

Huntingdon Man Arrested for Arson

CARROLL COUNTY—Tennessee Bureau of Investigation special agents specializing in fire investigations, working alongside the Huntingdon Police Department and Huntingdon Fire Department, have arrested and charged a Huntingdon man in connection with an arson investigation.

On December 27, at the request of the Huntingdon Police Department, agents began investigat-

ing a suspicious fire at a home in the 100 block of Hawkins Lane. During the course of the investigation, agents developed information identifying William Audrine Hollowell (DOB 03/03/61) as the individual responsible for starting the fire.

Agents obtained an arrest warrant for Hollowell, charging him with Arson. On December 29, he was arrested and booked into the Carroll County Jail on

a \$50,000 bond.

The charges and allegations referenced in this release are merely accusations of criminal conduct and not evidence. The defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt and convicted through due process of law.

If you have information about an intentionally set fire, call the Tennessee Arson Hotline at 1-800-762-3017.

Students Return to School January 6

BY LYNDESEY SUMMERS
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Local students are set to return from their short-lived winter break Tuesday, January 6, entering the second semester of the 2025-26 school year. Each school district has posted its school year calendar on its respective website. While most local schools follow similar calendars, there are several differences for each district.

Monday, January 19, is Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, and local schools will not be in session.

Huntingdon and Hollow Rock-Bruceton students do not have school Monday, February 2.

Clarksburg School is not in session Friday, February 13, for teachers' professional development.

Monday, February 16 is President's Day. School is not in session.

West Carroll students do not have school Tuesday, February 17, for a parent-teacher conference and teacher data day.

McKenzie elementary and middle schools do not

have school March 19, for a parent-teacher conference and teacher data day.

March 23-27 is spring break for all Carroll County schools.

April 3 is Good Friday, and local schools will not be in session.

Huntingdon, Hollow Rock-Bruceton and Clarksburg students do not have school Monday, April 6, for teachers' professional development.

Thursday, May 21 is students' last day of the 2025-26 school year. It is a half day.

New Laws Go Into Effect January 2026

Adding THC Regulations, Social Media Parental Controls, Domestic Violence Registry

BY LYNDESEY SUMMERS
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TENNESSEE — The new year brings some new laws to Tennessee, affecting THC regulations, social media control for minors and the creation of a domestic violence registry. The laws, passed in early 2025, go into effect January 1, 2026.

Here's a look at what's changing, starting with new THC laws:

THC, defined as a "tetrahydrocannabinol, tetrahydrocannabinolic acid, a THC component, or any derivative thereof" faces an onslaught of new regulations under HB 1376. The new law effectively bans the sale of products with high levels of THCA and other intoxicating cannabinoids.

Starting in the new year, the Tennessee Alcoholic Beverages Commission will take over the regulation of the THC industry from the Department of Agriculture.

State law will prohibit the sale of most hemp products, including those with total or theoretical THC content exceeding 0.3% by weight. As a result, the state has effec-

tively outlawed all THCA products. The sale of all remaining hemp products are also limited under the new law.

Sales will be restricted to in-person purchases by individuals age 21 and older.

THC edibles and beverages will have new limits on serving and packaging sizes. Packages are also required to be child-resistant, and product marketing must not be made specifically to appeal to consumers under the age of 21 years old.

These products may only be sold in restricted-access locations, such as specialized retail stores, liquor stores, and hemp shops. The products must be maintained behind a barrier.

Online sales, shipping, and delivery of hemp-derived cannabinoid products are also prohibited.

Additionally, a new wholesale tax structure based on milligrams of cannabinoids or gallons of liquid products will be imposed, replacing the previous retail tax.

Also changing in 2026 are parental control options over minors' social media accounts.

Tennessee is imple-

menting two new laws expanding parents' control over their minor children's online activities, including social media use and access to adult content.

The Protecting Children from Social Media Act (HB 1891) was passed to give parents greater oversight of their children's access to social media. The law requires parental consent for the creation of new social media accounts by anyone under the age of 18. Additionally, parents will have the means to supervise their child's social media accounts by viewing privacy settings, setting daily time restrictions and implementing breaks during which their child cannot access their accounts.

The state also passed a law creating a registry of persistent domestic violence offenders, maintained by the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation. "Savanna's Law" (HB 1200) rules that anyone convicted of domestic violence who has a prior conviction on record will be required to register.

The law is named after Savanna Puckett, a Middle Tennessee deputy who died after being stabbed by her ex-boyfriend in 2022.

These new laws follow the array of laws that took effect in July 2025, right after the 2025 legislation session concluded.

Report

...From Front Page

on the department's website, including the State Report Card Overview and the State Report Card highlight video, to learn how to best utilize the tool.

"The 2024-25 State Report Card celebrates the progress and achievements of public schools and districts across Tennessee, empowering families and communities with the knowledge to support every student's success," said Lizzette Reynolds, Commissioner of Education. "We are inspired by the dedication of schools that excelled in School Letter Grades and are making a meaningful difference for students. We invite all Tennesseans to join us in supporting, uplifting, and advancing the growth of every school in

our state."

School Letter Grades provide a snapshot of how each school in the state is performing, including student achievement and academic growth measures for all schools, as well as a measure of college and career readiness just for high schools.

Letter grades are decided based on four main indicators: achievement, growth, growth for highest need students, and (if applicable) college and career readiness.

Statewide, 355 schools received an overall A letter grade, and 483 schools received an overall B letter grade. Four Carroll County schools received overall B letter grades.

Here's a look at area schools' grades from the 2024-25 school year.

McKenzie Elementary School: B, 491 students enrolled

McKenzie Middle School:

D, 378 students enrolled

McKenzie High School: B, 366 students enrolled

Huntingdon Primary School: C, 399 students enrolled

Huntingdon Middle School: C, 467 students enrolled

Huntingdon High School: C, 403 students enrolled

Clarksburg School, Pre-K-12: C, 313 students enrolled

Hollow Rock-Bruceton Central Elementary School: B, 245 students enrolled

Hollow Rock-Bruceton Central High School: B, 345 students enrolled

West Carroll Primary School: no letter grade issued, 156 students enrolled

West Carroll Elementary School: C, 222 students enrolled

West Carroll Jr/Sr High School: C, 302 students enrolled

Gleason School, Pre-K-12: C, 382 students enrolled

SNAP Changes Eliminate Soda, Processed Foods From Program

BY LYNDESEY SUMMERS
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Tennessee Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients will soon be unable to spend their benefits on processed foods and beverages such as soda, energy drinks and candy, following a decision from the United States Department of Agriculture.

Tennessee joins 17 other states in adding waivers redefining what types of food can be purchased with SNAP dollars in 2026. The changes vary slightly state-to-state.

Tennessee's SNAP chang-

es, set to be implemented July 31, 2026, prevent SNAP recipients from spending their benefits on items where the primary ingredient is sugar, corn syrup, high-fructose corn syrup or other high-calorie alternatives. It also prevents recipients from spending their benefits on drinks where the first two ingredients are carbonated water and sugar/high-fructose corn syrup or similar alternatives. The changes also add hot prepared chicken to the list of foods available for purchase.

"With these new waivers, we are empowering

states to lead, protecting our children from the dangers of highly-processed foods, and moving one step closer to the President's promise to Make America Healthy Again," said Secretary of Agriculture Brooke Rollins in a press release.

SNAP, formerly known as the Food Stamp Program, helps approximately 1 in 8 Americans afford groceries. Beneficiaries receive monthly benefits on an EBT card, which they can use to shop at approved retailers.

Last month, 3,598 individuals from Carroll County received SNAP assistance.



Huntingdon Stockyard Under New Ownership

A staple in the agricultural community of Huntingdon and surrounding areas, the Southwestern Stockyard is welcoming new faces and receiving a new name.

The sale barn has been purchased by Dickson Regional Livestock West, and

the farmer-owned group will take over in January of 2026.

The new owners are eager to bring a revitalized, competitive market to the area and look forward to serving the hard-working cattlemen and women who buy and sell their

cattle with Dickson West.

The barn is located at 21860 East Main Street, Huntingdon, TN 38344, with regular sales on Tuesdays at 1 p.m.

For further inquiries, please contact Carter Cary (931-289-9134) or Robert Parchman (931-801-2212).

Leadership Tennessee Names Kasey Muench to NEXT Program

NASHVILLE (December 18) — Leadership Tennessee, a group committed to fostering non-partisan conversations on key state matters, has named Henry County resident Kasey Muench to the Leadership Tennessee NEXT program for the program's twelfth class.

A total of 32 individuals were chosen for Leadership Tennessee NEXT, representing 14 Tennessee counties. The class brings diverse professional experience in a wide range of sectors and industries and fosters collaborative, non-partisan dialogue on issues of state importance, according to a press release.

The cohort is Tennessee's only statewide leadership program focusing on existing and emerging leaders and spanning geographic and industry boundaries.



Kasey Muench

"It's a milestone for us to announce the twelfth Leadership Tennessee NEXT Class," said Alfred Degrafinreid, II, president and CEO of Leadership Tennessee. "Each class has played a vital role in shaping the future of our state, bringing fresh perspectives and innovative solutions to the table. I have no doubt that Class XII will continue that legacy, contributing to Tennessee's progress and addressing the challenges we face with creativity and collaboration."

During each class session, members engage with those from the Signature Program, learn about issues and opportunities specific to Tennessee, and engage in personal skill development.

"I'm truly honored to be

selected for Leadership Tennessee NEXT," said Kasey Muench, executive director of the Northwest Tennessee Tourism Association and member of the Leadership Tennessee NEXT Class XII. "Continued leadership development is deeply important to me, and I value the opportunity to build meaningful relationships with leaders from across the state. Those connections and perspectives will help me better serve and advocate for Northwest Tennessee as we work to strengthen our communities."

Candidates are selected by an anonymous se-

lection committee and evaluated based on the following criteria: professionals who excel in their fields, are engaged in service to their various communities and are dedicated to improving the lives of Tennesseans.

Since Leadership Tennessee's founding, more than 850 members have graduated from both Leadership Tennessee NEXT and the organization's Signature Program. The cohort's work will begin in February and run through May 2026, and the class curriculum includes robust visits to Nashville, Memphis, Knoxville and Paris, Tenn.

Without newspapers, where would you search to find the information on this page?

We do the legwork to keep you informed.



High Winds Topple Trees, Cause Power Outages

CARROLL COUNTY (December 28) — Strong winds accompanied a cold front that moved into Tennessee on Sunday evening. As Christmas weekend temperatures moved from the 70s to the upper 20s, the front brought high winds, frigid conditions, and rain. Emergency crews were busy clearing downed trees on roadways in the

county on State Route 190, State Route 114, and U.S. 70. A few scattered electrical power outages were also reported in the county.

An Early Look Into Three 2026 Elections

BY LYNDSY SUMMERS
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CARROLL COUNTY — Local government offices might be shaken up come 2026, with three elections slated throughout the year. Political races for governor, state representative, countywide office, school board, and municipal seats are on the ballot in elections held in May, August and November 2026.

Midterm election year is upon us, with candidate-petitioning for Carroll County offices and school board seats beginning Monday, December 22.

The primary election for county offices and board of education seats — for each political party — is Tuesday, May 5, 2026. All candidates must qualify for their positions by February 19, 2026, at noon to be considered for the May 5 primary election.

Following this primary election is the Thursday, August 6, general election — which includes the county office race, board of education race and Clarksburg municipal race for mayor and two alderman seats.

Candidate petitioning for the Clarksburg race begins January 9, 2026. Candidates must qualify by March 10 at noon to be put on the August 6 election ballot.

Also August 6 is the primary election for governor, U.S. Senate, U.S. House and Tennessee House.

The general election for the above listed state offices and for municipal seats in Carroll County cities and towns — excluding Clarksburg — is Tuesday, November 3.

Candidate petitioning for Atwood, Bruceton, Hollow Rock, Huntingdon, McKenzie, McLemoresville and Trezevant municipal seats begins June 22, 2026. Candidates must qualify by noon August 20 to be on the November 3 ballot.

Here is a look at which offices will be on the ballot in 2026.

The following seats are on Carroll County's May 5 primary and August 6 general election ballot:

Carroll County Seats

Circuit Court Clerk (four-year term), held by Sarah Bradberry.

County Mayor (four-year term), held by Joseph Butler.

Property Assessor (four-year term), held by Rita Jones. Jones is not seeking re-election.

County Clerk (four-year term), held by Darlene Kirk.

Trustee (four-year term), held by Paula Bolen.

Register of Deeds (four-year term), held by Natalie Porter.

County Sheriff (four-year term), held by Andy Dickson. Dickson is not seeking re-election.

Road Supervisor (four-year term), held by Ricky Scott (District One) and Ronnie A. Wade (District 2). There will only be one Road Supervisor position in 2026 and following.

Republican State Ex-

ecutive Committee Man, held by Ryan Ellegood.

Republican State Executive Committee Woman, held by Tess Robbins.

County Commission Seats (four-year term) Three District 1 (Atwood, Cedar Grove, Lavinia) seats, held by Darrell Ridgely, Jimmy Halford Jr. and Randy D. Long.

Two District 2 (McLemoresville, Trezevant) seats, held by Daniel Willman and Lana Y. Suite.

Two District 3 (Bruceton, Buena Vista, Sp. Grove, Vale) seats, one vacant and one held by Joey Simmons.

Two District 4 (Cannon, Hollow Rock, Macedonia) seats, held by Morris Rogers and Daniel J. Thomas.

Three District 5 (Civic Center) seats, held by Joey W. Darnall, Cyril Ostiguy and Barry Mac Murphy.

Two District 6 (Clarksburg, Concord, New Liberty, Westport) seats, held by Jimmy D. McClure and Philip E. Moore.

Three District 7 (Huntingdon Police Station) seats, held by Walter Smothers and Lori Dillahunt.

Two District 8 (McKenzie Senior Citizens Center) seats, held by Jerry R. (Jay) Phipps and Willie Huffman.

Three District 9 (McKenzie Church, City Hall) seats, held by Jason R. Martin, Spiros L. Roditis and John Austin.

Carroll County School Board (four-year term): one District 1 (Lavinia, Cedar Grove, Atwood McLemoresville, Trezevant, McKenzie Senior Citizens Center) seat, held by Mike Foster; one District 2 (Bruceton, Recycling Center, Hollow Rock, McKenzie Church, McKenzie City Hall) seat, held by Deborah Broadbent; and one District 3 (Civic Center, Clarksburg, Concord/Westport, Huntingdon Police Station) seat, held by Charlotte Tucker.

Hollow Rock-Bruceton Special School District (four-year term): one District 16 Hollow Rock city seat (2-year unexpired), held by Jonathan Tedford; one District 16 Bruceton city seat, held by Brandi Boyd; one District 16 at-large seat, held by April Hampton; and one District 15 Buena Vista seat, held by Jeffrey (Michael) Graves.

Huntingdon Special School District (six-year term): two at-large seats, currently held by Morgan Butler and Shawna Smith.

McKenzie Special School District (four-year term): four at-large seats, currently held by Bobby Young, LaShonda Williams, Spiros L. Roditis and George Cassidy. Candidates must live in Carroll County.

South Carroll Special School District (four-year term): two at-large seats, currently held by Christy Blount and Tom R. Miller.

West Carroll Special School District (four-year term): one Old County seat, held by Betty Wallace; one Old Atwood seat; held by Keith Murray; and one Old Trezevant seat, held by Kelly M. Weaver.

City of Clarksburg: Mayor and two alderman

positions are on the August 6 ballot. Clarksburg is the only Carroll County city with an August municipal election. Currently, Howell Todd is Clarksburg mayor, and Judy Grant Smith and Barbara McClure are aldermen.

The following offices are listed on the August 6 primary midterm election ballot:

U.S. Congressional District 8, held by David Kustoff.

U.S. Senate, held by Bill Hagerty

Tennessee Governor, held by Bill Lee

Tennessee House of Representatives, District 76, held by Tandy Darby

Tennessee House of Representatives, District 79, held by Brock Martin

The general election for these seats is Tuesday, November 3, along with municipal elections for Atwood, Bruceton, Hollow Rock, Huntingdon, McKenzie, McLemoresville and Trezevant. To run for the following seats, all candidates must reside in the listed municipality.

The following municipal seats are on the November 3, 2026, ballot:

Atwood
Mayor, held by Fridie Algee

Alderman, held by Jim Lewis
Alderman, held by Randy D. Long

Bruceton
Mayor, held by Robert T. Keeton, III
Alderman, held by Jack R. Blocker
Alderman, held by James A. Butler

Hollow Rock
Mayor (two-year unexpired), held by Ronnie Webb
Alderman, held by T. Richard Goodwin
Alderman, held by Angela Stockdale
Alderman (two-year unexpired), held by Cathie Pardue

Huntingdon
Council member, held by John Sanders
Council member, held by Kelly Eubanks
Council member, held by Andrew Maddox

McKenzie
Mayor, held by Ryan D. Griffin
Councilman, held by Tom Alexander
Councilman, held by Carol J. Armpriest
Councilman, held by Bobby Young

McLemoresville
Mayor, held by Phil Williams
Alderman, held by Sharron Holland
Alderman, held by Mike Presson
Alderman, held by Don T. Reed
Alderman, held by Angie Martin
Alderman, held by Lana Y. Suite

Trezevant
Alderman, held by Dan Dieringer
Alderman, held by Pamela D. Joyner
Alderman, held by Don Barger

For more details, contact the Carroll County Election Commission Office at 731-98-1968, or www.carrolltnelections.com



Above, Postlethwait took a photo while fixing the cafe's roof in late November. Photo Courtesy of AJ's AllStar Cafe Below, Firefighters from Huntingdon and Carroll County stations 1,4 and 11 responded to AJ's All Star Cafe's fire on November 12 and remained on the scene for hours. File Photo by Joel Washburn/The Banner



AJ's

...From Front Page

of the debris left over from the fire and rebuilding the Lexington Street cafe. The

building's plumbing and electrical systems are running. Postlethwait and others sprayfoamed the entire building and began painting over Christmas weekend.

AJ's All Star Cafe, located at 12660 Lexington Street in

downtown Huntingdon, is a popular breakfast and lunch destination for Huntingdon diners. It has been closed since the November 12 fire as Postlethwait and others worked tirelessly to bring the building back to its prime.

EForce

...From Front Page

The new system costs \$56,759.90. Sergeant Jones said the cost was covered by a State Street Aid Fund and no local tax money was utilized.

The upgrade is designed to replace aging infrastructure with a unified, web-based platform that streamlines the flow of information. This transition marks a significant shift toward "smart policing," providing officers with high-tech tools to increase efficiency and public safety on the streets of McKenzie.

High-Tech Patrol: iPads and Real-Time Data

As part of the rollout, McKenzie patrol units are being equipped with iPads and mobile workstations running EForce's specialized mobile applications. This hardware allows officers to perform critical tasks directly from their cruisers that previously required manual paperwork or radio transmissions:

- **Instant Scanning:** Using the iPad's camera and EForce software, officers can now instantly scan driver's licenses and vehicle registration plates. This auto-populates data into the system, reducing human error and significantly shortening the duration of traffic stops.

- **Electronic Citations (e-Citations):** The department is moving away from traditional paper ticket books. Officers can now issue digital citations that are instantly uploaded to the department's records and can be transmitted directly to the court system, eliminating the need for manual data entry by administrative staff.

Streamlining the Paperwork

One of the primary goals of the transition is to reduce "desk time" for officers. The EForce system is designed to be task-oriented, meaning information entered during a traffic stop or a call for service automatically flows into incident reports.

By removing the need to enter the same data multiple times, officers can spend

less time behind a keyboard and more time patrolling our neighborhoods," the department noted regarding its commitment to community-oriented policing.

Enhanced Connectivity and Safety

The EForce system also provides McKenzie with full compliance with the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS), a federal standard for crime reporting. The software's ability to validate reports in real time ensures the department's data is accurate and ready for state and federal submissions with a single click.

For the community, this upgrade means faster response times, more accurate reporting, and more visible police presence. By leveraging the mobility of iPads and the power of the EForce cloud-based network, the McKenzie Police Department is ensuring that its technology is as modern and resilient as the community it serves.

For more information on the software being utilized, visit www.eforcesoftware.com.

ATV

...From Front Page

According to Frey, Henry County EMS and the Henry County Sheriff's Office responded to 725 Albert Brown Lane in Paris for a

call of an ATV accident. "At the scene, first responders found that a four-year-old grandson and his grandmother were riding an ATV and had struck an outbuilding. The four-year-old was taken by ambulance to the Henry County Medical Center before being transferred to a Nashville area

hospital. The grandmother, Holly Sciarpelletti, age 55, succumbed to her injuries at the scene.

"The thoughts and prayers of the Henry County Sheriff's Office remain with the family during this difficult time." — Sheriff Josh Frye

Meeting

...From Front Page

The CDBG grant program is funded through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and administered by the Tennessee Department of Economic

and Community Development. Last year, 44 communities received CDBG grants, totaling \$26.5 million statewide, to assist with their infrastructure and beautification efforts.

The allocation of CDBG funds is based on priorities set through the public meeting process at the local community level. Funds are avail-

able for water and sewer improvements, health and safety projects and other improvements to enhance the quality of life in Tennessee's rural communities.

Persons with disabilities requiring special accommodations to attend the meeting should contact Kim Carter at (731) 986-2900.



The 1945-46 McKenzie High School Blue Cyclones were featured in the Jackson Sun in December 1945. Nancy Vawter Holland, then-freshman and now the last surviving member of the team, is pictured in the back row, far right, next to Coach Lon Varnell. Photo submitted by the McKenzie High School Alumni Association

80 Years Ago This Week...

Courtesy of the McKenzie High School Alumni Association

The 1945-46 McKenzie High Blue Cyclones won three games and lost one on a 1945 Christmas road trip through southern Georgia to play some of that state's top girls basketball teams. Along the way, they defeated the defending Georgia state champions, Damascus High School, 23-12. Damascus had not lost a game in four years, and only once

in the previous six years. In the mid-1940s, the Blue Cyclones were coached by Lon Varnell, whose lengthy coaching career at MHS, Bethel University and Seawane: The University of the South earned him an induction into the Tennessee Sports Hall of Fame in 1973. Varnell became one of the most successful entertainment promoters in the U.S., when he established Varnell Enterprises in Nashville. He promoted such

acts as Elton John, Sonny and Cher, Donny Osmond and the Harlem Globetrotters. He was instrumental in bringing the Harlem Globetrotters to McKenzie High School for a game in 1957. Nancy Vawter Holland (MHS Class of 1949) was a freshman on that 1945-46 squad, and still resides in McKenzie. She is the last surviving McKenzie High girls basketball player to have played under the mascot Blue Cyclones, which changed to Rebelettes in 1947.

Editor's View

BY BRITTANY WASHBURN MARTIN
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Merry Cough-mas

"It must be my left foot, that foot is always the culprit," I said to myself as I stifled another cough and contorted myself into an awkward turtle position to slather more Vicks on the sole of my left foot. (Vicks on the feet stops coughing for a good night's sleep - usually). It's been over a week since six members of my family came down with this mysterious virus that robs you of your self-respect as you cough and dash to the nearest bathroom, an unfortunate by-product of motherhood. It always starts with the smallest ones, the ones dripping in cuteness, rendering the adults powerless to avoid kisses and hugs, and then it spreads like a silent assassin through the family, leaving tissue box carcasses and empty cold pill blister packs in its wake. Yes, this year we decked the halls with Lysol and cool mist humidifiers in hopes that Saint Nicholas wasn't afraid of the common cold. (Cool mist humidifiers keep snot and mucus on the run

- literally). Despite illness overshadowing the holiday, the kids had a good Christmas and were in good spirits. I'm thankful that the meds, Vicks and humidifiers seemed to help control the symptoms well enough so we could still enjoy time together through the coughs and fevers. Life is rarely a Hallmark card or Lifetime movie; finding the silver lining in the midst of chaos continues to be the theme of parenthood for me. How was your Christmas? I hope it was blessed. I hope you found so many reasons to smile. I hope that if you missed someone over the holidays that their memory brought warmth to your heart and peace for a moment. I hope remembering their crazy shenanigans made you laugh out loud, and I hope you know just how much you were/are loved by them and so many others. 2026 is coming soon. What are your new year's

resolutions? Mine are to be happy, eliminate stress, give more than I take, be grateful and try to end the year in better shape physically and financially than I started. It sounds pretty standard probably, but my hopes for the new year are also peace and truth. I pray that truth wins more often than lies and peace spreads like wildfire through the world. I used to want different things, but as I age, I keep coming back to... peace. It's what I hope we all have in 2026. I hope you have peace and rest and are able to appreciate all the beauty in your life. I hope that when something wonderful happens in 2026, you notice it immediately and feel grateful for that moment. I hope that when you look back on the year, your heart is full. I hope whatever ails you passes soon and wish you an abundance of good health in the new year. Lastly, I hope the start of this editorial made you smile. It is the fever-stricken ramblings of a Mombie (Mom + zombie) coming off of a five-day self-imposed quarantine with two tiny humans who still have one more week of freedom before going back to school. Stay well.

HUNKER DOWN WITH KES Living Large... Through It All

You'd think I would be an expert by now. But the last article in December is always a tough one for me. Every journalist on earth, and his brother, does some type of "year in review" write-up on sports, foods, fads, movies, music, highlights, remarkable achievements, political blunders, people of the year...

I am not intellectually astute enough to be different. But, at the same time, I am not qualified to tell you which foods you should have eaten, or avoided like the bubonic plague, this past year. Let me give you an example. The list of the ten best Italian dishes of the year came out just this past week. Spaghetti and lasagna were the only two items I had ever heard of on the entire list! Now, if they had been talking about Martha White all-purpose, self-rising flour (with Hot-Rise), verses Dixie Lilly, Gold Medal or Pillsbury when it comes to making those extra-large, melt in your mouth "cat-head" biscuits that could sop up an entire plate of extra thick, extra dark homemade maple syrup...then I might could point you in the right direction. I can sum up the sports year for you quickly. My St. Louis Cardinals were ten sheets shy of mediocre. They reminded me of the 1958 team. The only ray of sunshine in the sports world was the Port St. Joe Sharks making it to the final game in their high school football division. Cathy and I did not go to a movie this past year. Makes it kinda hard to comment on that scene. The last fad I got personally involved with was the hula hoop. And I don't care who the person of the year is...just as long as it is not Jane Fonda.

I don't believe there can be a top ten country music list. The last real, genuine country song was George Jones singing, "He Stopped Loving Her Today." I haven't heard a song, regardless of genre, that measures up to that one in almost half a century. Now, you must be thinking the year was a total loss for me. You would be dead wrong! It might have just been my greatest year ever... Hannah called me last week. Didn't want to talk to Cathy, who quickly handed me the phone. Hannah is sixteen. A beautiful busy young teenager. Who just got her driver's license and has places to go and things to do. But she made time for me. We had a private, personal granddaughter-grandfather parley. She laughed long, and often. My heart swelled up 15 feet tall. Back in April a group of young students from Faith Christian School took me on a trip to Washington, DC. It was triple amazing! We went by Savannah and Fort Sumter in Charleston on the way up. And the University of Virginia and Chickamauga on the way home. Adam and Sophie made sure I didn't "embarrass anybody" on the trip. Micah and Annie took me to a major league baseball game. Peggy and Libby let me eat with them at the chicken place. Peyton knew more about the Bible Museum than the guide at the Bible Museum knew. Kimberly leaned in close and listened intently to every wild tale I was telling. Which, of course, is a God given gift of encouragement. Celie and Molly taught me a whole lot about eating on this trip. And they cared enough to buy me the definitive book on one of

my favorite places, Thomas Jefferson's Monticello. Kara, every single day, made me feel like the most important person on the trip. You talk about another wonderful gift from God.... I fulfilled a lifetime dream in March by seeing Moe Bandy in concert. I stood up in my chair when he got down to the chorus of "Hank Williams, You Wrote My Life" and started yelling, "You tell'em, Moe!" David Mark had open heart surgery in July. He is my only little brother. Hearing the doctor say, "everything went well, he's going to be fine" made the year for me. I don't need to bother with anybody else's thoughts, lists, or opinions on what we need to applaud or repudiate over the past 12 months. My eldest grandson turned 20 in October. Luke is a sophomore at the University of Tennessee. And I am still his hero. I ponder on that late into the night. Cory Carroll came into my life in November. We were at Living Waters Assembly of God Church in Apalachicola. And I heard just a small part of his testimony. WOW! He was a young man doing everything wrong until he met Jesus through a Gideon placed Bible in a jail in Franklin County. Now, by God's marvelous grace, Cory is doing everything right. It is the ageless story of redemption...brought to life, close to home. Cory's story has encouraged my heart, renewed my faith, lifted my spirits. And, in my book, that beats any "10 best list of the year" from here to eternity, and then some....

Respectfully,
Kes
kesley45@aol.com

The Dixie Kicks Off New Year with Great Shows

The Dixie Carter Performing Arts Center welcomes the new year with a standout January lineup featuring celebrated music and comedy talent. Tickets for all performances are on sale now. **An Evening with Shawn Mullins, Saturday, January 10, 7:30 p.m., Tickets: \$25-\$35:** Grammy-nominated singer-songwriter Shawn Mullins brings his soulful storytelling to The Dixie. Best known for his No. 1 hit "Lullaby" from Soul's Core, Mullins has enjoyed a career spanning chart-topping releases, major TV placements, and collaborations across genres. In celebration of the 20th anniversary of Soul's Core, Mullins revisited the album with Soul's Core Revival, featuring newly recorded solo and full-band arrangements. Sponsored by First Bank and 94.1 WLKZ. **Lorrie Morgan, Friday, January 23, 7:30 p.m., Tickets: \$55-\$65:** Country music icon Lorrie Morgan brings her powerful vocals and emotional storytelling to The Dixie. The first woman in her genre to launch her career with three consecutive Platinum albums, Morgan is known for classics like "Something in Red," "Except for Monday," and "Watch Me." A Grand Ole Opry member and daughter of Country Music Hall of Famer George Morgan, she continues to deliver perfor-

mances marked by authenticity, strength, and heart. **Jeff Allen: Love & Laughter Tour, Saturday, January 24, 7:30 p.m. Tickets: \$45-\$55:** Comedy favorite Jeff Allen brings his high-energy, family-centered humor to The Dixie. With appearances on Dry Bar Comedy, America's Got Talent, Netflix, Comedy Central, and more, Allen's comedy has garnered nearly one billion online views. His latest tour offers a hilarious and heartfelt take on everyday life. Sponsored by Froggy 104. **Tickets & Information:** Tickets are available at DixiePAC.net or through The Dixie's box office, Monday-Friday, 10-4 p.m., 731.986.2100.

LOOKING FOR LUCK IN 2026? Try These New Year's Superstitions

BY LYNDESEY SUMMERS
lsummers@mckenziebanner.com

On New Year's Day, it's safe to follow one general rule of thumb: anything you do for the next 24 hours sets a precedent for the coming year. Sometimes, this is literal. Sometimes it's merely metaphorical. But there are some specific superstitions people from across the world follow to ensure good luck and prosperity for the following 365 days. Here are some superstitions you can follow to ring in the new year. Note: You might already be doing some of these.

Eat collard greens: In the south, we tend to follow a similar New Year's Day menu each year. The collard greens on our tables supposedly resemble money because they share a similar green hue. **Eat black-eyed peas:** Of course, you can't eat your collard greens without a side of black-eyed peas. Beans, like collard greens, resemble money — specifically coins. Together, the two sides are meant to bring good luck and prosperity into the new year. **Eat cornbread:** No, we don't add cornbread to the table just because we like the taste — although that is plenty. Because cornbread's coloring resembles gold, the dish suppos-

edly brings fortune into the new year. **Eat pork:** Whether it's pulled or chopped, pork is said to bring good luck into the new year because pigs move forward when they eat. Since pigs are often quite plump, too, they symbolize a larger wallet in the year ahead. There are so many pork variations you can eat, but popular dishes include ham, pork roast (shoulder/butt), pork chops and hog jowls. **Eat fish:** If you're not so much a pork-eating person, fish is also meant to bring abundance in the new year. Fish scales resemble coins, and many fish swim in large

schools. They also swim forward, which supposedly represents progress. Sardines, specifically, are seen as lucky. **Eat tamales:** Last on the list of things to eat on New Year's Day is tamales. The traditional Mexican dish symbolizes generations of familial bonds, since families typically gather to help each other make the dish. **Avoid chicken:** Sorry, poultry lovers. One dish to avoid on New Year's Day is chicken. Because chickens have wings, your luck could fly away. At least, that's how the thinking goes. **Don't clean your house:** According to Chinese lore, cleaning on New Year's Day is thought to clean away any good luck you have stored up for the new year. Another saying goes that if you wash

laundry on New Year's Day, you're washing away loved ones. It might be best to save your chores for January 2. **Put cash in your wallet:** Supposedly, if you have cash in your wallet before midnight on New Year's Day, you'll have a year of prosperity. You might participate in this superstition every year without even knowing it. **Eat 12 grapes at midnight:** In Spain, it's common for locals to eat a dozen grapes as soon as the clock strikes midnight. The superstition goes that each grape represents each month of the coming year. Finish all 12 before 12:01 a.m., and you will earn good luck in the new year. **More grape-related fun:** Eat 12 grapes under a table when the clock strikes mid-

night, and some say you will find your soulmate in the coming year. **Wear dotted clothing:** In the Philippines, it is believed that wearing clothing with polka dots will boost your luck in the year ahead. The polka dot circles represent coins, so this superstition specifically targets financial prosperity. There are so many more superstitions people follow around the world — like drizzling honey on your food to ensure sweetness in the coming year, or smashing a pomegranate against the front door to measure your good fortune. Whether or not they work is another story. Give some of these a try and report back to us next December. Happy New Year!

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Obituaries



KYLE EMERY CHAPMAN 1951 – 2025

MCKENZIE — Kyle Emery Chapman went to glory on Wednesday, December 25, 2025. He was the second of three children born to construction worker Marvin Leon Chapman and his wife, Pauline Joyce Chapman, on May 17, 1951.

He was born at Nobles Hospital in Paris, Tenn. Kyle lived his entire life of seventy-four years in McKenzie.

Visitation was Sunday, December 28, and Monday with the memorial service at McKenzie Church of Christ.

After high school graduation, he attended McKenzie's vocational-technical school. He soon became an instructor at the Carroll County votech school and served on the board. He also served on the Farm Bureau board.

When he was fourteen years old, he was baptized into Christ by Kenneth Edwards at the McKenzie Church of Christ, where he served the Lord for the past sixty years. It was when attending worship that he met Alice Jean Kizer, and after a few years of dating, they were married on August 20, 1981. Chapman worked in many roles as teacher, grocer, and farmer, but he served the entire McKenzie area as the service manager for the Ford dealership, where he labored for more than forty years.

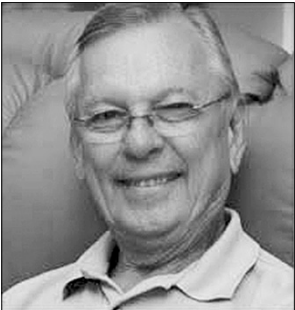
He was diagnosed with cancer in 2023 and had to leave the job for which he was so greatly loved at the age of seventy-one.

Kyle Emery Chapman was preceded in death by his father, Marvin Chapman; and his mother, Joyce Chapman.

He is survived by his beloved wife of forty-four years, Alice; his sisters, Debby (Dan) Simon and Valerie (Ken) Sanders; nine nephews and nieces; and twenty-one great-nephews and nieces. Because of his powerful influence for good and his quiet and peaceful

demeanor, Kyle Chapman will be sorely missed.

Brummitt-McKenzie Funeral Home, 731-352-4848. +



LELAND KEITH JOHNSON 1939 – 2025

MARIETTA, Ga. — On November 28, 2025, Leland "Keith" Johnson, 85, of Marietta died after a courageous battle with cancer.

Born in McKenzie, Keith grew up with strong roots in his community and a lifelong love of learning. He completed his early education in McKenzie. He graduated from McKenzie High School with the Class of 1957.

After graduation, he attended the University of Tennessee at Martin and received his bachelor's degree from Bethel College. He later continued his education at the University of Georgia, completing a Master's degree that helped shape his long and accomplished career.

Keith began his professional life teaching chemistry at Athens Technical College, where he met the love of his life, Janet. The two later moved to Atlanta, where Keith dedicated many years to serving the State of Georgia. He worked as a director in education and economic development, contributing to programs and initiatives that helped strengthen communities across the state.

After retiring in 2002, Keith embraced a quieter but fulfilling life. He enjoyed spending time with family and friends, tackling home projects.

Proceeded in death by his parents, Carl and Maurine Burrow Johnson, and grandparents, Quincy and Mae Burrow and Marcus and Dora Johnson.

He is survived by his wife of 55 years, Janet Johnson; his son, Michael Johnson; his beloved grandchildren, Katelyn and Owen; and his sister, Gayle Britton (Bruce) of Smyrna.

Keith will be remembered for his steady kindness, his dedication to education and service, and the deep love he held for his family. His life touched many, and his memory will remain a blessing to all who knew him.+

SANDRA McMAHEN 1941 – 2025

MCKENZIE — Mrs. Sandra Walker McMahan, 84, died at Cherrywood Post Acute on Thursday, December 18, 2025. A Celebration of Life for Mrs. McMahan will be held after the holidays at the First United Methodist Church in McKenzie. She will be interred in the Walkerville Cemetery in Magnolia, Ark.

Mrs. McMahan was born in Connecticut on February 17, 1941, to Wayne and Reba Irene Hider Walker, and grew up in St. Albans, Vt. Mrs. McMahan is a graduate of Boston University with a degree in Music Performance. During her time in McKenzie, she has been involved in productions and concerts at Bethel College, given private piano lessons, and served as the organist at McKenzie First United Methodist Church.

She received a bachelor's degree in business from Bethel College and worked at H&R Block for several years. Mrs. McMahan was a member of the First United Methodist Church and the Inglenook Book Club.

She is survived by her daughter, Kimberly McMahan; and her significant other, Clark Brown, both of McKenzie.

Mrs. McMahan is preceded in death by her parents and husband, Rowe Gene McMahan.

Brummitt-McKenzie Funeral Home.

LINDA BROWN LE 1947 – 2025

MCKENZIE — Ms. Linda Brown LE, 78, died Sunday, December 21, 2025, at her residence. Funeral services for Ms. Le were on Sunday, December 28, 2025, at Brummitt-McKenzie Funeral Home. Interment was at Carroll Memorial Gardens.

Ms. Le, was born in Houston, Miss., on September 27, 1947, to James Dudley Brown Sr. and Maxine Lowrey Brown.

Her daughters survive her, Stefanie Le (Curtis) Carleton of Roswell, Ga., and Jamie Jennifer Le (Kevin) Caulfield of New Lenox, Ill.; a son, Stanley Jackson of Lexington, Tenn.; two sisters, Virginia Thurbur of Winnie, Texas, and Patsy (Donald) Lawrence of McKenzie; two brothers, Mike (Deborah) Brown and Johnny (Cindy) Brown, all of McKenzie; and two grandchildren.

She is preceded in death by her parents; a daughter, Tamatha Deane Rich; and

a brother, James Dudley Brown, Jr.

Brummitt-McKenzie Funeral Home, McKenzie.

TYRONE DAVID HAYNES 1975 – 2025

MCKENZIE — Tyrone David Haynes, 50, died on Tuesday, December 23, 2025, at his residence. A Celebration of Life will be announced later.

Mr. Haynes was born on February 3, 1975, in Milan, Tenn., to George Lewis Haynes and Sadie Mae Douglas Haynes.

He is survived by his sister, Teresa (Terry) Scott of McKenzie; a brother, David (Maggie) Jones of McKenzie; his ex-wife, Diana Haynes of McKenzie; three daughters, Celenia (Todd) Miller of Colorado, Tiesha Haynes of New York and Kayla Lassiter of McKenzie; a son, Armani Seats of McKenzie; and three grandchildren.

He is preceded in death by his parents; and three brothers, Michael Anthony Haynes, Terry Wayne Clark and Terry Haynes.

If you require additional assistance, please contact Brummitt-McKenzie Funeral Home at 731-352-4848 or visit our website at brummittmckenziefuneralhome.com.

DORRIS LEE FLY PARKINS 1932 – 2025

MILAN — Dorris Lee Fly Parkins, 93, died peacefully on Tuesday, December 23, surrounded by her children at her home in Milan, Tenn.

Dorris was born to Denton William Fly and Esther Lee Rollins Fly on April 5, 1932.

Dorris grew up working on her family farm while attending Milan schools. At age 17, she was stricken with Polio, which ended a promising basketball career. Yet, with the aid of a crutch, she graduated with her classmates, went to college, and walked down the aisle with the love of her life, Bob Parkins. Together, they produced 8 healthy children.

In 1965, Bob and Dorris Parkins founded the Milan Mirror newspaper. During that same time, the couple also worked on Green Acres Farm, which included over 300 dairy cows and a tomato packing shed that employed hundreds and supplied tomato plants for some of the largest tomato producers in the world.

Dorris was an artist at

heart. She loved Ceramics and Porcelain so much that she opened her own business in 1970 called Dorris' Ceramics.

Dorris was very involved in the community, serving as a PTA officer and a legend in her day. She was a member of the Freed Hardeman College Associates, the Graball Community Center, a 4-H Club leader, and a YMCA Board member. In 2024, she was recognized for her 50-year membership with the Daughters of the American Revolution. She was also a member of the Colonial Dames XVII Century. She was a lifelong member of the Sitka Church of Christ, where she taught Sunday school and organized hundreds of church events. She instilled the love of Jesus Christ to her children and all those around her.

Her crowning award came in 1968 when the late Governor Buford Ellington presented her with the coveted Governor's Trophy as Tennessee's Handicapped Citizen of the Year.

She was preceded in death by her husband of 56 years, Bob Parkins; and her parents, Denton and Esther Lee Fly.

She is survived by eight children, Deborah Ayers (Dick), Melanie Day (Dewitt), Denton Clay Parkins (Donna), Tamara Dunnebacke, Paris Parkins, Scarlet Elliott (Marty) Crystal Goldie (Shaun) and Victor Bob Parkins (Carol); 12 grandchildren, Jordan Parkins, Holland Parkins, Deborah Lee Day Story (Taylor), Austyn Dunnebacke (Lauren) Casen Dunnebacke (August), Clay Elliot (Brittany), Demi Elliott, Bob Elliott, Tyler Jackson (Sydney) Walker Parkins, Kendall Parkins, Edward Goldie, Juliette Goldie, and a brother, Felix Fly; and great grandchildren: Liam Dunnebacke, Ryker Dunnebacke, Nalani Perez Parkins, Cooper Jackson, Jordy Jackson, Marshall Jackson, Riley Jackson, Denton Elliott, Mason Elliott, Xander Largent, and Emma Largent.

The memorial service was Sunday, December 28, at Sitka Church of Christ. Interment was at Oakwood Cemetery in Milan, Tenn.

Memorials may be sent to the Milan High School Alumni Association, Sitka Church of Christ or the Tennessee Children's Home.

Bodkin Funeral Home, 731-686-3111.

PHYLLIS CARDEN 1950 – 2025

CLARKSBURG — Mrs. Phyllis Fronabarger Carden, 75, of Clarksburg, Tenn., died Saturday, December 27, 2025, at her home.

Funeral services were in the Chapel of Chase Funeral Home on Monday, December 29, 2025, with Bro. Andrew Stokes officiating. Burial was in Clarksburg Baptist Church Cemetery.

Mrs. Carden was born February 12, 1950, to the late James Ford Fronabarger and Jo Priestly Walker Fronabarger. She was preceded in death by her parents; a brother, James "Jimmy" Fronabarger; and a great-grandchild, Saylor Willis.

She is survived by her husband of 56 years, Lois Carden; their beloved children, Stephanie Vincent and son-in-law, Jeff Vincent; Shannon Carden and daughter-in-law, Holly Carden; and three grandchildren; and three great-granddaughters. She also leaves behind three sisters, Kim Cobb (Alan), Sandy Rush, and Tracy Fronabarger.

Chase Funeral Home.

EMOGENE LYNN DELILLE 1949 – 2025

ATWOOD — Ms. Emogene Lynn Delille, 76, died at her residence on Thursday, December 18, 2025. The family has chosen cremation with services at a later date.

Ms. Delille was born in Chattanooga, Tenn., on January 17, 1949, to John W. and Stella M. Franklin Rice. She graduated from Western High School, Las Vegas, Nev., and attended the Tennessee School for the Deaf. She worked at a hospital in Wilcox, Ariz., as a dietitian.

She is survived by her daughter, JoAnna MacDowell of Sahuarita, Ariz.; her husband of 19 years, Jimmy Darrell Coe; two sisters, Norma Joyce Rice Nolte of Idaho and Sandra Rice Wangsness of Nevada; and one grandchild.

She is preceded in death by her parents; and sister, Lora Rice Gray Novak.

If you require additional assistance, please contact Brummitt-McKenzie Funeral Home at 731-352-4848 or visit our website at brummittmckenziefuneralhome.com.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

THE BREAKFAST CLUB AT HOMETOWN HEALTH

Everyone is invited to The Breakfast Club every Monday from 9-10:30 a.m. for coffee, snacks, mingling and a light activity. Take the chance to connect and socialize before getting interactive with games, light exercise and fun! Bring a friend and come make new ones at Hometown Health Clinic - Pediatrics/Specialty Entrance. We can't wait to see you there!

CARROLL HUMANE SOCIETY EVENTS, NEWS Casino Night

Get those new 2026 calendars out and mark Friday, January 9th for an exciting new event!

CCHS will host a Casino Night Fundraiser at the Civic Center in Huntingdon, 6-9 p.m. Tickets are available now and are limited. A single ticket is \$45 or \$80 per couple and includes dinner, dessert, dirty soda bar, appetizers, and start-up cash. Enjoy an evening of blackjack, roulette, poker, big 6 LED money wheel, auction and prizes. Call or email for more info.

Cat Vouchers

Cat spay/neuter vouchers

are always available for \$60. To purchase by phone for use at Paris Vet Clinic, call 731-514-0878 and leave a message. These are available to anyone regardless of residency. We now offer cat vouchers to Carroll County residents for \$60 at the Huntingdon Animal Clinic. These must be purchased in person at the shelter with cash or card, and proof of residency is required. However, Carroll Co. residents can still use Paris Vet Clinic if preferred.

Dog Vouchers

Dog spay/neuter vouchers are still available for \$60 and must be purchased in person at the shelter using cash or card. We have lots of neuters available so those are available regardless of residency. Spay vouchers are currently for Carroll Co. residents only. Must be purchased at the shelter during business hours Tuesday-Saturday 8 a.m.-12 p.m. Appointments will be made at the time of purchase. The participating vet clinic is Huntingdon Animal Clinic. We do recommend that you have your pet vaccinated due to exposure to other animals. Puppies must be a minimum of four months of age (older if small breed) at the time of surgery.

MCKENZIE TOPS MEETS WEEKLY

Win over weight with support and encouragement by meeting with the McKenzie Chapter of TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly) each Mon-

day at 3 p.m. in the McKenzie Church of Christ gymnasium. The first meeting is free. For more information, call 731-352-7309. If no answer, leave a message.

CARROLL COMMISSION MEETS MONTHLY

Carroll County Commission meets the second Monday of each month, 7 p.m., in the Conference Room of the Carroll County Office Complex, High Street, Huntingdon. No meetings in February and July.

ADULT EDUCATION CLASSES

Huntingdon Location — Adult Education Building, 14155 Paris Street. Office hours are Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Classes are offered for one-on-one instruction on Mondays, 1-4 p.m. and Thursdays, 9 a.m.-NOON. For more information, phone 731-364-5481.

CARROLL DEMOCRATIC PARTY MEETS

The Carroll County Democratic Party meets the third Thursday of every month at 6:30 p.m. at 12740 Lexington Street, Huntingdon.

CARROLL REPUBLICAN PARTY MEETS

Carroll County Republican Party meets monthly on the fourth Thursday of each

month, 7 p.m. in various locations in the county. Watch for notices of the monthly venue.

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AVATAR: FIRE AND ASH (PG-13)
Tues.-Fri. 3:20 (3D), 7:20
Sat.-Sun. 1:20 (3D), 7:20
SPONGEBOB: SEARCH FOR SQUAREPANTS (PG)
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(L to R) Emma Hurley, Olivia Willis and Isaiah Green. Submitted photos

West Carroll Spotlights Students of the Week

WEST CARROLL (December 18) — The West Carroll Special School District announced its final round of 2025 students of the week from its primary, elementary and junior/senior high schools. The three students — Emma Hurley, Olivia Willis and Isaiah Green — were

each nominated for their helpfulness and excellent academic performances.

Kindergarten student Emma Hurley is West Carroll Primary School's student of the week, nominated by Glinda Crossnoe.

"Emma consistently demonstrates curiosity and excitement daily," said Crossnoe. "Her outstanding academics and eager learning are an inspiration to her peers."

Sixth-grade student Olivia Willis is West Carroll Elementary School's student of the week, nominated by Shanna Pafford.

"Olivia is an outstanding student," said Pafford. "She is highly creative and uses those talents in class. She is kind and helpful to others and very respectful."

Eighth-grade student Isaiah Green is West Carroll Jr./Sr High School's student of the week, nominated by Michael Williams.

"She is a model student. She participates, helps out, asks questions and performs incredibly academically," said Williams.

The West Carroll Special School District also recognized West Carroll Jr./Sr. High School special education teacher Sonya Kay Eaton as teacher of the week.

West Carroll honors three students and one educator each week for their efforts in the classrooms.

Hannah Fowler Receives Ag Scholarship

MARTIN, Tenn. — Hannah Fowler, a University of Tennessee at Martin sophomore agribusiness major from Atwood, is one of seven students nationwide to receive the 2025 Southern Agriculture Industry Advancement Scholarship from AMVAC, an American Vanguard company that specializes in the development, manufacturing, and marketing of products for agricultural use.

Fowler, a graduate of West Carroll High School, has a concentration in farm and ranch management. She was the lone Tennessee recipient of the scholarship.

Each recipient received a \$2,000 scholarship to help them continue their educational and professional pursuits in the agriculture industry. These students' fields of interest vary widely across the industry, including agribusiness, crop science, plant breeding and weed science.

"Agriculture has always been a part of my life," Fowler told AMVAC. "Growing up on a row crop farm taught me where it all begins, and studying agribusiness lets me give back and make an impact. I'm so grateful to be chosen for this



Hannah Fowler, a sophomore agribusiness major from Atwood, was one of seven students nationwide to receive the 2025 Southern Agriculture Industry Advancement Scholarship from AMVAC.

seniors or students enrolled in an agriculture program at an accredited college or university. For more information about agriculture studies at UT Martin, visit www.utm.edu/caas or call the College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences at 731-881-7250.

McKenzie Chamber of Commerce Reflects on 2025 Activities

As we reflect on 2025, the McKenzie Chamber of Commerce is proud of the work accomplished alongside our members, partners, volunteers, and community leaders. This past year was marked by strong engagement, meaningful collaboration, and a continued commitment to supporting local businesses and strengthening our community.

One of the Chamber's most visible events was the Annual Easter Egg Drop, held on April 12 at McKenzie City Park. This event remains our largest chamber event and is intentionally offered free to families, with the only cost for participants being optional food purchases from vendors. This year, 50,000 eggs were distributed, including a helicopter drop, and toys were placed throughout the field. Families also enjoyed balloon activities by MelRhea Balloons, face painting and crafts provided by Bethel University students, and attractions such as a petting zoo and bouncy houses. Thousands of children and families attended from McKenzie and the surrounding West Tennessee communities.

Supporting education remained a priority in 2025. During Teacher Appreciation Week, the Chamber partnered with the McKenzie Industrial Development Board to recognize all teachers and staff of the McKenzie Special School District. The Chamber provided lunch for 172 teachers and staff, donated gifts for the Teacher Banquet, hosted a teacher appreciation giveaway, and displayed appreciation banners at the schools to thank them for their dedication.

The Chamber remained focused on business growth and visibility through multiple ribbon cuttings and re-grand openings, celebrating milestones for Delia's Sewing, Premier Furniture, West Tennessee Brewing Company - McKenzie Tap Room, Five-Star Detailing, The Happy Book Stack, Petals Azola, McKenzie City Florist and More, The Silly Goose Children's Shop, and Manpower. We also welcomed several new members: Central Refrigeration, JC Educational & Office Supplies, Hospital Wing, Tosh Farms, D&D Wrecker Service, McKenzie Tap Room, Campbell Well Drilling, Manpower, CASA, Top Nail & Spa, Cedar Street Studios, The Happy Book Stack, Henry County Medical Center and Topflight CrossFit.

Throughout 2025, the Chamber hosted regular Chamber Coffees, providing consistent opportunities for members to connect, build relationships, and stay informed. These networking and conversation mornings were hosted by a variety of local businesses and organizations, including The City of McKenzie, FunZone Laser Tag, Lewis, Aird & Associates, Beating Hearts, Bobby Gee's Diner, Dynamix, and L.I. Smith & Associates.

Chamber Coffees remains one of the most valuable membership benefits, offering an informal setting for business owners, employees, and community leaders to share updates, learn about new opportunities, and strengthen professional connections across industries.

Our partnership with Bethel University continued to grow. Chamber board members prepared and distributed 350 welcome bags with food staples and essentials, staffed move-in days to greet students and families, and shared information highlighting local businesses. These efforts helped introduce new students and their families to McKenzie and encouraged them to support our local economy.

Workforce development remained a primary focus through Manufacturing Month, a joint effort with the McKenzie Industrial Development Board. Activities included plant tours and a TCAT facility tour. TCAT students' private industry tours for more one-on-one time with industry leaders and lunch. A Manufacturing Breakfast with approximately 60 attendees, including Industry Leaders and community stakeholders.

During Manufacturing Week, the Chamber and IDB provided boxed lunches to 420 manufacturing employees, catered locally by Hometown Hangout. Chamber Board Members assisted with packing and personally delivering lunches to each industry as a hands-on show of appreciation.

The Chamber also invested in business education, offering workshops on practical topics such as Canva design, social media marketing, and Reels training. These workshops were free to Chamber members and provided to the community at a minimal cost. In addition, the Chamber partnered with the Tennessee Chamber of Commerce and the University

of Tennessee Center for Industrial Services to host A.I. for Manufacturing at Bethel University, bringing participants from across the state to McKenzie.

Tourism and promotion efforts included advertising in the Northwest Tennessee Tourism Guide and partnering with the City of McKenzie on an advertising in the Tennessee Vacation Guide. The Chamber also served as the breakfast sponsor for the Northwest Tennessee Tourism Legislative Breakfast, supporting continued investment in rural tourism.

Community outreach expanded through the Chamber's participation in Boo Bash, where volunteers distributed thousands of pieces of candy to local children. The remaining candy was donated to Lakeside Senior Living, enabling residents to participate in Halloween activities.

Throughout the year, the Chamber continued to encourage residents, students, and visitors to Shop Local, including Shop Local Bingo with nearly 500 cards distributed and extensive social media and local newspaper advertising.

The year's work was celebrated at the 2025 Chamber Banquet, held in June at Bethel University with approximately 175 guests in attendance. The evening recognized Businessperson of the Year, Business of the Year, Nonprofit of the Year, and Chamber Champion, and honored all outgoing Chamber Board members for their service and leadership.

The Chamber's year ended on a high note with the Annual Christmas Open House at The Happy Book Stack. We hosted 75 guests for lunch; door prizes were awarded, and every guest left with a gift.

None of this work would be possible without the support of our members, sponsors, and Board. Their investment of time, resources, and energy allows the Chamber to continue serving as a connector, advocate, and champion for McKenzie.

Monica Heath
Monica Heath TCeCD
Executive Director
McKenzie Industrial Development Board
McKenzie Chamber of Commerce & Industry
The RailYard Workspace

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EXPIRES JANUARY 15, 2026

THE BANNER

McKenzie, Tennessee

Online Promo Code: NEWYRS

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2. Click Subscribe.

3. Choose Local Print Delivery One Year or Online Only One Year.

4. Enter promo code

5. Check out.

Don't miss this limited time offer of \$5 off a one year membership to The McKenzie Banner. Good for local print delivery (Carroll, Henry or Weakley counties) or online anywhere in the world!

YES! I'd like to GIVE/GET one year of the McKenzie Banner and I am enclosing payment in the amount indicated below with this form.

☐ \$34 Print AND Online (Local Area*)
(reg. \$39) Includes print delivery and full online access to www.mckenziebanner.com. * Local area includes Carroll, Henry and Weakley counties in Tenn.

OR

☐ \$20 Online Only (Anywhere)
(reg. \$25) Includes full online access to www.mckenziebanner.com. * Offer valid anywhere in the world.

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Send Renewal Notices To:

☐ Me OR ☐ Gift Recipient

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OFFER EXPIRES JANUARY 15, 2026

Mail/Return To: The Banner, 3 Banner Row, McKenzie, TN 38201 • 731-352-3323

Limited time offer. **Print delivery special** valid only in the **LOCAL** tri-county area of Carroll, Henry and Weakley counties in Tennessee. **Online only special** valid **ANYWHERE** in the world. Good for new or renew. Regular price is \$39 for local print and online delivery and \$25 for 1 year online only. Offer entitles reader to 12 months membership to the newspaper. Payment is required to begin offer. Cannot be combined with any other offer.

Gas Prices Decline During Week

TENNESSEE (December 29) — Average gasoline prices in Tennessee fell 3.7 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$2.38/g today, according to GasBuddy’s survey of 3,821 stations in Tennessee. Prices in Tennessee are 20.8 cents per gallon lower than a month ago and stand 25.6 cents per gallon lower than a year ago. The national average price of diesel has decreased 5.4 cents compared to a week ago and stands at \$3.521 per gallon.

According to GasBuddy price reports, the cheapest station in Tennessee was priced at \$2.01/g yesterday while the most expensive was \$3.49/g, a difference of \$1.48/g. The lowest price in the state yesterday was \$2.01/g while the highest was \$3.49/g, a difference of \$1.48/g.

The national average price of gasoline has fallen 4.0 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$2.75/g today. The national average is down 22.6 cents per gallon from a month ago and stands 22.4 cents per gallon lower than a year ago, according to GasBuddy data compiled from more than 11 million weekly price reports covering over 150,000 gas stations across the country.

Historical gasoline prices in Tennessee and the national average going back five years:

December 29, 2024: \$2.64/g (U.S. Average: \$2.98/g)

December 29, 2023: \$2.74/g (U.S. Average: \$3.11/g)

December 29, 2022: \$2.81/g (U.S. Average: \$3.13/g)

December 29, 2021: \$2.97/g (U.S. Average: \$3.28/g)

December 29, 2020: \$2.00/g (U.S. Average: \$2.26/g)

“For the fifth straight week, the national average price of gasoline has declined, with all but a handful of states seeing prices move lower,” said Patrick De Haan, head of petroleum analysis at GasBuddy. “Oil prices have remained relatively low even amid the U.S. blockade on Venezuela’s oil exports. With refineries running at seasonally high output and gasoline inventories building, most states— outside of price-cycling markets— have continued to see declines, with some stations in nearly a dozen states now dipping below the \$2-per-gallon mark. That trend could persist a bit longer before prices finally bottom out sometime in January or February.”

GasBuddy*, a PDI Technologies company, is North America’s trusted fuel savings platform, helping consumers fuel up for less for over 25 years. With over 100 million app downloads, GasBuddy delivers real-time prices at 150,000+ stations and tangible savings through Pay with GasBuddy+. It is the most authoritative source of station-level fuel pricing data, updating averages 288 times daily from the broadest mix of inputs— spotter reports, direct station integrations, and transactional data.

SOURCE GasBuddy



Barnhart Earns Medals At Bodybuilding Contest

CHATTANOOGA (November 8) — Chad Barnhart, a Huntingdon councilman and rescue squad member, earned a pair of medals at the recent NPC Night of Champions at the Chattanooga Convention Center. Barnhart competed in the Men’s Physique division against 16 contestants and earned third place in the True Novice Class and fourth place in the Hero Class, which includes military members and first responders. It was Barnhart’s first competitive bodybuilding event. *Photo courtesy Chad Barnhart*

McKenzie Police Reports

Trespassing — Jamie Garrison, Highway 70, Cedar Grove, was charged with Trespassing after he drove his car into the driveway of a residence where he is banned.

Officer Jackson Henderson filed the report stating that Garrison pulled into the driveway of a female McKenzie resident on Christmas day. He never exited his vehicle, however, he did not have consent of the property owner. He had previously been banned from the property.

NOTICE

Cause No. 2025 AA 219
In the Chancery Court for Carroll County, Tennessee
At Huntingdon

Adoption of Gary Wayne Searatt, DOB: July 30, 2022

By: Shawn Patrick Blassingame and Regina Blassingame, Petitioners,

VS.

Chloe Marie Scales and Lucas Searatt, Respondent.

In this cause, it appearing from the Order of Publication, that the Respondent, Lucas Searatt’s, residence is unknown and cannot be ascertained upon diligent inquiry, it was ordered that publication be made for four successive weeks, in the McKenzie Banner, to notify Respondent, Lucas Searatt, to file an answer with this court and send a copy to Petitioners’ attorney, Laura A. Keeton, whose address is P.O. Box 647, Huntingdon, TN 38344, within 30 days from the last date of publication, exclusive of the last date of publication, or a judgment by default may be entered against Respondent. Failure to appear may result in the termination of Respondent’s parental rights to the above-named child. The cause is set for hearing before this Court on March 5, 2026 at 9:00 a.m., to provide said Respondent with an opportunity to appear and defend.

This 12th day of December, 2025.

Kenneth Todd, Clerk and Master

A8515/R26861/51-4

NOTICE OF INTENT TO SELL TRACTS OF LAND BOUGHT BY CARROLL COUNTY AT DELINQUENT TAX SALES

In accordance with T.C.A. 67-5-2507 (b) (1), the County Mayor has received an offer for the total amount of taxes, penalty, interest and cost of the following parcel of land bought by Carroll County at Delinquent Tax Sales. The deed on this parcel shall not be executed and will not become final until (10) days after the publication in a newspaper in the county of the proposed sale. If anyone, during the (10) days. Shall increase the offer made for the land by ten percent (10%) or more, the party making the first offer shall be notified and a day fixed when both parties shall appear and make offers. To increase the offer by 10 percent (10%) or more contact the Carroll County Mayor’s office, 625 High Street, Suite 101, Huntingdon, Tennessee 38344. If the original offer is raised by 10 percent (10%) or more the two parties shall appear on a day fixed and the tract of land shall be sold to the party making the highest and best offer. Conveyances of land shall be made without warranties of any sort and deeds shall be executed by the County Mayor of Carroll and County and the County Trustee, who shall collect the purchase price at the time of the execution of deed.

Map/Parcel Map No.: 012N/E Parcel No.: 003.00; Deed Book 385 Page: 435

Bid \$585.18 by Russell Powell, 89 Park Lane, McKenzie, TN 38201.

A13/51-2

IN THE CHANCERY COURT OF CARROLL COUNTY, TENNESSEE NOTICE TO CREDITORS

PROBATE CASE NO: 2025PE234

ESTATE OF: JOYCE M. HICKS, LATE OF CARROLL COUNTY, TENNESSEE

Notice is hereby given that on the 9TH day of DECEMBER, 2025 Letters Testamentary, of Administration, in respect to the Estate of JOYCE M. HICKS deceased, who died OCTOBER 17TH, 2025, were issued to the undersigned by the Chancery Court Clerk & Master of Carroll County, Tennessee. All persons, resident and non-resident, having claims, matured or unmatured, against the Estate are required by law to file the same with the Clerk of the above named Court on or before the earlier of the dates prescribed in (1) or (2) otherwise their claims will be forever barred:

- (1) (A) Four (4) months from the date of the first publication (or posting, as the case may be) of this notice if the creditor received an actual copy of this Notice to Creditors at least sixty (60) days before date that is four (4) months from the date of the first publication (or posting); or
- (B) Sixty (60) days from the date the creditor received an actual copy of the Notice to Creditors, if the creditor received a copy of the Notice less than sixty (60) days prior to the date that is four (4) months from the date of the first publication (or posting) as described in (1) (A); or
- (2) Twelve (12) months from the decedent’s date of death. All persons indebted to the above Estate must come forward and make proper settlement with the undersigned at once.

This 9TH day of DECEMBER, 2025.
THIS NOTICE WILL RUN TWO CONSECUTIVE WEEKS.

FILE CLAIMS IN TRIPLICATE WITH:
KENNETH TODD - CLERK & MASTER
99 Court Square, Suite 105, Huntingdon, TN 38344

BEVERLY ANNETTE HILL, Executor/Administrator
W. COLLINS BONDS, Attorney
KENNETH TODD, Clerk & Master

A561/R26869/51-2

IN THE CHANCERY COURT OF CARROLL COUNTY, TENNESSEE NOTICE TO CREDITORS

PROBATE CASE NO: 2025PA233

ESTATE OF: JAMES EDGAR CROCKETT, LATE OF CARROLL COUNTY, TENNESSEE

Notice is hereby given that on the 5TH day of DECEMBER, 2025 Letters Testamentary, of Administration, in respect to the Estate of JAMES EDGAR CROCKETT deceased, who died AUGUST 7TH, 2025, were issued to the undersigned by the Chancery Court Clerk & Master of Carroll County, Tennessee. All persons, resident and non-resident, having claims, matured or unmatured, against the Estate are required by law to file the same with the Clerk of the above named Court on or before the earlier of the dates prescribed in (1) or (2) otherwise their claims will be forever barred:

- (1) (A) Four (4) months from the date of the first publication (or posting, as the case may be) of this notice if the creditor received an actual copy of this Notice to Creditors at least sixty (60) days before date that is four (4) months from the date of the first publication (or posting); or
- (B) Sixty (60) days from the date the creditor received an actual copy of the Notice to Creditors, if the creditor received a copy of the Notice less than sixty (60) days prior to the date that is four (4) months from the date of the first publication (or posting) as described in (1) (A); or
- (2) Twelve (12) months from the decedent’s date of death. All persons indebted to the above Estate must come forward and make proper settlement with the undersigned at once.

This 5TH day of DECEMBER, 2025.
THIS NOTICE WILL RUN TWO CONSECUTIVE WEEKS.

FILE CLAIMS IN TRIPLICATE WITH:
KENNETH TODD - CLERK & MASTER
99 Court Square, Suite 105, Huntingdon, TN 38344

DIANA CROCKETT WALKER, Executor/Administrator
JOHN D. STEVENS, Attorney
KENNETH TODD, Clerk & Master

A561/R26870/51-2

PUBLICATION NOTICE

TO: **BRANDON VESTAL**

PENDING IN THE CHANCERY COURT OF OBION COUNTY, TENNESSEE

IN RE: **MAREENA WREN VESTAL**, dob July 17, 2023
A Minor Child Under the Age of Eighteen (18) Years

KEVIN HARRIS STEELE and wife **AMBER LEANN STEELE**,
Petitioners,

And **DOCKET NO. 36,285**

RONDA DOTTS
Co-Petitioner,

Vs.
BRANDON VESTAL,
Respondent.

In this cause, it appearing from the Petitioners’ pleading, which is sworn to, that the residence of Respondent, Brandon Vestal, is unknown and cannot be ascertained upon diligent inquiry or he is a nonresident of Tennessee.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED THAT publication be made for four (4) consecutive weeks as required by law in the McKenzie Banner, a newspaper of general circulation published in Carroll County, Tennessee, notifying Respondent, Brandon Vestal, to serve upon Petitioner’s attorney, Steven L. West, WEST & WEST ATTORNEYS, 19765 E. Main Street, Huntingdon, Tennessee 38344, and the Clerk of this Court, an Answer to the Petition for Adoption and Termination of Parental Rights filed against him in this action within thirty (30) days from the date of last publication which will be January 7, 2026, or a judgment by default will be entered on February 17, 2026, and the action set for hearing ex parte as to him.

Dated this the 4th day of December, 2025,

Emily Hall, Clerk and Master, Obion County Chancery Court
Steven L. West, WEST & WEST ATTORNEYS
19765 E. Main Street, Huntingdon, TN 38344 (731) 986-5551

A8515/50-4

NEED STAMPS? WE GOT ‘EM! Call **731.352.3323**

NOTICE OF SUBSTITUTE TRUSTEE’S SALE OF REAL ESTATE

WHEREAS, on September 15, 2020, ASHLEE M. YOUNG, by a Deed of Trust of record in Trust Deed Book 694, at Page 1143, in the Register’s Office of Carroll County, Tennessee, conveyed the following described property in trust to secure the payment of a Promissory Note in the original principal amount of Three Hundred Forty-Six Thousand Seven Hundred Fifty and 00/100 Dollars (\$346,750.00), payable to CHRISTOPHER C. LUTZ AND MARY BESS TOOMBS; and

WHEREAS, the undersigned was appointed Substitute Trustee by CHRISTOPHER C. LUTZ AND MARY BESS TOOMBS, the legal owners and holders of the said Note, by appointment executed on November 12, 2025 and November 20, 2025, respectively, and recorded in Trust Deed Book 761, at Page 733 and Trust Deed Book 761, at Page 735, respectively, in the Register’s Office of Carroll County, Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, default has been made in the payment of said indebtedness and other provisions of the Deed of Trust have been violated, and CHRISTOPHER C. LUTZ AND MARY BESS TOOMBS, the lawful owners and holders of the said indebtedness, have declared the entire amount due and payable as provided by the Deed of Trust in accordance with the terms thereof, and instructed the undersigned to foreclose.

NOW, THEREFORE, the public is hereby notified that the undersigned Substitute Trustee will sell the hereinafter described real estate at public auction, to the highest and best bidder, for cash in hand paid in certified funds paid at the conclusion of the sale, or upon a credit bid from a bank or other lending entity pre-approved by the Substitute Trustee. The auction shall occur at the East door of the Courthouse at Huntingdon, Carroll County, Tennessee, on Tuesday, January 20, 2026, at 10:30 a.m., said property to be sold in bar of the equity of redemption and subject to the lien of all special assessments against it.

Lying, and being situate in the 11th Civil District of Carroll County, Tennessee, bounded and described as follows: to-wit:

BEGINNING at a set iron pin in the south right-of-way of Maerebell Road (30.00 feet from centerline), said point being 313.00 feet as measured along said right-of-way from the intersection of said right-of-way with the west right-of-way of McAdoo Road (24.00 feet wide); Thence South 3 deg. 05’ 00” W along the west line of an 8.359 acre tract in the Industrial Park property division, 842.00 feet to a set iron pin; Thence N 87 deg. 03’ 00” W along a new division line, 258.70 feet, set iron pin as corner; Thence N 3 deg. 05’ 00” E continuing along a new division line, 842.00 feet to a set iron pin in the south right-of-way of Maerebell Road; Thence S 87 deg. 03’ 00” E along said right-of-way, 258.70 feet to the point of beginning and containing 5.00 acres.

There is an overhead power line across the north end of said property. Said property is vacant. Bearings refer to record bearing (S 87 deg. 03’ 00” E). As surveyed by Aaron F. Edwards, Tennessee Licensed Surveyor, License No. 366, on the 1st day of April, 1990.

THERE IS INCLUDED, BUT TO BE EXCLUDED THEREFROM, a 0.084 acre tract of land conveyed to the County of Carroll as recorded in Deed Book 243, Page 435, Register’s Office of Carroll County, Tennessee.

THERE IS INCLUDED, BUT TO BE EXCLUDED THEREFROM, a 0.060 acre tract of land conveyed to the Town of Huntingdon, Huntingdon, Tennessee as recorded in Deed Book 245, page 696, Register’ Office of Carroll County, Tennessee.

The above description is the same as in the previous deed of record.

It being the same property as that described in a Warranty Deed from Christopher C. Lutz and Mary Bess Toombs, to Ashlee M. Young, dated September 15, 2020, and of record in Warranty Deed Book 394, page 860, Register’s Office of Carroll County, Tennessee.

Map 061, Parcel 012.01

The street address of the above-described property is believed to be Industrial Access Rd., Huntingdon, Tennessee, but such address is not part of the legal description of the property sold herein and in the event of any discrepancy, the legal description herein shall control.

SALE IS SUBJECT TO TENANT(S) RIGHTS IN POSSESSION, IF ANY.

This sale is subject to all matters shown on any applicable recorded plat; any unpaid taxes; any restrictive covenants, easements, or setback lines that may be applicable; any statutory rights of redemption of any governmental agency, state or federal; any prior liens or encumbrances as well as any priority created by a fixture filing; and to any matter that an accurate survey of the premises might disclose. Other interested parties: Department of the Treasury – Internal Revenue Service.

This property is subject to Federal Tax Lien of record in Lien Book 23, at Page 314, in the Register’s Office of Carroll County, Tennessee. Notice of said sale required by 26 U.S.C. § 7425(b) to be given to the Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service has been timely given, and said sale will be subject to the right of the Secretary of the Department of Treasury Internal Revenue Service to redeem such property as provided by 26 U.S.C. § 7425(d)(1).

Title to said property is believed to be good, but the undersigned will sell as Substitute Trustee only and will assign to the purchaser all covenants of warranty contained in said Deed of Trust.

The sale held pursuant to this Notice may be rescinded at the Successor Trustee’s option at any time. Said sale may be adjourned to another time or may be postponed to another date by public announcement at the appointed time of sale without readvertisement.

This office is a debt collector. This is an attempt to collect a debt and any information obtained will be used for that purpose.

This Notice of Sale has been posted by ForeclosureTennessee.com and can be viewed online at ForeclosureTennessee.com.

WITNESS my signature, this the 30th day of December, 2025.

KIZER, BONDS, HUGHES & BOWEN, LLC

BY: STEPHEN L. HUGHES, Substitute Trustee
P. O. Box 320, Milan, TN 38358 (731) 238-3199

A1767/52-3

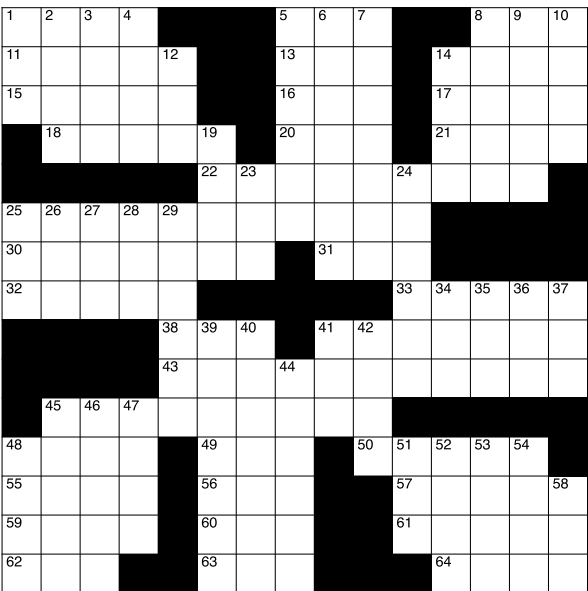
Color A Masterpiece



Weekly Crossword

CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Paddles
- 5. Sunscreen rating
- 8. Very fast airplane
- 11. Immune responses
- 13. "Partner" to feather
- 14. New England river
- 15. Longest river in New Guinea
- 16. Midway between east and southeast
- 17. Israeli politician
- 18. Back bones
- 20. Consumed
- 21. One you can rely on
- 22. Dressed up gaudily
- 25. Representatives
- 30. Dog breed
- 31. Pitching statistic
- 32. Manpower
- 33. S. Korean entertainer
- 38. Outsourcing firm
- 41. Viceroy of Egypt under Turkish rule
- 43. One who removes antlers from a flower
- 45. Potluck dish
- 48. Discount
- 49. Airborne (abbr.)
- 50. Cavalry sword
- 55. Basics
- 56. Hollywood director Howard
- 57. Afflicted in mind or body
- 59. Horsley and Majors are two
- 60. Midway between northeast and east
- 61. Spiritual leader of a Jewish congregation
- 62. Malaysian isthmus



- 63. Fall back
- 64. Cheek

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Former CIA
- 2. Baseball's best pitchers
- 3. ___ Nui, Easter Island
- 4. Invests in little enterprises
- 5. Constant
- 6. Hobby
- 7. A place to store food
- 8. Short-tail marten
- 9. Burn with a hot liquid
- 10. Left his heart in San Francisco
- 12. Swedish krona
- 14. Legendary actor Connery
- 19. French cleric
- 23. Former measure of length for textiles
- 24. Opaque glassy substance
- 25. Residue of burned item
- 26. A place to unwind
- 27. Japanese honorific
- 28. Terminus
- 29. Fails to make a shot
- 34. Journalist Tarbell
- 35. College hoops tournament
- 36. Monetary unit of Macao
- 37. Of she
- 39. Spoke ill of
- 40. Elements
- 41. Kilocalorie (abbr.)
- 42. Shades
- 44. Poem of fourteen lines
- 45. Pole used in Scottish sport
- 46. Hollyhocks genus
- 47. Street name for marijuana
- 48. Polio vaccine developer
- 51. Swiss river
- 52. Prejudice
- 53. Actor Idris
- 54. Confederate soldiers
- 58. Criticize

Week 52

See solution in next week's edition.

Shopping Word Search

A L B G H V N S R A L M H Q L S T S C C
U T E Q G D U B E N C L C P E T F N F O
A Q E Q A H P O H D S A L E I F B V P U
D A C T D P N E D P S N B E Q M L E L P
I O B S O E C R P O E U C D E H D C N O
K N G H B K E V C E P E T R F A T N O N
B L S R O I C U F I R B C C N C N A K Y
D I F U H G G E Y N S H R D O S V R R B
L N T S S C Q R T V A M Q H V V K A E C
M E A A E O O A K N P U R C H A S E T A
T C Y C A T L K D H Q Q N E I K U L A R
M Y I S A N L O I G V A U T O E B E C I T
G R D E A V S D N P A O Q N N L A O L V
P H V M G E P Q L T V A G V U V S G O U
F N M E G T N O R F E R O T S O Q I U V
I Y R E V I L E D R N I V K G T C L A D
S H Q M Q L U I P O B D B I I P C S L P
B B Q L G V S I B O U T I Q U E M F I P
O U S S I I I E D O C R A B C R P O V D
G D D N U F E R Q E N Y N A E V S A B Q

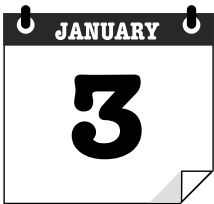
Aisle
Bag
Barcode
Boutique
Budget
Cart

Cashier
Checkout
Clearance
Coupon
Delivery
Discount

Inventory
Mall
Merchandise
Online
Price
Purchase

Receipt
Refund
Retail
Sale
Shopper
Storefront

THIS DAY IN HISTORY



1870: Construction begins on the Brooklyn Bridge in New York.

1911: A magnitude 7.7 earthquake destroys the city of Almaty in Russian Turkestan.

1956: A fire damages the top portion of the Eiffel Tower.

SUDOKU

WEEK 52

3	5		1		9	2	6	
					5			8
1	9			8		5		3
			2			6		
2	1	5			4			
6		3	5			8		1
4		2			8		9	
	6	1				4		
	8							2

Level: Beginner

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

See solution in next week's edition.



Solve the code to discover words related to shopping. Each number corresponds to a letter. (Hint: 25 = A)

A. 7 21 25 16 10 25 12 7 8 9 16
Clue: Buying or selling something

B. 12 25 10 22 8 24 21
Clue: Store employee

C. 12 9 11 19 9 16
Clue: Form of discount

D. 19 11 21 12 22 25 10 24
Clue: Buying something

Answers: A. transaction B. cashier C. coupon D. purchase

LETTER MIX-UP

How many words can you make by rearranging the letters in the phrase below? Use each letter only once.

MERCHANDISE

- 1. _____ 11. _____
- 2. _____ 12. _____
- 3. _____ 13. _____
- 4. _____ 14. _____
- 5. _____ 15. _____
- 6. _____ 16. _____
- 7. _____ 17. _____
- 8. _____ 18. _____
- 9. _____ 19. _____
- 10. _____ 20. _____

Riddle Me This

What did the triangle say to the circle?

Answer: You're pointless.

WORD SCRAMBLE

Rearrange the letters to spell something pertaining to this week's theme.

TSOER

Answer: Store

GUESS WHO?

I am an actress born in Barbados on December 31, 2008. I discovered my passion for acting as a young girl, and I attended the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts. My first professional role was in the short film, "Red." Now I'm one of the "outcasts" on a Netflix series about a girl from an unconventional family.

Answer: Evie Templeton

Peace of Mind.

One of the many services we provide.



PUZZLE SOLUTION

Week 51 Crossword Puzzle Solution

U	L	A	N		C	O	C	O	S		U	M	B	O
N	A	R	A		W	R	A	P	S		L	O	O	P
A	R	A	M		M	A	N	E	T		N	A	N	A
U	D	D	E	R		T	O	R			C	A	B	A
					S	E	R	E	N	A	D	E	S	
M	A	S			D	A	D			T	A	O		C
U	N	I	T	E	D		S	I	B		B	O	G	Y
L	I	R	A	S			M	A	C		S	O	L	A
C	L	U	B			C	E	E			C	A	B	A
T	S	P			C	U	D			P	U	G		S
					S	I	L	I	C	A	T	E	S	
U	S	N	E	A			C	O	L		S	A	B	E
G	H	E	G			C	A	R	A	T		B	A	R
L	E	N	O			I	R	A	T	E		I	B	I
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Reynolds Sisters Bring Championship Culture to Bethel Lady Wildcats

BY BRAD SAM
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Kylie and Mikaela Reynolds are McKenzie High School alumni and basketball standouts who helped lead the Lady Rebels to back-to-back state championships in 2022 and 2023. The sisters are still representing their hometown on the court as members of the Bethel University Lady Wildcats, who recently rose to number one in the NAIA rankings.

Kylie, a junior, and Mikaela, a sophomore, spoke to The Banner about their journey together on the hardwood.

They began playing basketball in elementary school in the local Upward league and by early middle school were playing both travel ball and AAU basketball.

They then joined the McKenzie Middle School team as they each reached sixth grade and played under Coach Jennifer Nelson, the wife of their future college coach Chris Nelson.

Kylie said of Coach Jennifer, "Even as young as we were, she was still hard on us. She still pushed us to be the best that we could be. She was always a second mom, basically. There for everybody, there to talk to."

Mikaela added, "She was definitely hard on us, that's for sure, but I guess that made us into the players we are. She was prepping us for Coach Nelson, you know. She could see the future, I guess."

Those were successful teams at MMS, foreshadowing what was to come at the next level.

Kylie's freshman year and then Mikaela's the next year were both transitional years for McKenzie High School girls basketball, the latter being Coach John Wilkins' first to helm the Lady Rebels. The team made strides that year, reaching the region semifinals.

The next two years cemented the Lady Rebels' and the Reynolds' legacy with a pair of state championships.

Kylie pointed to her senior season (2022-23) as the highlight of her time at MHS. "I'd say my senior year, just that whole year was a really good year for me. We had Savannah [Davis] go down and she was out for half of the season, but I felt like that was the time for me to step up and become the player that I am now. I got so much more confident. I was able to do a lot more scoring. I was a Miss Basketball finalist and then we won a state championship. It was just a year that I'm really grateful for. It really turned me into the player that I am."

Mikaela had a similar response. "I loved high school. My best experience probably was my junior year. When Savannah went down, me and Kylie really had to step up. I remember we were in Stewart County and we were playing this team out of Clarksville. They were really tough. I think they had been beating us the whole game. We were down at halftime, and I remember I had had this terrible first half. I couldn't do anything. And then in the second half, we just started getting buckets, me and Kylie. I think we both had 28 points. And I had 15 rebounds. It was great, just from having to step up and being able to do that and provide for my team."

The next year was one of the few years that the sisters have not been on the same roster as Kylie graduated and moved on to Bethel.

Asked if it was a different experience without each other, Kylie responded first, "For me it was, because I'm the type that, I need somebody that I'm close with, because I'm a very quiet, shy person. Mikaela just made me that outgoing person, even more confident in myself."

Mikaela said, "For me it wasn't, because I still had



Left, Kylie (left) and Mikaela Reynolds helped Bethel reach the semifinals of the NAIA national tournament last year and have begun this season undefeated to reach the ranking of number one. Above, Kylie (left) and Mikaela Reynolds hold the gold ball after winning their first of two state championships with the McKenzie Lady Rebels in 2022.

Savannah, and I grew up playing with her just as much as I did with Kylie. So it wasn't that big of a difference, I just had to step up my game a little bit."

Unfortunately, Mikaela's senior season would end early as she tore her ACL in the region semifinals, and the Lady Rebels' season would also end with that game.

Kylie added her experience as a Bethel freshman. "It was a very tough year for me, new coaching, new team, new level of basketball. Me and Coach Nelson had our tough times. We talk about it to this day, how much I've grown as a player. That season was not a good season. Tough conference, our point guard tore her ACL."

The next year, the pair reunited at Bethel. Kylie was becoming a bigger presence on the team, and Mikaela was battling hard to recover from her injury and subsequent surgery.

"It was my first major injury, first surgery, first time sitting out. It was very hard, physically and mentally, to come back from that, because it's your senior year, everything was going great, we were going to go to state hopefully, and then I was out. That hit me hard. Going into my first year of college, you don't want to miss out on that. That was really hard, knowing that I'm a step behind everybody, it was really tough."

The Lady Wildcats would have a breakout season, winning their conference championship, earning a number-one seed in the NAIA tournament and reaching the semifinals.

Kylie said, "I definitely felt this possibility, because the freshman class that we had coming with Micah [Hart], Mikee [Buchanan], Hal-lie [Turner], Mikaela, they were all really good. They all helped us get to where we are now. They came in really strong. They didn't play like freshmen, especially Micah. They all played like upperclassmen, they knew what they were doing. And then we also had our point guard back, Kalynn Howard. So her coming back helped us a lot. She was a really good floor general. And then we also had Madison Hart. She's just a really good player, and a really good leader on the court."

Mikaela said, "For me, I was happy to be there. Obviously I didn't play, I wasn't ready, but just watching them, it was great, they deserved it. They worked hard. We worked hard in practice. It was good to see, good to experience."

Kylie added, "It felt amazing. We would come in and practice, like after our Georgetown game here, we were like 'We gotta work on our defense.' And then once we did, we won games, we won our conference championship, we made it to the final four, and it felt good to do it with that group of people. I love that team."

The team's meteoric rise carried over to this season as they've begun the year 14-0 and went into the holiday break as the number one team in the nation.

Kylie reacted to reaching the top of the polls: "It's unreal kind of, because it's never happened before. We've all put in a lot of work. Mikaela put in a lot of work coming back from her ACL injury."

Mikaela said, "It's great. Not many people can say that they've done that before, and coming from a background at McKenzie of state championships, being the top dog, it's just a great feeling to have. Kinda unbelievable, but I trust our team and I know that we all want it really bad, so I'm very excited just to see how it goes. I know we have a target on our back but I think we're the team that can handle that... If you look at the players on this team, you'll see numerous high school state championships, Miss Basketball finalists, Miss Basketball."

Kylie points to a game last year as her personal high points in college. "Last year, my sophomore year, we were in the elite eight. It was a really close game against an undefeated Southern Oregon team, and me and Kal came out at halftime and just started hitting threes. I was having a struggle with my three-point shot at that time, and then just coming out and being able to hit those... Seeing how excited the team got, how excited I got on the court. I don't think I've ever shown that much emotion on the court, but I did that game. It was just a really exciting game, and it felt good to win and make it to the final four."

Mikaela said, "In college, honestly, my best experience has been this preseason. My freshman year, I didn't really get to play. My knee was still struggling, coming back from that. This year, I have gotten more to where I want to be physically. It's just been great feeling like I'm getting back to myself. I'm not 100 percent where I need to be, but I do feel that I have grown so much, just since my injury. And it's felt good to have that spark back in basketball. I wasn't feeling it at first, but I was sticking through it, and now it's all coming back together piece by piece."

Mikaela also commented on the culture of Bethel basketball. "The people are great," she said. "I know some teams struggle with grades, and they have to do things to build friendships with each other. But our team had just clicked from the jump. Everyone gets along, it's so fun. The coaches are great. No problems at all, it's so fun. We all hang out outside of basketball. Everyone gets along so well. It's a blessing to have because I know a bunch of teams don't get to experience that. And there's always some kind of drama, but with us, it's pretty clear."

Kylie noted the amount of local talent on the team. "It's very unique, it's very neat to see. Growing up, I never knew any of the girls. But so many people from around here are going to Bethel now, and for the younger kids it's great to see. They probably know our faces, have seen us before. So that's fun to see."

She also shared her appreciation for playing in front of the home crowds. "It feels really good. It shows how much they support us. Being close, and our old teachers coming to our games and talking to us after games. It just shows that they really care for us."

Mikaela added, "It's special. It's great to have a great community. It feels like high school all over again."

The pair also shared their appreciation for Coach Chris.

Mikaela said, "He's a great coach. Growing up, in middle school, being Jen's player, we always went to their camps. And I was like 'I'm never going to play this dude.' I didn't want to play for him, and then here we are. But, I mean, it's great. He's hard on us when he needs to be. He's a great coach. He knows what he's talking about."

Kylie said, "He's always pushing us. My freshman year, we didn't have the best year. He wanted me to do something and I didn't feel like it. But he was pushing me to be the player that I am now. He doesn't have to yell at me, to tell me to go rebound because I just do it. He's just pushing me to be the best player I can be."

Nelson reciprocated those feelings in comments to The Banner. "It is really neat to get to coach and watch the growth of these two. Obviously, we have pretty much known them since they were born, and my wife coached them in middle school."

"We watched them and cheered them on in high school as they won championships and have now carried that over to our level."

"Obviously, it hasn't been easy on either of them as Mikaela had to battle back from injury to now. And the growth and maturity Kylie has had from having to play right away in the MSC [Mid-South Conference] and having to endure those growing pains, and then to see her hit those big shots last year that helped propel us to a Fab Four."

"They are proven winners, and I think it starts at home. Their mom [Stephanie McClerkin] has done a terrific job of raising them, and it shows on and off the court. They both have jobs, great grades and they excel on the court."

Both young ladies are Exercise Science majors, but their plans split from there.

Kylie intends to become a physical therapist and is eying Nashville for the next phase of her education.

Mikaela seeks to become a dental hygienist and is considering a school in Mississippi.

The two expressed their reservations in going separate ways, but it helps knowing that their hometown will be a great midpoint for frequent reunions.

The sisters and the Lady Wildcats will begin 2026 with a pair of road games before returning to the home crowd at Crisp Arena on Thursday, January 8 as they begin conference play against The University of the Cumberlands. Tip-off is 5:30 p.m.

HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL



Above, War Eagle Demarion Gilbert draws contact in the paint and finishes the shot for a three-point opportunity. Gilbert led West Carroll with 17 points against Huntingdon. Below Left, Mustang Kenton Smith floats to the basket on a fast break. Smith led Huntingdon with 17 points against West Carroll. Below Right, Huntingdon's Krystin Moore fires a three-pointer. Moore led all scorers with 23 points, including seven threes, against Chester County. Photos by Brad Sam/The Banner



Fillies, Mustangs Win on Day One of Huntingdon Christmas Tournament

BY BRAD SAM
brad@mckenziebanner.com

HUNTINGDON (December 27) — Huntingdon High School's annual Point Guard Coca-Cola Christmas Tournament began Saturday with eight games. The host Fillies and Mustangs were among the winners to start the three-day tournament.

Play continued Monday as winners from Saturday met to earn a place in Tuesday's championship games. Losing teams from Saturday and Monday also continue playing through Tuesday to determine final placements through eighth place.

Huntingdon Mustangs 77, West Carroll War Eagles 32

In the final game of the day, the host Mustangs stormed out to a 26-8 lead after the first frame and pushed the advantage to 53-10 at the half. The War Eagles fared better in the second half, winning the third quarter 16-12. Huntingdon had a 12-6 edge in the fourth.

Kenton Smith led the Mustangs with 17 points, including a three-pointer. Garvin Kee scored a dozen with a pair of threes. Caleb Ezell scored ten points, also with a pair of threes. Bryson Whiteside and Lucas Smith each scored seven, Whiteside with a three-pointer. William Boals scored six points, and Zayden Connelly had five with a three. Colt Luther and Kingston Smith each scored four, Luther with a three. Kylen Turner hit a three-pointer, and David Boals had a pair.

Demarion Gilbert led West Carroll with 17 points, including a trio of three-pointers. Chandler Rimmer scored nine points. Mason Taylor had four, and Trey Williamson had a pair.

Huntingdon Fillies 65, Chester County Lady Eagles 10

In the final girls' contest of Day One, the host Fillies charged out to a 25-3 lead after the opening frame. By halftime, the gap grew to 50-5. Huntingdon had advantages of 9-2 and 6-3 in the final two quarters.

Huntingdon's Krystin Moore led all scorers with 23 points, including seven three-pointers. Wylie Kee scored 16 points, and Knox Bennett had eight. Emma Lynn Maness scored five points with a three. Millie Luther and Ellie Wilson each had four points, Luther with a three-pointer. Kaylen Cary and Maria De Vicente each had a pair, and Grier Bartholomew hit a free throw. E. Osburn led Chester

County with five points, including a three. A. Rivers hit a three, and C. Young had a pair.

Gibson County Lady Pioneers 65, McKenzie Lady Rebels 37

Gibson County jumped out to a 23-4 lead after the first frame and widened the gap to 41-18 at the half. The Lady Pioneers had a 14-7 advantage in the third, while the Lady Rebels finished strong with a 12-10 edge in the fourth.

Sanja Reaves led Gibson County with 16 points. Akira Riding scored 15 with a three-pointer. Jada Hart had 12 points with a trio of threes. Kaitlyn Patterson scored nine on a trio of threes. Raven Wells had seven points. Avery Hardin hit a three-pointer, Bre'El Harris had a pair, and Marlei Davenport hit a free throw.

Jaycee Stafford led McKenzie with 16 points, including a three. Addyson Littleton and Braylin Auvenshine each scored six, Littleton on a pair of threes. Ava Hastings had five points, and Gracie Aird and Madeline Gottshall each had a pair.

Other Boys Games

The USJ Bruins defeated the Dyer County Choctaws 48-41. Dyer County's Clay Dodds led all scorers with 17 points, including a pair of three-pointers. Sam Keyl led the Bruins with 11 points, including a pair of threes.

The Riverside Panthers defeated the Greenfield Yellowjackets 70-59. Riverside's Jack Cupples led all scorers with 22 points, including a three-pointer. Cruze Porter led the Yellowjackets with 21 points, including a pair of threes.

The Lake County Falcons defeated the Gibson County Pioneers, 84-75. Gibson County's Trajan Eddings led all scorers with 30 points, including five three-pointers. Aikee Ward and Jay Ricks led the Falcons with 22 points each, Ward with six three-pointers.

Other Girls Games

The Camden Lady Lions defeated the Dyer County Lady Choctaws 54-45. Lady Lion Carson Douglas led all scorers with 15 points, including a three. Ava Pearson and Anna Tatum led Dyer County with ten points each, Tatum with a pair of threes.

The Greenfield Lady Yellowjackets defeated the Union City Lady Tornadoes, 53-46. Union City's S. Moss led all scorers with 26 points, including a pair of three-pointers. Ella Porter led Greenfield with 21 points.