

The Times

FLOYD COUNTY

TEXT & WIN

See page A6 for details

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DEAD PERIOD

— Page B1

briefs

State tax rate set at 12.2 cents

FRANKFORT — The Kentucky Department of Revenue has set the 2008 State Real Property Tax Rate at 12.2 cents per \$100 of assessed value. KRS 132.020 requires the Department of Revenue to set the real property rate no later than July 1 of each year.

This rate is based on the revenue generated from the increase in taxable real property assessments from 2007 to 2008. If the increase in revenue is more than 4 percent after the exclusion of new property added to the tax roll during 2008, then the prior year rate must be reduced.

Since the assessment increase for 2008 is estimated at 6.65 percent, the state rate will decrease from 12.4 to 12.2 cents per \$100 of assessed value to limit the increase in revenue to 4 percent.

All of the revenue generated from the state property tax rate will go into the state's General Fund.

Man charged with robbing Rite Aid

by JACK LATTA
STAFF WRITER

PRESTONSBURG — A Floyd County man who was apprehended, then escaped, only to be apprehended again after he allegedly held up the Rite Aid in Highlands plaza Saturday evening was arraigned Monday

morning in district court.

According to Prestonsburg Police Chief Mike Ormerod, Jason S. Rice, 29, of Dwale, entered the Prestonsburg business around 6 p.m. Saturday evening wearing camouflage clothing and brandishing a .45 caliber weapon, and demanded drugs from the pharmacy.

Ormerod said Rice threatened the employees with physical violence if they did not comply. "He wanted drugs and if he didn't get what he wanted he was going to kill everyone there."

According to Ormerod, Rice fled the store when the audible alarm was triggered. "The staff did what they were supposed to,

and locked the doors when he left," said Ormerod.

Police received a call about the attempted robbery and observed a person fitting the description on the walking track of Big Sandy Community and Technical College.



Jason S. Rice

(See ROBBERY, page nine)

WRONG WAY



photo by Ralph B. Davis

Patricia Childers' car became stuck after she attempted to drive down the College Lane sidewalk between the old Prestonsburg Elementary and Court Street. She was subsequently arrested for driving under the influence and other charges.

Wrong turn lands driver in jail for DUI, drug charges

by RALPH B. DAVIS
MANAGING EDITOR

PRESTONSBURG — Prestonsburg police had an easy time locating the suspect after receiving a report of a possible drunk driver Monday afternoon — she was the only one driving on the sidewalk.

Patricia Childers, 44, of Martin, was placed in jail and now faces 10

criminal charges as a result of her errant sojourn. She was arrested after her 1999 Dodge Intrepid slipped off of College Lane — a sidewalk leading from the old Prestonsburg Elementary to Court Street — and became stuck.

In addition to being charged with reckless driving and driving under the influence, she also faces six counts of having a prescription in an

improper container and two counts of possession of a controlled substance.

Arresting officer George Tussey said Tuesday that Childers told him she was confused by the detours resulting from the downtown Prestonsburg sewer project. He said she explained that she had been

(See SIDEWALK, page nine)

Johnson inmates escape

by JACK LATTA
STAFF WRITER

PAINTSVILLE — Two female prisoners housed in the Big Sandy Regional Detention Center were still at large Tuesday afternoon after escaping the jail late Saturday afternoon.

According to Kentucky State Police reports, Remona Mills, 37, of Paintsville, and Haley R. Smith, 22, of Florida, both disappeared from the prison Saturday afternoon.

Trooper Scott Hopkins said the escape was due to a power outage which caused the door to open. The two were reportedly not in their cell at the time of the outage.

"It wasn't some big master plan. The power went off, the door opened, and they walked out," Hopkins said.

Hopkins said that while both escapees were in jail for nonviolent offenses, he wouldn't call them non-threatening. "I can't say that an escaped criminal isn't dangerous."

Mills was serving a sentence for theft by unlawful taking, and Smith's sentence was for trafficking in a controlled sub-



Remona Mills is one of the escape suspects. No picture was available for the other suspect, Haley R. Smith.

(See ESCAPE, page nine)

2 DAY FORECAST

Today



High: 87 • Low: 63

Tomorrow



High: 90 • Low: 65

For up-to-the-minute forecasts, see floydcountytimes.com

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One dead, one hurt in Sunday shootings

by JACK LATTA
STAFF WRITER

Two men were shot this weekend in unrelated incidents in Floyd and Pike counties, with one of the men dying as a result of his injury.

Kentucky State Police received a call regarding a shooting off of U.S. 23 in the Goody community of Pike County at 9:57 p.m. Sunday.

The body of Philip Hickman, 39, of Forest Hills, was discovered by Trooper Jason Merlo, who responded to the scene, and a preliminary investigation showed that Hickman died as a result of a gunshot wound.

A suspect in the alleged murder had reportedly fled the scene by the time officers arrived. A

"person of interest" turned himself in later to the Pike County Sheriff's Department, before being transported to the KSP Post.

In a strangely similar case, KSP reported the drive-by shooting of a man in Floyd County on the same day.

According to KSP, James Issacs, 30, of Drift, walked into the emergency room of Highlands Regional Medical Center with a gunshot wound in his back Sunday afternoon.

Issacs reportedly told police that he had been walking along Route 1101 in Floyd County when a vehicle drove by and someone in the vehicle shot him in the back.

(See SHOOTINGS, page nine)



photo by Jack Latta

Judge-Executive R.D. "Doc" Marshall declared June to be Elder Abuse Prevention Month during a proclamation signing on Monday with workers from Mountain Comprehensive Care, the Department of Protection and Permanency and the Council on Aging.

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Viewpoint

Amendment 1

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people to peaceably assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

Worth Repeating ...

Education is the ability to listen to almost anything without losing your temper or your self-confidence.

— Robert Frost

Guest View

We've got to get smart about educating workers

One of the more overused nouns in the English language is the word "crisis." It's slapped — by politicians, policy advocates and the news media — on almost every problem that comes along, seemingly no matter how small-bore or distant. But the National Commission on Adult Literacy wasn't overreaching last week when it released a report with the title "Reach Higher, America: Overcoming crisis in the U.S. work force."

Don't believe us? Consider these facts:

The U.S. is the only nation, among 30 free-market countries that are members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, in which current young adults are less educated than their parents' generation.

More than 1.2 million teenagers drop out of high school each year. In Indiana, nearly three out of 10 high school students fail to graduate on time.

More than half of the adult work force faces at least one educational hurdle, from lack of a high school diploma to little or no college to poor literacy skills, that blocks moving into the best-paying jobs. Existing adult education programs reach only a fraction of workers who need training to compete in the modern marketplace.

In Indiana, about one in three workers lacks the literacy skills needed to land good jobs.

It's not that the United States isn't producing millions of well-educated workers each year. The nation's university system remains the best in the world. But there is a growing gap between the highly educated and those who lack basic skills. The gap is developing at a time when, more than ever, education is vital to economic and social well-being. In short, we are a nation headed in two directions when it comes to education. Failure to help those on the bottom climb to higher levels will carry a painful price for everyone.

The Commission on Adult Literacy argues that "our failure to address America's adult education and work force skills is putting our country in great jeopardy and threatening our nation's standard of living and economic viability." Again, that's no exaggeration.

To begin confronting these issues in Central Indiana, Indy Reads and The Star's Editorial Board brought together leaders of about 50 community organizations for a Literacy Summit this month. That effort will continue, through a variety of means, in the months ahead.

On the political front, the education level of the work force needs to become a central issue of this year's state and federal races. The nation won't meet the economic challenges ahead unless it enlists and trains a growing army of well-educated workers.

— The Indianapolis Star



Guest Column

Spending our tax dollars responsibly

by ERIK LEWIS

When Lyndon Johnson managed to balance the national budget in the midst of building the "Great Society," he made a public point of turning off lights around the White House. Cheap symbolism, maybe, but it signaled concern for how tax money was spent.

I've been thinking of Johnson and the White House lights for the last couple weeks, as Senate President David Williams planned to feather the Senate's nest with a new kitchen and lounge, then scrapped the plans in the face of public outcry.

Never mind the blueprints drawn, contracts bid, agencies shuffled, files packed, furniture moved, space rented, and money spent. Caught in the midst of upgrading his own facilities while preaching the virtues of budget austerity, Williams cut his losses, despite sunk costs.

I can understand the political sense of Williams' decision. I can't understand the comment that Williams

made when he was asked about the renovations in the face of such a bleak budget: "You're talking about people who you couldn't print enough money for. I don't accept the premise that they're cutting anything to the bone."

These comments are derogatory and show a lack of empathy and respect. My wife worked in a community mental health center for eight years. The center faced perpetual belt-tightening, forced by consistently inadequate state investments in mental health. The lack of proper funding caused hardships for my wife and her coworkers. She carried a caseload of 200, hadn't received a raise in over two years (despite earning a higher credential in her field). The counselors had to supply their own tissues — this is mental health counseling, people cry — all because the funding wasn't there for them.

Two days after the state budget cuts went into effect, my wife was told to pack up her office, in the name of agency cost-cutting. She, her coworkers, and their clients are among the people for whom "you couldn't print enough money." Many of her clients are now not only confronting their mental illness, but also the absence of the counselor they had grown to know and depend on.

In Williams' hometown of Burkesville, almost a quarter of the families, including more than a third of children, live below the poverty line. In nearby Albany, about 30 percent of families and 50 percent of children are living in poverty, according to the Census Bureau. So, in whose interests is Williams acting on when he cuts health and family services? How many of these families will be pushed further back as after-school programs are cut, class sizes swell, community health services are shut down, and tuition hikes make college even more remote?

What kind of vision for Kentucky is this?

Responsible politicians lead by sending signals that offer constituents a clear vision for the future. Perhaps hard working state legislators deserve to have a kitchen, a lounge, and a flat-screen TV. But not now, when every Kentucky community is trying to stave off the most devastating consequences of budget cuts that have long crippled the Commonwealth.

□□□

Lewis is a member of Kentuckians for the Commonwealth and a geography instructor at Morehead State University.

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Letter Guidelines

Letters to the Editor are welcomed by The Floyd County Times.

In accordance with our editorial page policy, all letters must include the signature, address and telephone number of the author.

The Times reserves the right to reject or edit any letter deemed slanderous, libelous or otherwise objection-

able. Letters should be no longer than two type-written pages, and may be edited for length or clarity.

Opinions expressed in letters and other voices are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the newspaper. Send letters to: The Editor, The Floyd County Times, P.O. Box 391, Prestonsburg, Ky. 41653.

PRIDE donates wetlands book to local libraries

SOMERSET — If your summer project is to build a wetland, then you should visit your local library to check out Wetland Drainage, Restoration, and Repair. Eastern Kentucky PRIDE recently donated copies of the book to every public library in the 38 counties of southern and eastern Kentucky, as well as the region's NRCS and Conservation District offices.



With guidance from Tom Biebighauser, McBrayer Elementary School in Rowan County built this wetland with a PRIDE grant as an outdoor classroom. Photo by Tom Biebighauser.

"Referring to Wetland Drainage, Restoration, and Repair is the next best thing to our working together to restore a wetland," said author Tom Biebighauser, a wildlife biologist for the Daniel Boone National Forest and international wetlands expert. "My hope is that you'll be encouraged to jump in and build a wetland after reading this book, whether for fish and wildlife habitat, flood control, groundwater recharge, envi-

ronmental education, or simply for the beauty they add to our landscape."

romental education, or simply for the beauty they add to our landscape." "This book will lead to fun, family-friendly activities that help the environment, and we are pleased to be part of that," said Tammie Wilson, PRIDE

vice president and chief financial officer. "I want to thank Norma Pellerin, the Lake Cumberland regional librarian for the Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives, for helping us distribute the books to the libraries in PRIDE's service area."

The book is a step-by-step guide for building wetlands that look and function like natural wetlands. The highly effective techniques described were developed by Biebighauser over 25 years building wetlands across North America. His groundbreaking work has earned him national awards and international instructor engagements.

For the history buff, the book features photos and stories about the systematic draining of the nation's wetlands for agriculture and development. In Kentucky, for example, over 81 percent of

the state's original 1.5 million acres of wetlands were drained.

Nationwide, efforts are being made to protect and restore wetlands, which are basically areas of shallow water. The saturated soils in these habitats create unique soil and biological conditions, even in those wetlands that dry

seasonally. Wetlands absorb floodwater, filter pollutants, and provide plant and wildlife habitat. For more information, visit www.kypride.org/educators/wetlands.php.

PRIDE is a nonprofit organization that promotes environmental cleanup and education in 38 counties of southern and eastern Kentucky.



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Jobless rates up in 108 counties from May 2007 to May 2008

FRANKFORT — Unemployment rates rose in 108 Kentucky counties between May 2007 and May 2008 and fell in 12 counties, according to the Kentucky Office of Employment and Training, an agency of the Education Cabinet.

Woodford County recorded the lowest jobless rate in the commonwealth at 4.6 percent. Other counties with low unemployment rates were Fayette County, 4.9 percent; Shelby County, 5 percent; Boone and Oldham counties, 5.1 percent each; Jessamine County, 5.2 percent; Daviess, Henderson and Warren counties, 5.3 percent each; and Anderson and Clinton counties, 5.4 percent each.

Jackson County recorded the state's highest unemployment rate — 11.3 percent. It was followed by Magoffin County, 10.6 percent; Clay County, 10.1 percent; Bell County, 9.6 percent; McCreary County, 9.5 percent; Elliott and Morgan counties, 9.4 percent each; Harlan and Wolfe counties, 9.3 percent each; and Lawrence County, 9.2 percent.

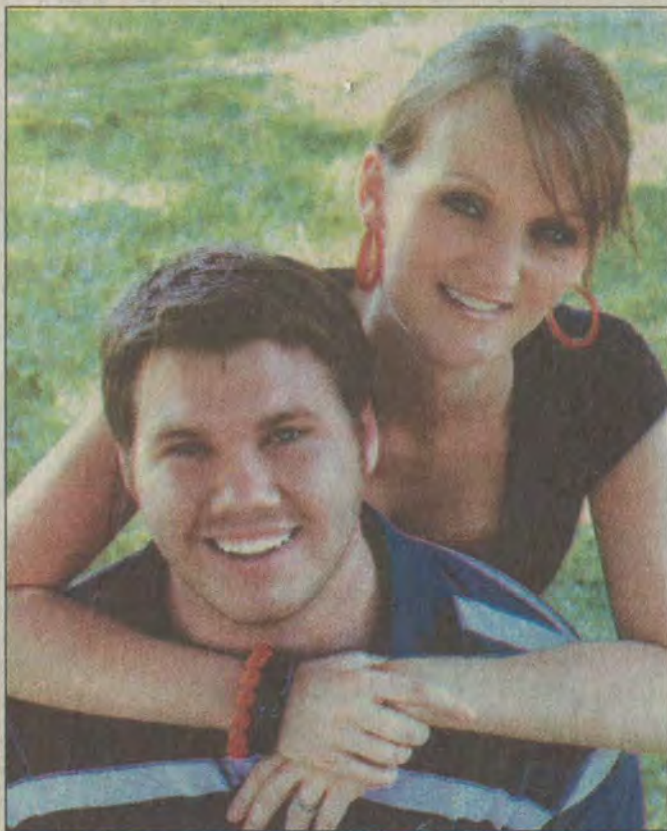
In Floyd County, unemployment shot up to 7.2 percent in May 2008, up from 6.6 percent in May 2007 and up from 6.0 percent in April 2008.

Unemployment statistics are based on estimates and are compiled to measure trends rather than actually to count people working. Civilian labor force statistics include non-military workers and unemployed Kentuckians who are actively seeking work. They do not include unemployed Kentuckians who have not looked for employment within the past four weeks. The statistics in this news release are not seasonally adjusted to allow for comparisons between United States, state and county figures.

Learn more about the Office of Employment and Training at workforce.ky.gov.

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Tackett-Stewart to wed



Mark and Mary E. Tackett of Melvin, Ky., are pleased to announce the engagement and forthcoming marriage of their daughter, Christina Gail Tackett, to Gabriel Joe Stewart, son of Joe and Cindy A. Stewart of Wheelwright, Ky.

Christina is the maternal granddaughter of Everett and Rosie Johnson of Wheelwright, Ky., and the late Johnny Johnson. She is the paternal granddaughter of Clifford and Claudine Tackett of Weeksbury, Ky. Christina is a graduate of South Floyd High School and a student in the Respiratory program at KCTCS, Prestonsburg, Ky.

Gabriel is the paternal grandson of Osalene Triplett of Wheelwright, Ky., and Sid and Jean Triplett of Nancy, Ky., and the late John A. Stewart. He is the maternal grandson of Ruby C. Harris of Wheelwright, Ky., and the late James O. "Bill" Harris. Gabriel is a graduate of South Floyd High School and is employed by Miller Brothers Coal.

An outdoor wedding is planned at the home of the bride's aunt and uncle, David and Donna Bates, 22702 Rte. 122, Melvin, Ky. Saturday, July 5th, 2008, at 7:30 p.m. The gracious custom of open house will be observed.

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'06 Dodge Ram 1500: 4x4, Quad Cab, SLT, 20" Wheels, Loaded!	'07 Mazda 6: Sport Package, Auto., Spoiler, Sharp!	'04 GMC Sierra SLT: X-Cab, 4x4, Leather, Sharp, Loaded!	'05 Ford F250: Crew Cab, Leather, 4x4, Lariat!	'06 Ford F150: Crew Cab, X-Cab, 4x4, V8, Sharp!
'07 Chevy HHR Lt.: Power Sunroof, Leather, Remote Start, Loaded!	'07 Toyota 4Runner: SR5, Sunroof, 4x4, 3rd Seat, Factory Warranty!	'08 Nissan Altima: 2.5S, Auto., Only 11,000 Miles, Fac. Warr., Sharp!	'07 Toyota Camry SE: Power Sunroof, Alloys, Loaded!	
'07 Ford F350: King Ranch Pkg, Power Stroke Turbo Diesel, FX4 Pkg, Leather, Lariat, Low Miles, Loaded!	'05 GMC Canyon: Crew Cab, 4x4, Off Road, Z71, Loaded!	'04 Jeep Wrangler: Sahara Edition!	'05 Toyota Tundra 4x4: Crew Cab, TRD, Auto., Sharp!	'07 Toyota Sienna LE: Power Sliding Door, Rear AC, Nice!
'07 Mercedes C230: Power Sunroof, Leather, X-Clean, Sport Pkg., Loaded!	'06 Cadillac STS: Navigation, Leather, Sunroof, Fac. Warr., Loaded!	'07 Ford Mustang: V6, Alloys, Auto., Sharp!		

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Calendar

attend. For more info., contact Shirley Combs at 874-3388 or 434-8400.

'Earn While You Learn'

The Big Sandy Area C.A.P. office is taking applications for its "Senior Training Program." You must be 55 or older to apply. In Floyd, call 886-2929; Johnson, call 789-6515; Magoffin, call 349-2217; Pike, call 432-2775; and in Lawrence, call 638-4067.

Senior employment program

Are you a senior citizen on a fixed income struggling with soaring medical bills and living expenses? Could you use some extra spending money but don't know how to get back into the workforce?

If you are at least age 55, the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) may be able to help. Earn extra money, learn new skills, and help your community at the same time! To find out more, call: 886-2929

External Diploma Program
Kentucky residents age 25

and older can earn a high school diploma by demonstrating skills learned on the job or in raising a family. Flexible scheduling is provided and confidentiality maintained. Classes are held at the Carl D. Perkins Rehabilitation Center, in Thelma, Mon. thru Fri., with evening classes on Thursday. EDP classes are also held at the Mullins Learning Center, in Pikeville, on Tuesdays, from 4:30-8:30 p.m. Contact Andy Jones at 606-788-7080, or 800-443-2187, ext. 186, or Linda Bell, at ext. 160 to make an appointment.

GED classes are also available.

Floyd County Extension

Homemaker Club Meetings
Allen: 1st Monday, 11 a.m., at Christ United Methodist Church Fellowship Hall.

Dixie: 3rd Thursday, 12:30 p.m., Dixie Community Room.

David: 1st Monday, 1 p.m., at St. Vincent's Mission.

Martin: 1st Tuesday, 6 p.m., Martin Church of Christ.

Maytown: 3rd Thursday, 6 p.m., Maytown Learning Center.

Cliff: 3rd Tuesday, 12 p.m., Community Center.

Prestonsburg: 2nd Tuesday, 10:30 a.m., Extension Office.

South Prestonsburg: 3rd Tuesday, 7 p.m., Home of members (call 886-2668 for info.)

Left Beaver: 2nd Tuesday, 10:30 a.m., Osborne Elem. School Library.

Special interest groups:
Nimble Thimble Quilt Guild: 1st/3rd Wednesdays, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Extension Office.

Newbees Quilt Group: 4th Thursday, 6 p.m., Extension Office. (The Newbees do not meet during the months of January and February.)

Looking for a Support Group?

Floyd County Alzheimer's Support Group meets regularly at Riverview Manor Healthcare Center. Call the center for meeting times.

Domestic Violence

Support Group - The Big Sandy Family Abuse Center holds meetings each Tuesday from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. The meetings are free of charge. Call 886-6025 for more information.

Overeater's Anonymous - Meetings held each Wednesday at 6:30 p.m., at the old Allen Baptist Church, located in Allen, just past red light. Call 889-9620 for more info.

US TOO! Prostate Cancer Survivors Support Group - For all men with prostate cancer and their families. Group meets the 3rd Thursday of each month, at 6 p.m., at the Ramada Inn, Paintsville.

Community Weight Loss Support Group - Meets Thursday's at 6:30 p.m., at the Martin Community Center. For more info., call 377-6658. Those who have had gastric bypass surgery most especially welcome to attend. Meetings being offered as support to anyone needing extra support in dealing with weight loss.

Domestic Violence Hotline

- 24-hour Crisis Line manned by Certified Domestic Violence counselors. Call 886-6025, or 1-800-649-6605. Remember, "Love Doesn't Have to Hurt."

Disabled? - You may be eligible for grant money to assist in your daily living. For an application or more information, call 886-4326.

A.S.K. (Adoption Support for Kentucky) - Support group for all adoptive parents (public, private, international, and kinship care), foster parents and all others interested in adoption. To be held the first Monday of each month, at the Department for Community Based Services office, 1009 North Lake Drive, Prestonsburg, from 6-8 p.m. Childcare will not be provided. For more information, contact Dedra Slone, adoptive parent liaison, at 432-4110 or 422-7927, or email to: doslone@eastky.net.

PARENTS! - Contact the Big Sandy Area Community Action Program, Inc. to find out about child care services in your area, the STARS for

KIDS NOW licensing standards program, and how you can earn an income by staying home with your own children while caring for the children of others. Find out more by calling Cheryl Endicott at 886-1280, or 888-872-7227 (toll free).

East Kentucky S.T.A.R.S. Homeschoolers - Will hold monthly meetings at the Paintsville Recreation Center. For more information, call Trudy at 889-9333, or 297-5147. Everyone welcome.

Narcotics Anonymous (NA) - Each Wednesday, from 7-8 p.m., in the Atrium Conference Room, 2nd floor, May Tower, Pikeville Methodist Hospital. For more info., contact Chris Cook at 606-433-1119 or christopher-cook@hotmail.com.

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Business of the Week

The Floyd County Chamber Of Commerce Business of the Week for June 30 to July 5 is Country Treasures in Prestonsburg. Located at 902 North Lake Drive in Prestonsburg, Country Treasures has many items that are sure to add a touch of country to your home. Candles, tarts, jellies, primitives, pictures and more are just some of the many products they carry. Owners Paul and Missy Williams carry a lot of one-of-a-kind items along with many different wreaths and types of berry garlands. The motto of Country Treasures is to help the customer step back a little in time with the many items arriving daily. Country Treasures can be reached at (606) 886-2258.



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FLOYD COUNTY Lifestyles

YESTERDAYS

Items taken from The Floyd County Times,
10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70 years ago. page B7

INSIDE STUFF

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POISON OAK

About RC Cola and Moon Pies

"Free hugs."

That's what the hand-lettered, poster-size sign read that the young man — maybe 12 or 13 years old — was carrying.

He held the placard high over his head and was working the crowd. His assistant, his counter, another boy about his age, walked beside him. As the boy with the sign hugged the middle-aged woman standing next to me watching a line of youngsters see how far they could spit a watermelon seed, the counter said, "126."



Clyde Pack

As the hugger moved on in

search of another lucky recipient of his free service, the just-hugged lady smiled approvingly and muttered, more to herself than to anyone else, something that sounded an awful lot like, "Now, wasn't that nice."

The above scenario occurred a couple of Saturdays ago in the little Middle Tennessee town of Bell Buckle. The reason for the crowd was the town's annual "RC Cola/Moon Pie Festival." A local woman told us the population of Bell Buckle was about 450, but she expected around 15,000 on this day. I'm not that good at estimating the size of a crowd, but from what I observed, it's quite possible she had it figured about right.

Never before having heard of the festival, nor Bell Buckle, for that matter, Wilma Jean and I were there because we were visiting son Todd and his family in Nashville. They discovered the little town and its festival last summer, and this year we tagged along.

While we mostly just ambled around from craft booth to craft booth, 8-year-old Alison jumped into things big time, becoming a contestant not only in the aforementioned watermelon seed spitting contest, but also the Moon Pie toss and the hog-calling competitions.

Little Owen - he's 2-and-a-half — simply went along with the crowd and didn't seem particularly impressed with any of it. His mama, Marcy, pretty much kept busy just keeping up with him.

But I think the "free hug" deal pretty much set the tone for me, because the hugger, as well as his hugges, seemed to reflect the spirit of the event — pure, small-town Americana on display for all to see.

It was hot and muggy and a lot of pale blue shirts developed dark patches as the day wore on, but those who had paid nearly \$4 a gallon for gas and driven I don't know how many miles were there to enjoy themselves and cheered enthusiastically as various contests played out on and in front of a makeshift stage constructed beneath a grove of maple trees, pretty much the only gray area around.

With every other person or so washing down a Moon Pie with a big RC as they sat on bales of hay and enjoyed the activities, one could almost imagine himself a contestant at a 1950s county fair, with a grand prize being a sliver of the "World's Biggest Moon Pie," weighing in at 40 pounds and standing 4 inches tall. It was delicious.

Although I have no clue as to how these folks advertise this event from one year to the next, from this perspective, a large photo of the young man giving away "free hugs" would be most appropriate.

BREATHING EASIER



Sandy's Restaurant and Catering was presented with a certificate of appreciation for choosing to go smoke-free.

Health department and Sandy's Restaurant and Catering celebrate 'World No Tobacco Day'

Sandy's Restaurant and Catering, in downtown Prestonsburg, has become the 23rd Floyd County restaurant to offer smoke-free dining.

The Floyd County Health Department celebrated the World Health Organization's 2008 World No Tobacco Day by presenting a certificate of appreciation to this new local restaurant where people of all ages can enjoy smoke-free eating without fear of the dangers of secondhand smoke.

The goal of this year's World No Tobacco Day is tobacco-free youth. Not only is tobacco the leading cause of preventable death in the world, it is also the only legal consumer product that kills one-third to one-half of those who use it as intended by its manufacturers.

On average, smokers die at an age that is 15 years younger than non-smokers. In the United States, 90 percent of smokers start before they are

18 years old. The younger children are when they first try smoking, the more likely they are to become regular tobacco users and the less likely they are to quit since the nicotine in tobacco products is one of the most addictive substances in our culture and society.

Health department officials say it is important for the community to show its youth that there are safe places to go with their friends and family where people gather and do not smoke. The goal of the Floyd County Health Department is to have all work places be smoke-free.

It is clearly proven that exposure to direct and indirect pro-tobacco advertising, together with other marketing strategies used by the tobacco industry, lead to an increase in experimentation by young people and, in turn, to the very real risk of their becoming regular users of tobacco products.

In any community, the fewer places that allow smoking, the stronger the public health message is that the community wants to protect its youth.

The World Health Organization suggests that one of the most effective ways countries can protect young people from experimenting and becoming regular tobacco users is to ban tobacco advertising. In our area, one activity in which tobacco is heavily advertised is auto racing (NASCAR and many other local and regional races).

The Floyd County Health Department is promoting smoke-free public space as part of its commitment to promote public health, and to prevent disease related to tobacco addiction. The Health Department invites any smoke-free business to display its free "Breathe Easy Smoke-Free" stickers.

Ombudsman program holds volunteer appreciation banquet

The Big Sandy Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program recently held its annual Volunteer Appreciation Banquet and Training on Thursday, May 22, at Big Sandy Area Development District in Prestonsburg.

All attending volunteers from the Big Sandy area

received a gift and certificate of appreciation for their hard work and dedication to the program. Participants represented the Big Sandy and Kentucky River Ombudsman Programs as well as the Kentucky Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program.

In attendance were Steve

Jones, Donna Frazier, Bertha Daniels, Andi Sluss, Liz Hamilton, Rosa Young, Angeleta Hendrickson, Jacqueline Strader, Jane Chapman, Argene Jones, Cleatice Jones, Pam McCoy, Soreya Lambat, and Kay Gibson. Angeleta Hendrickson of the Kentucky Long-Term Care

Ombudsman Program provided training on person-centered care in nursing facilities.

The ombudsman program is currently seeking volunteers who are interested in serving as advocates for residents of local nursing homes, personal care homes, and family care homes. If

you would like to be involved in improving the quality of care and life of residents of long-term care facilities or would like more information on becoming a volunteer, please contact Andi Sluss at (800) 737-2723, extension 335, or send an e-mail to andra.sluss@bigsandy.org.

Keep safety in mind when driving with pets

by JACK LATTA
STAFF WRITER

Vacations season is in full swing and many dogs and cats will be joining their owners for a summer getaway. Experts agree that trips don't have to be stressful for pets if drivers take a few simple precautions.

"There are more than 135 million household dogs and cats in the nation," said Ray Palermo, director of public relations for Response Insurance, a national car insurer. "They're members of the family and when we take vacation or just get

away for the weekend, they are often along for the ride."

Palermo says that too many drivers do not take the time to prepare pets for long trips. The following tips were offered to ensure a safe driving experience:

■ If the pet is not accustomed to car trips, try a few test runs to help acclimate them for the ride. Spending time in the car while parked and short drives to nearby destinations are an easy start.

■ Cats should be kept in a carrier and dogs should be held in a restraining hardness. This will help stabilize

your pet if there is a sudden movement or crash.

■ Feed your pet a little less than you would normally. Since too much water can upset their stomachs on the road, limit water by providing ice to chew on. Don't forget to pack some toys and any other favorite items or bedding.

■ When traveling to places your pet is not familiar with it is particularly important to have a collar with an identification tag that includes both your permanent and vacation addresses and phone numbers. Bring a photo of your pet in the event you

need to put up "lost pet" posters. Many veterinarians and animal welfare organizations also offer microchip identification implants.

■ Never leave your pet in a car in warm or hot weather. Even with windows open, or parked in the shade, interior temperatures can quickly rise to lethal levels.

■ Pack a first aid kit with tweezers and alcohol for tick removal, cloth bandages and topical antiseptic.

For more information on this and other safety topics check the Response web site at www.response.com/safety.

