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===== *A dive into life in Western Kentucky* =====



A special publication of *The Murray State News*



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www.readgateway.online



Letter from the Editor

Western Kentucky is known for its resilient and inclusive community. Therefore, we at *The Murray State News* felt it was important to highlight the people of this region and their inspiring stories of inclusion and resilience.

Western Kentucky, specifically Murray, has been my home for the last 10 years. It welcomed my mom and I with open arms. This town and University has provided me with so many opportunities and experiences — *The Murray State News* to name just one. The compassion I've seen in the people of Murray and surrounding areas is astounding. In a time of need, we all come together to lend each other a helping hand and a shoulder to lean on.

The people of Western Kentucky are much more than just compassionate. We are resilient and inspired by those around us.

In this year's edition of *Gateway Magazine*, you will find stories highlighting local artists, a member of the Army, the recovery efforts in Mayfield and so much more. We hope you enjoy these stories that showcase inclusivity and resilience in our region.

Thank you,

Jill Smith, Gateway Editor

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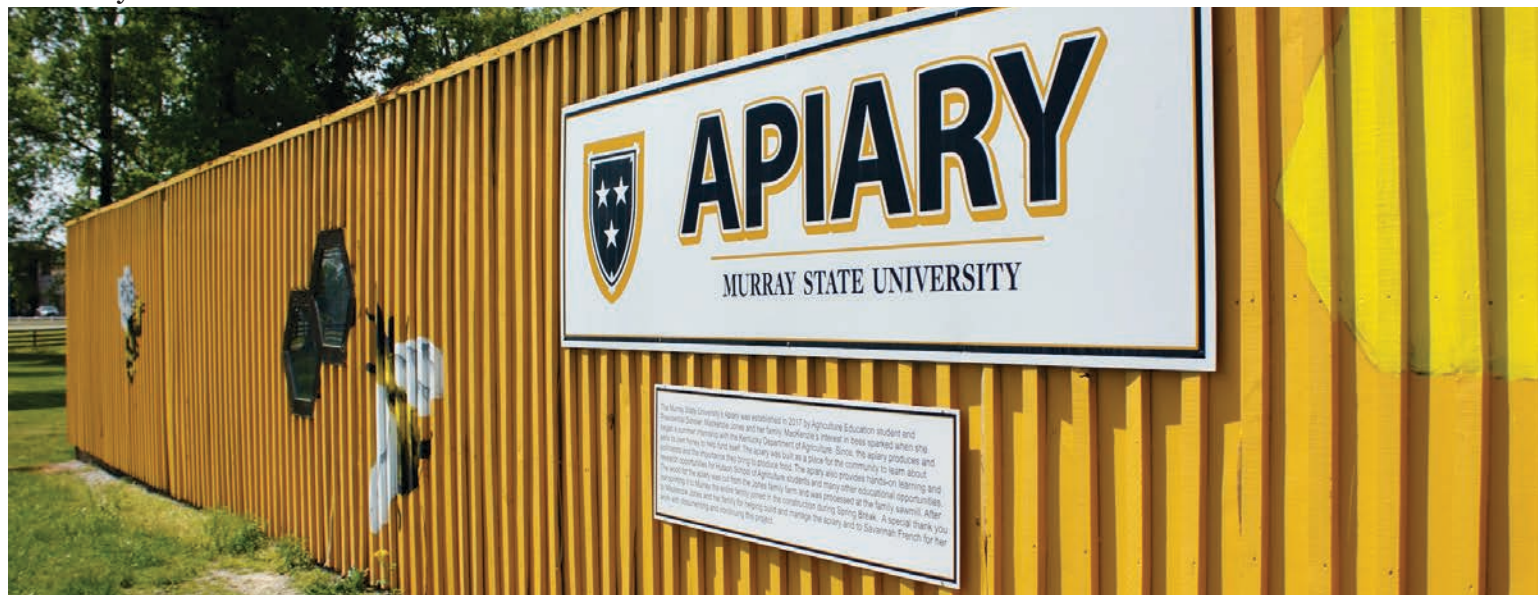
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WHAT'S THE BUZZ?:

Murray State Apiary educates visitors on the importance of bees

While 2020 alumna MacKenzie Jones was enrolled at Murray State, she and her family responded to the noticeably lacking bee population at the Arboretum by building an apiary on site.

During an interview with *The News* in 2017, Jones revealed what first ignited her interest in bees: a 2016 summer internship with the Kentucky Department of Agriculture. Jones worked in the Animal Health division with Tammy Horn Potter, the state apiarist.

In addition to working with Potter during her internship, Jones says she and Potter discussed the possibility of installing an apiary at Murray State for Jones' required research project for her Presidential Fellowship.

That notion soon became reality: Jones and her family were integral to the construction of Murray State's apiary.

"The wood for the apiary was cut from the Jones family farm and was processed at the family saw-mill," reads Jones' dedication sign on the apiary. "After transporting it to Murray, the entire family joined in the construction during Spring Break."

In building the apiary, not only were the bees protected, but in return, the community of bees gave them an opportunity to educate students.

The establishment of the apiary brought plenty of ways both the community and students could gather information about bees.

"The apiary was built as a place for the community to learn about pollinators and the importance they bring to produce food," the sign says. "The apiary also provides hands-on learning and research

opportunities for Hutson School of Agriculture students and many other educational opportunities."

The apiary also allows the pollinators to help the community's agriculture.

"We also have local farmers that have produce, like watermelon, strawberries and pumpkins, that we will take a couple of hives to pollinate their crops," said Chad Gaylord, agronomy instructor, Hutson School of Agriculture, and Arboretum assistant manager.

More specifically, Gaylord said the bees help farmers produce a higher product yield and overall a better product.

Gaylord said that while Jones is no longer involved with the apiary, he employs students to help maintain the bees environment.

"The students do inspection on the hives, check for a parasite that hurts the bees and treats the bees from this parasite," Gaylord said. "The students also help with the honey harvest in October. During the semester the students give presentations to our local elementary kids about how important bees are."

Freshman Tommy Brubaker brings a local perspective on the establishment of Murray State's apiary.

"As someone who has grown up in this area, I think that Murray State's apiary is a great concept to really get the community personally involved and get them to truly understand how much our environment needs the bees and how much of our environment would negatively change if bees went extinct," Brubaker said.

For more information about Murray State's apiary, contact Gaylord at cgaylord1@murraystate.edu.

West Kentucky drag community thrives amid anti-LGBTQ legislation

Local drag performer highlights their work in Western Kentucky, how to support drag community

In a year marked by anti-LGBT laws from the Kentucky legislature, Murray and the surrounding regional community has given rise to a robust and resilient drag community.

Earlier this year, Senate Bill 115 was introduced into the Kentucky General Assembly. This bill, which claimed to target “adult-oriented businesses,” would have placed severe limitations on the local drag community and their ability to host performances in the state.

Despite these challenges, local drag performer and Graves County native Diana Tunnel said the community has been supportive of drag.

“I noticed a lot of support for the drag community from people locally and nationally,” Tunnel said. “I have received a lot of messages and comments about how ridiculous it is that these laws were trying to be passed.”

Tunnel said they have been involved with drag for around six years. After earning their Bachelor of Science in theater from Murray State and moving to Chicago, Tunnel first performed at a drag competition in a Chicago nightclub.

After moving back to Murray in 2020 with their spouse, another local drag performer who uses the stage name Ken Sucky, Tunnel has been dedicated to participating in and building up the local drag community.



Over the course of the last year, drag performances have been hosted at places like the Big Apple Grill in Murray, the Grove in Murray and the Johnson Bar in Paducah.

Tunnel said local drag performances are usually open to community members over 18, and some events are open to all ages. While most of the audience is general community, Tunnel estimates about 20% of the audience at their drag shows consists of Murray State students.

The performances and activities at drag shows can be just as diverse as the audience, Tunnel said.

“Some performers are better dancers,” Tunnel said. “I am not one of them. We have people who do stunts and cartwheels. We have drag queens who do heavy metal numbers. At the right show, you might see some stage blood.”

Tunnel encourages anyone who is interested to see what the local drag community is about.

“I would encourage anyone in this community to come down to one of our shows,” Tunnel said. “They are just good fun. It’s people playing dress up at the end of the day. I would tell anybody who wants to come on out, don’t take anything too seriously and just have a good time.”

When they are not in drag, local performers can be found in a variety of places.

Tunnel said some of the local drag queens can be found working in restaurants, hotels or in the classrooms of Murray State.

Off the stage, Diana Tunnel is Devan Reed, a local restaurant manager and the president of Murray Pride.

Murray Pride is an organization that seeks to celebrate the local LGBTQ+ community in Murray and Calloway County.

Over the last year, Reed and Murray Pride have been able to organize a local pride festival, provide gender-affirming clothes to and help with prescription costs for transgender members of the community and organize a

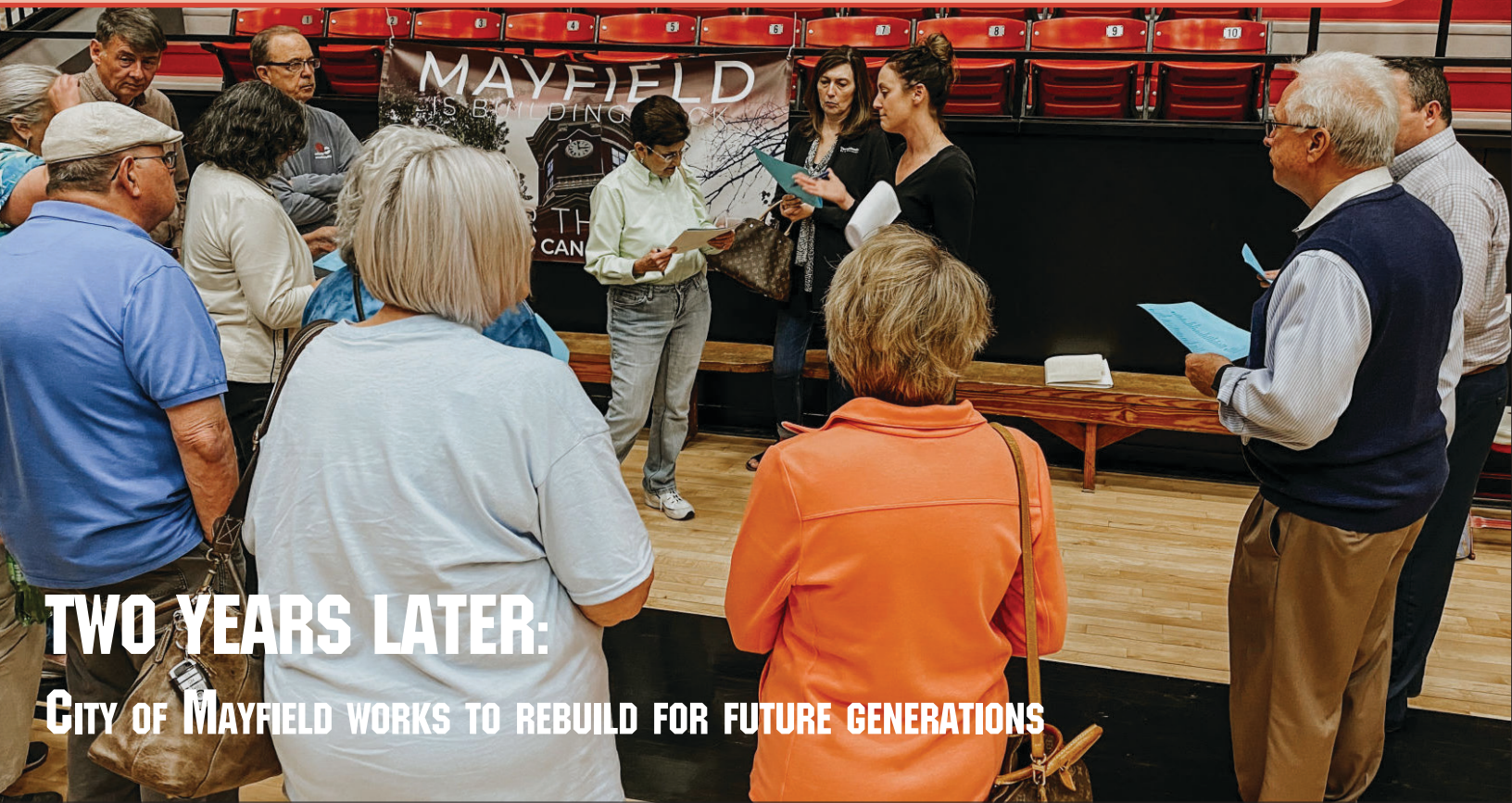
Pride prom event that was open to the public.

Reed said many of the proceeds from the local drag performances went to fund these activities organized by Murray Pride.

The next community drag show will be hosted at the Big Apple Grill on June 9. This performance, open to anyone 18 and over, will include performances from Tunnel, their spouse Ken Sucky and three other drag queens.

Reed also encourages those interested to attend this year's Murray Pride Festival, which will be hosted on Sept. 15, 16, and 17.





TWO YEARS LATER:

CITY OF MAYFIELD WORKS TO REBUILD FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

Story by Addi Allen

Photos by Dionte Berry and Jill Smith

Photos courtesy Jill Celaya

An EF4 tornado tore through Mayfield, Kentucky, on Dec. 10, 2021, which resulted in 24 lives, over 400 homes and roughly 180 businesses were lost.

Every government building was destroyed: Mayfield City Hall, Mayfield Fire Station, Mayfield Police Station, Graves County Courthouse and Graves County Jail, along with the electric and water companies.

The government facilities and employees are now scattered across town. The mayor's office is located in an old fitness building, and the county offices are in a vacant shopping center.

Jill Celaya was the chair of Mayfield Rebuilds, an organization that guides the process of rebuilding. In her role, Celaya also chaired over seven subcommittees, working to rebuild the city she calls home.

"Mayfield Rebuilds is a community group focused on dreaming about our future," Celaya said.

Mayfield Rebuilds is currently undergoing an extension to its organization.

Some projects you can expect to see in this extension include a community-wide clean-up, tree planting and other events.

This extension is expecting to see more diversity and more projects. Celaya said communications, reporting and accountability will come in the future of this group. No other information is being disclosed at this time.

“This new group will include new diversity, new ideas and is the logical next step to the rebuilding of Mayfield” Celaya said.

There is history within Mayfield, Kentucky. In the early 19th century, the city was a powerful industrial area, and even some of today’s celebrities call Mayfield home.

The tobacco industry was one of the first industries in Mayfield and one of the longest lived.

Mayfield Rebuilds, its new extension and Celaya are looking to rebuild Mayfield as a place where children and grandchildren want to settle down.

The hope of this new extension is to provide a city with more economical opportunities.

These organizations are being optimistic about the losses from Dec. 10 and are using this to build from the ground up to provide opportunities that were not present before.

“The tornado was awful, but it has given us the opportunity to plan for our future and future generations,” Celaya said. “We want to build back better than we were before.”

There is still an abundance of work still needs to be completed before the city will see its new norm.

Celaya said the city and organizations are still needing volunteers to help around the community.

“Get involved and help,” Celaya said. “We are not done, and we have a long way to go.”

For more information on how to get involved, visit mayfieldrebuilds.com.



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MSU group supports survivors

Pink Ribbon Racers began in August 2022 as a support group among friends and has grown into a campus organization supporting those who have been impacted by breast cancer.

Carrie McGinnis, director of Alumni Relations, is one of the founding members of the group. McGinnis said she became aware of the need for the group after two breast cancer diagnoses of her own.

“I had people, who were also newly diagnosed, come to me and say things like, ‘I’ve been diagnosed with breast cancer,’” McGinnis said. “Do you have any advice?”

In its inception, the group met once a month. However, because of busier schedules, the group has started meeting every other month during the spring semester.

McGinnis said the group is important because it allows individuals to share

information they may not have received from medical professionals—experiences and information only cancer survivors would know.

“We need to be able to just talk to each other so that we can inform each other about unique experiences that may end up happening to you at some point,” McGinnis said.

McGinnis was first diagnosed with breast cancer in May 2018. At that time, it was caught early through regular screening.

The first of McGinnis’ treatments was successful. She entered remission two months after her initial diagnosis but was diagnosed again in December 2020.

The second treatment included a bilateral mastectomy and reconstruction. With a family history of breast cancer, and the fact she had it twice by 46, McGinnis said she and the

Breast Cancer Statistics

About 1 in 8 of U.S. women are going to develop invasive breast cancer in the course of their life.

(breastcancer.org)

A report finds that nationally, 297,790 new cases of breast cancer have been reported among women in 2023.

(cancer.org)

Estimated new breast cancer cases in KY 2023: 4,030

(American Cancer Society)

Estimated breast cancer deaths in KY 2023 (female): 790

(American Cancer Society)

doctors decided a double mastectomy was the best option.

McGinnis completed her mastectomy surgery in 2021 and finished reconstruction surgeries in 2022.

Both times, regular, precautionary exams helped catch the cancer early.

“Unfortunately, simply speaking statistically, there will be more and more members of our campus community who will be impacted by breast cancer,” McGinnis said. “Whether they are facing a new diagnosis, dealing with complications during their recovery process or have recently finished treatment and now feel comfortable getting out, we are here to be a network of support.”

Lisa Schmidt, the coordinator of Racer Academy, also belongs to the support group. Schmidt was officially diagnosed in January 2021.

I will say cancer just steals little bits and pieces away from you constantly, and on the surface, the little things don't seem that big, but once you just keep stealing, stealing, stealing—it's like I just want to scream.

*— Lisa Schmidt,
coordinator of Racer Academy*

In 2021, she went for a mammogram, and they told her it looked highly suspicious. After a biopsy, she was diagnosed with breast cancer.

“[The surgeon] said, ‘You have cancer,’” Schmidt said. “He was surprised because he kept saying, ‘You’re so young. You’re so young.’”

Schmidt needed four chemotherapy treatments.

Although she also finished her radiation treatment over a year ago, Schmidt said she will still have to continue various treatments for the next several years.

“I will say cancer just steals little bits and pieces away from you constantly, and on the surface, the little things don’t seem that big, but once you just keep stealing, stealing, stealing—it’s like I just want to scream,” Schmidt said. “You almost have to mourn your body. You have to mourn your previous self because your body will never be the same again after cancer.”

Schmidt said she finds the support group valuable because of the shared experiences among the members.

“I think whenever you go into that room, you can just breathe,” Schmidt said. “Everybody there knows exactly what you went through.”

Dena Weinberger, an associate professor of biology, was diagnosed at 34 years old.

After finding a lump, she went to the hospital for noninvasive testing, which determined it was benign.

After talking to her doctor, she had two choices: a check-up every six months or a lumpectomy.

She chose removal, and afterwards, the medical staff did a routine pathology and found the lump was not benign after all. Weinberger said she then had to go to the oncology ward and ended up being treated with chemotherapy.

Less than a year after Weinberger finished chemotherapy treatments, she was diagnosed with another type of breast cancer.

“One of the things that I think is hard for people to get when they’re not a part of it is that every cancer is different...you’re never

going to be able to cure it in the way that we think of curing most diseases because the collection of mutations that led to my disease was different than the person next to me who has the exact same diagnosis,” Weinberger said.

Weinberger had a surgery during fall 2022 and said she will have at least one more surgery before her treatment is complete.

We laugh a lot about the oddities we’ve all experienced, from medication side effects and hormonal imbalances to hair loss and brain fog...

*— Carrie McGinnis,
director of Alumni Relations*

“I will say that sometimes the uncertainty can be harder to deal with because you don’t know what you’re going to do,” Weinberger said. “You don’t know when it’s going to happen. You don’t know what you’re going to need.”

As a private person, Weinberger was hesitant to join a support group.

“I’m glad that [Pink Ribbon Racers] does not match my fears of a pity party,” Weinberger said. “It’s much more of, ‘This is what happened to me. This is what I’ve learned. Let me complain about this for a while. I just need to get it out to someone who knows.’”

McGinnis said the group is open to the campus community. Anyone who is interested in joining the group, can email her at cmcginnis2@murraystate.edu.

“We laugh a lot about the oddities we’ve all experienced, from medication side effects and hormonal imbalances to hair loss and brain fog,” McGinnis said. “We can laugh because we’ve all been there, and it helps to not feel alone.”



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Mental Health by the Numbers

An Overview on Student Mental Health

A Lumina survey found that 76% of college students said they considered withdrawing from college due to emotional stress.

(Council of Post Secondary Education)

Approximately 37% of high school students reported poor mental health, which includes stress, anxiety and depression.

(Pew Research Center)

73% of students experience a mental health crisis of some kind during college.

(Clay Center for Healthy Minds)

Only 25% of students with a mental health problem seek help.

(Clay Center for Healthy Minds)



Shann Riley/*The News*

May is Mental Health Awareness Month.

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ACROSS THE GLOBE: Student highlights her experience in the Kentucky National Guard

Most students take the traditional path after high school by attending college or a trade school. But one Murray State student chose another path that sent her to the other side of the world.

Bri Hunter, a junior journalism major, enlisted in the Kentucky Army National Guard after graduating from Calloway County High School in 2020.

Hunter said she originally joined the National Guard to help offset the cost of tuition, but quickly gained valuable experiences that helped boost her confidence.

Hunter began basic training on June 28, 2020 at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, during the height of COVID-19. Training lasted until Nov. 19, 2020, because of the pandemic.

After returning from training, Hunter found herself enrolled in her first semester classes at Murray State. But she was suddenly recruited for her first mission.

Hunter's first mission was to head to Washington, D.C. after the Capitol insurrection on Jan. 6, 2021.

Hunter said the Washington mission was an interesting experience, and she holds more appreciation for the Guard after experiencing her own mission.

"I did not think I would ever get the opportunity to go to the Capitol with nobody else in there because it's always busy with all the tours," Hunter said. "I think my appreciation mainly comes from just getting to learn to be sort of a law enforcement officer in the military just because I didn't really know how different it was in civilian life."

During this mission, Hunter worked to ensure another riot would not break out at the Capitol building by standing guard at the Capitol gates.

After returning from her mission, Hunter was quickly sent on another mission that took her to Kosovo.

Kosovo, located in southern Europe, is not recognized as a sovereign state by its neighbor Serbia.

This lack of representation has created unrest in Kosovo.

Because of operation security, Hunter is not allowed to disclose where she was located on this mission, but was able to discuss some of her duties while abroad.

In her role, Hunter worked with military police and international military police to ensure peace was maintained within Kosovo.

As part of this role, Hunter would drive citizens around the city she was stationed in to ensure they arrived at their destination safely. Hunter was able to take classes in Kosovo during the fall 2022 semester and said she had an opportunity to shadow public information officers.

While shadowing the public information officers, Hunter was able to tie her love for journalism to her current life in the Guard.

“We did general [classes of] ‘This is how we write articles for the military’...and we did a photography class,” Hunter said. “I was able to write a story about Police Week and was able to participate and photograph one of the events: the 6K ruck.”

In Kosovo, Hunter was allowed to use her days off to work a chaplains’ trip, which allowed her to visit the different churches in the city.

“I got to go to one of them in Prizren, Kosovo and go see the different mosques and Eastern Orthodox churches,” Hunter said. “When it comes to religion, yes, it’s predominantly Muslim, but there is that coexistence between Christianity and Islam over there.”


By joining the National Guard, Hunter said she has more confidence in herself and is grateful she had the experience to travel.

“I have learned that I am capable of a lot more than I thought...I got tased and [pepper] sprayed for this deployment,” Hunter said. “I just really enjoyed the experience of getting to go overseas because I’ve always wanted to travel to Europe, and I didn’t care if it was for work or for personal pleasure. I just wanted to go.”

Hunter said she values her interactions and friendships she has made with people from all over the world.


“I’ve always loved to meet people with different cultures,” Hunter said. “I really like to learn about other people’s lifestyles and their cultures depending on just where they come from, whether it’s a different political mindset, different religion...I just think it’s cool to sit down and get to know somebody.”





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Story by Ava Chuppe
 Photos Courtesy of the *Paducah Sun*

Celebration honors Haitian Revolution

Paducah plans its annual Eighth of August Celebration to recognize the day enslaved people in Haiti earned their freedom.

The celebration, which has taken place for over a century, falls on a day different from many other communities. Many acknowledge emancipation from slavery on Jan. 1, the anniversary of the day the Emancipation Proclamation was enacted in 1863. Others choose June 19, known as Juneteenth, to commemorate the day enslaved people in Galveston, Texas, first heard of the end of the Civil War.

Paducah, on the other hand, recognizes the day enslaved people in Santo Domingo, Haiti, earned their freedom. Haiti became the first Black-led republic in the world and the first independent Caribbean state following a slave uprising against French colonists that began in 1791—known as the Haitian Revolution.

According to a 1905 edition of *The Paducah Sun*, then called *The Paducah Daily News Democrat*, the city chose Aug. 8 for these reasons.

The edition explained Paducah’s Emancipation Day attracted travelers from hundreds of miles away.

Visitors from Illinois, Indiana, Missouri and Tennessee were recorded to have attended the celebration and continue to do so to this day.

Javanta Dawson, W.C. Young Board Member and organizer of the celebration, said a souvenir book remains a tradition each year.

“We’ve been doing that particular journal for about 40 years now,” Dawson said. “It has really grown...we showcase different businesses, family memorials, we’re doing a section that’s on the graduates or students that are achieving and doing good things for their community.”

The book also includes a section dedicated to historical preservation of Black churches, businesses and other points of interest in the community.

Dawson said events will take place outside the official schedule.

“Our main purpose is to organize the Eighth of August festivities, but anyone is welcome to have an event, forum, dance or whatever,” Dawson said. “There’s going to be a lot of other things going on besides what is on our schedule of events.”

Dawson said she has always embraced the celebration.

“I’ve lived abroad, but I’ve come home for the eighth,” Dawson said. “It’s a really exciting celebration...Everyone plans their family reunions, church reunions, class reunions, so it’s always a great time to see family, friends and classmates during this time of year.”

Paducah Historical Marker No. 1957, which the Kentucky Historical Society added at the intersection of Adams and S 8th St. in 1995, also commemorates Aug. 8.

The marker reads: “Traditionally, on August 8, African Americans assemble in Paducah to celebrate freedom and pay tribute to their roots. They gather annually for dances, ballgames and picnics as a family occasion and in a spirit of community remembrance. In some years people have come from as far away as St. Louis, Memphis and Chicago.”

Jim Seaver, community engagement coordinator for the Kentucky Historical Society, said it is important the historical marker commemorates Kentucky’s Black community.

“It’s equally important that our historical markers, celebrate Black joy, pay homage to those who came before and recognize the significance of annual gatherings and homecomings within our local communities,” Seaver said. “The KHS historical marker on Paducah’s Eighth of August celebration has proudly done this since its dedication at that observance back in 1995.”

Seaver said the event spurs reflection not only within Paducah’s Black community but within the community at large.

“It occurs at a time when many people are thinking harder about Kentucky’s past and the way that race relations have been conducted in the past and the present,” Seaver said. “Having an opportunity like this for dialogue...can only serve to benefit Kentucky in the future.”

Because the event expands on Juneteenth, Seaver called it unique.

“That date tends to be most prominent for these kinds of celebrations, so for Paducah to kind of chart its own course and look to the Haitian Revolution for the inspiration for this event is an exciting and interesting aspect of this,” Seaver said.

The celebration typically includes activities like a parade, a fashion show, gospel music and more.

This year’s itinerary begins with an open house at the W.C. Young Community Center on Aug. 2 at 6 p.m. On Aug. 3, the Center will host a Back to School Street Dance at 6 p.m., and Flora Hall of the Carson Park Fairgrounds will hold an Emancipation Dance at 8 p.m.

All day on Aug. 5, a parade and activities at Robert Coleman Park will commence. The following day, famed gospel singer CeCe Winans will perform at the Carson Center, and the Lil Mr. & Ms. 8th August pageant will take place at the W.C. Young Center at 2 p.m.

The festivities conclude with an Emancipation Breakfast at the W.C. Young Center at 7 a.m. on Aug. 8.

To stay posted on events for the Eighth of August Celebration, follow the W.C. Young Community Center on Facebook.



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*— Jim Seaver,
community engagement coordinator
for the Kentucky Historical Society*



Story by MacKenzie Rogers

Photos Courtesy of Anne Beyer, Wyatt Severs and Jennifer Fairbanks

Local artists draw inspiration from Kentucky

Artists center their creations around Kentucky landscapes

Throughout Western Kentucky lies an artistic community that features a diverse range of creatives, from crafters to painters to woodworkers.

Regional artists credit institutions like the Murray Art Guild, Murray State and the Kentucky Arts Council for helping them grow in their careers and connect to other Western Kentucky creatives.

Wyatt Severs, Murray State alum, is a commission-based woodworker located in New Concord, Kentucky. He not only creates sculptures and pieces of furniture, but also teaches carpentry to high schoolers at the Paducah Innovation Hub, where students from many counties can have real-world learning experiences.

"I didn't know I wanted to be an artist until I went

to Murray State after high school," Severs said. "I've always been a creative person, but I didn't find out about the idea of making a living on that kind of work until I went to Murray. I realized that there was this whole community of artists and makers and people that supported and bought it."

The Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts recently commissioned Severs to create a sculpture commemorating a board president who is stepping down.

"That's often how it works in my field," Severs said. "You find a client that likes you and your style... They'll latch on to you, and they'll have you build quite a few things for them."

Severs said he found some of his artistic inspiration in architectural designs, often incorporating brick patterns into his pieces.



“I’m very interested in the ability of humans being able to take materials and recreate them into objects,” Severs said. “I’m inspired by all the time periods...I kind of think that when I’m constructing work that it is very much a conversation between me and nature, and part of the thing that I love about wood is that it is this organic material that has given us the ability to basically kind of build.”

Also from New Concord is Anne Beyer, a wood fire ceramic specialist. Fire ceramics use a technique called wood firing, which uses flames and ashes to paint across the surface of clay, creating chemical reactions and organic patterns.

“I am inspired by the relationship between nature and the human psyche,” Beyer said. “My portfolio consists of functional pottery and ceramic sculpture that are primarily finished in multiple-day wood firings. This practice engages the whole body in a way that connects me to my intuition by cultivating my control of attention, flow and sense of self.”

Having created art for over 11 years, Beyer says she has had an interest in the arts since her childhood, with both her grandmother and mother supporting creative expression.

“We were always making things like jewelry, clay animals, clothes and pot holders, to name a few, when I was growing up,” Beyer said. “I was drawn to the arts because it was a way to combine many areas of research together and make a life for myself that created meaning, purpose and connected me to others in my community on a deep level.”

Beyer said she takes inspiration from the natural landscape and animals she sees near her home by Kentucky Lake.

Beyer is also a member of the Murray Art Guild Community Center and said local organizations help her connect to other Kentucky artists she would have been unaware of otherwise.

“Every place we live has a huge impact on how we relate to and think about ourselves and the world around us,” Beyer said. “Restriction on bodily autonomy in Kentucky affects me as a woman, which influences what I am researching and making in my studio. The lack of diversity efforts in the local population influences the culture that I am living within.”

While each of the local artists resides within Kentucky, only one lives locally within the Murray community.

Oil painter Jennifer Fairbanks owns Gallery 109

and Fairbanks Studio, a local art gallery that offers weekly oil painting classes for people of all skill levels.

“I grew a lot from trying to teach, because having to explain something to a group of people, you have to know it pretty well, so I realized areas where I needed to grow,” Fairbanks said. “Learning for me, I found it to be very reciprocal. You know, as I gave out, it came back into me.”

Fairbanks paints classical realism inspired by Kentucky’s landscape. While living in New York for 11 years, she adapted to painting cityscapes but said she truly loves the lushness and beauty only found in nature.



“Being in the landscape is sort of inspiring to me,” Fairbanks said. “I react pretty strongly to the things I see in nature, in the way light falls on the things in nature, the sunset, the changing of the light. All of that is fascinating to me. There is always an enthusiasm to be outside, and I think that’s been there for me since I was a little kid.”

While each of the artists found themselves in Kentucky for varying reasons, the state has proven to serve as artistic inspiration and as a breeding ground for their respective mediums.

For more information, works can be found online through respective links; Wyatt Severs, wyattsevers.com; Anne Beyer, annekbeyer.com; and Jennifer Fairbanks, jfairbanks.com.

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