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2026
Lawn &
Garden
Issue

18

24

MARCH

VOL 80 | NO 3

18

GARDENING FOR THE BIRDS

Did you know your backyard can provide valuable habitat for birds—including vulnerable species? Learn more about using native plants, food sources and water features to provide year-round support to avian visitors. You'll attract more birds while creating valuable wildlife habitat.

24

PLAN TO CAN

Early spring is garden planning time—and that's not just for planting. You also need to think about what you're going to do with all that produce after you harvest. Learn more about canning, freezing, drying and fermenting, and plan now to make the most of your garden bounty.

ON THE COVER A monarch butterfly perches on swamp milkweed at The Arboretum, State Botanical Garden of Kentucky. The arboretum is one of 12 stops along the recently created Kentucky Garden Trail, featuring green spaces across the state. Read more about the trail on page 36, and plan your own getaway to experience gardens, sculptures, pollinator habitat, Kentucky history and more. Photo: Craig Sargent

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Kentucky Living is published to create a community of people who take pride in thinking of themselves as Kentuckians and as knowledgeable electric co-op consumer-members, in order to improve their quality of life.

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Spring is coming

Look for signals that winter is giving way

THE START OF 2026 has tested our patience.

An ice storm, persistent cold and a winter that seems unwilling to loosen its grip have made this season feel longer than usual. Energy bills are higher, the days are gray and the simple act of shoveling snow wears thin quickly. Add to that a nonstop news cycle filled with global uncertainty—Venezuela, China, Russia, the Middle East—and it's easy to feel like the world is unsettled.

Here in Kentucky, late winter is typically the time when we begin to sense spring on the horizon. This year, that anticipation feels delayed. The economy has moved in fits and starts, and many people are understandably uneasy. It's been a strange stretch for our country and our commonwealth.

But as I reflect on where we are, I find myself thinking less about what's been hard and more about what's ahead.

Spring has a way of doing that.

I start seeing golf tournaments on television from California and Florida, and imagining warmer days. Pitchers and catchers report. Spring training begins. I think about my favorite baseball team, the Cincinnati Reds, and how Opening Day in Cincinnati is more than a game—it's a celebration, a signal that winter is finally giving way.

Those signs matter. They remind us that seasons turn.

They also get me thinking about the electric industry, which is experiencing a turning point of its own. After decades of relatively flat growth, energy demand is rising rapidly. During those quieter years, we didn't build enough generation, and some resources were retired that would be helpful today. Now we're facing the challenge of building again—and doing it wisely.

There is uncertainty, but there is also opportunity. Nuclear energy is back in the national conversation, and communities like Paducah are embracing the potential to play a meaningful role in that future. Natural gas production remains strong, even as prices fluctuate. Across the country, investment in new generation and infrastructure is gaining momentum.

Technology gives me optimism as well.

As an electrical engineer, I've watched tools evolve from manual, time-consuming calculations to advanced modeling, automation and data-driven systems. These technologies have made our work safer, faster and more accurate. While concerns about artificial intelligence deserve serious attention, thoughtful and incremental adoption can unlock enormous benefits—from medical advances to productivity to how we learn and solve problems.

I'm nostalgic, like many people. I think back to the 1970s—the cars we drove, the games we watched, the communities that shaped us. Those memories matter. But time moves forward, and progress doesn't wait.

As cardinals appear outside my window, their red bright against winter's fading white, I'm reminded that change is already happening. Spring is coming. The Kentucky Derby is around the corner. Communities will gather again.

Let's embrace what's ahead, shape change thoughtfully and keep working to make Kentucky stronger.

CHRIS PERRY
President/CEO



KENTUCKY ELECTRIC
COOPERATIVES

FROM THE EDITOR

THERE IS NOTHING NEW

under the sun.



These words, attributed to King Solomon in the book of Ecclesiastes, probably weren't written to address this column, but they popped into my head as I sat down to write. *What can I say that hasn't been said before?*

Probably nothing, but March and the spring season it brings remind me that things can be made anew. This month we shed the cold, barren winter and we look toward a warmer time of growth and replenishment.

So, as you read this month's articles about gardening to attract birds (page 18), reaping the harvests of the gardens you plant (page 24) and sites to visit to see spring and summer in bloom (page 36), take note that plants aren't the only things that grow this time of year.

Just like with plants though, make sure you tend to yourself. Warmer days are ahead and growth is on the horizon.

SHANNON BROCK,
EDITOR

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WIRE

WOMEN IN RURAL ELECTRIFICATION

SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY

Three \$1,000 scholarships available

Women in Rural Electrification is offering three \$1,000 scholarships, open to any eligible college student whose family is served by a Kentucky electric cooperative. The deadline to apply is June 5, 2026. For full eligibility details and an application form, go to KentuckyLiving.com and search for "WIRE 2026" or contact your local cooperative.



BIRDS IN YOUR BACKYARD

More ways to build habitat

Improving your backyard to benefit birds might sound daunting, but experts say it's simpler than you think. Read the story on page 18, then visit KentuckyLiving.com for links to customized planting suggestions, bird identification tools and more.



THE SCURFPEA STORY

An extinct plant scent returns

The Falls-of-the-Ohio scurfpea is extinct, but its scent has been recreated thanks to cutting-edge science and specimens that were collected by a 19th-century Kentuckian. Read the story page 41, then visit us online for additional history.



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Good news

Bad news is readily available. It's easy to get bogged down in it, so what a refreshing shift for a reporter to focus on the good. Marvin Bartlett, news anchor for Lexington's WDKY Fox56, joyfully takes on the task.

Even as a young boy, Bartlett was fascinated with Charles Kuralt's *On the Road* segments. "I thought he had the best job in the world, as he traveled around the country in a recreational vehicle and met ordinary people with extraordinary stories," he explains. He always hoped he would get the chance to do something similar, and in 1993 while working for WLEX-TV, that chance arrived, quickly becoming his most rewarding work.

In 1995, his move to his current position with WDKY ended those segments until 2016, when his manager asked him for ideas that would set the station apart from the rest. *Spirit of the Bluegrass* was revived, with Bartlett taking on all the production himself, from writing to recording to editing.

Since then, his weekly reports featuring unique people and places across the state have proven that all news doesn't have to be bad and that the commonwealth is anything but common. Now, readers can enjoy some of Bartlett's favorites compiled in his book, *Spirit of the Bluegrass: Strange, Surprising, and Sentimental Stories from Kentucky*.

Divided into four categories, stories are

presented as they aired on TV with updates as needed. At only a few pages each, the stories provide a quick pick-me-up when a break is needed from the inundation of current events.

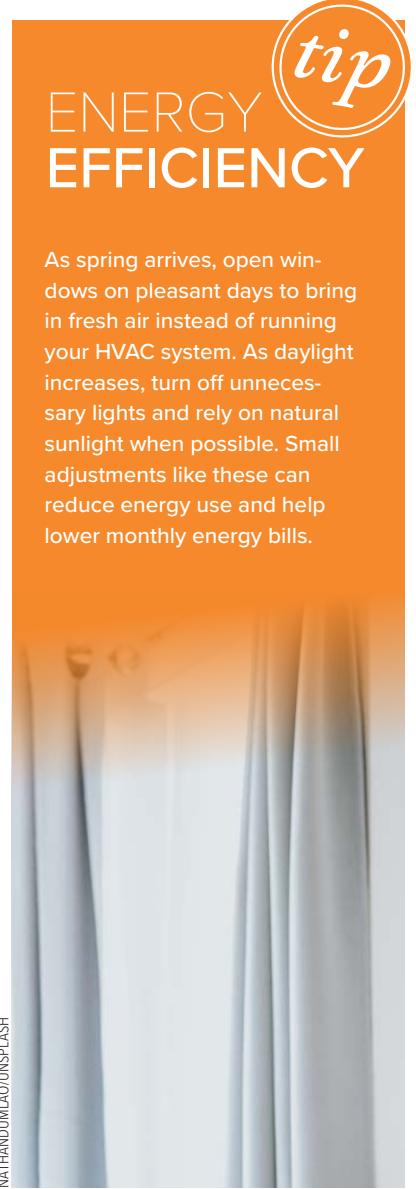
Places such as Cave City's Wigwam Village #2 or Hazard's Mother Goose Inn may just top readers' next road trip adventure list, with a stop at some of the museums, country stores and roadside attractions spotlighted in the Spirited Places section.

The Holiday Spirit segments could leave readers with goosebumps as they discover some of Kentucky's haunts or ready to go all-out for Christmas like Pendleton's Kirsch family with their yearly live nativity or Mary Lou Bohannon with her collection of more than 100 decorated trees in her Versailles home.

Readers meet spirited people such as Adam Fields, who finds solace in the art of rock balancing and Mike Mankel, who creates guitars from bourbon barrels. The Unexpected Spirit section may introduce something new to readers, such as the Primate Rescue Center in Jessamine County or how Dippin' Dots were created right here in Kentucky.

One thing is for certain—there is no shortage of good people and interesting places to continue Bartlett's segments. He says his idea folder holds a "hundred or so" story possibilities at any given time.

» Penny Woods



tip
ENERGY EFFICIENCY

As spring arrives, open windows on pleasant days to bring in fresh air instead of running your HVAC system. As daylight increases, turn off unnecessary lights and rely on natural sunlight when possible. Small adjustments like these can reduce energy use and help lower monthly energy bills.

NATHAN DUMILAO/UNSPLASH



Read and watch

Find *Spirit of the Bluegrass* (Globe Pequot, \$27.95) at www.globepequot.com or at major book retailers. The work earned Marvin Bartlett an Ohio Valley Regional Emmy Award in the writing category.

Video versions of each story can be viewed at www.youtube.com/@SpiritoftheBluegrass. Share story ideas with Bartlett at mbartlett@FOX56news.com.



Vaught continues formula for success

On February 28, 1970, eighth grader Jamie Vaught attended his first professional basketball game. Watching former members of his beloved Kentucky Wildcats rip up and down the court in their new American Basketball Association uniforms was a thrill. He loved the ABA's unique red, white and blue basketball, and the innovative 3-point line that had yet to make its way to the rival National Basketball Association or the collegiate level.

After the final buzzer sounded on a 115-111 Colonels victory over the visiting Miami Floridians, Vaught hung around to get autographs from Louis Dampier, Jim "Goose" Ligon

and Wayne Chapman while his parents waited outside in the car. It was late, and the Vaught family had a two-plus hour drive back to their home in Science Hill, but young Jamie was too excited to be tired.

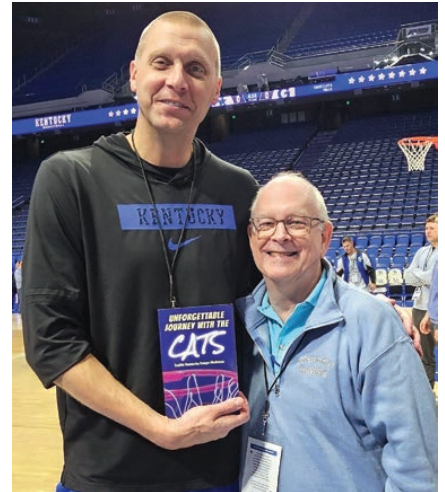
"I was definitely on cloud nine," Vaught says, more than five decades later.

Vaught's introduction to the Colonels makes up one section of his newest book, *Unforgettable Journey with the Cats: Inside Kentucky Hoops Madness* (\$18.95; online or at local booksellers). The book, Vaught's seventh, is a literary quilt, stitching together pieces of Kentucky Wildcat lore. Other chapters include profiles of Tim Couch, Paul Andrews, Reed

Sheppard, Leigh Ann Pope, Kenny Brooks and Trent Noah.

The format works, both for Vaught and his readers. "Since my other volumes, especially the first one which came out in 1991, have done very well, I thought, 'Well, why not?' and continued to use the same road map or format in writing the book," he says.

Vaught's continued output is fueled by his passion for his alma mater, the game of basketball and the state of Kentucky. He says his newest book won't be his last.



Author Jamie Vaught with UK coach Mark Pope. Photo: Kara Ball

"I love writing. I love sports," he says. "That is a nice combination."

» Jarrett Van Meter

featured FRAMES



Mock orange blooms outside a home in Letcher County. Photo by Sheree Combs, of Paris, a Blue Grass Energy consumer-member.

Have a question
or comment for
the editor?



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When ice wouldn't let go

Winter Storm Fern pummels parts of Kentucky

JOE ARNOLD



▶
Fleming-Mason
Energy Lineman
Josh Hamm climbs a
pole while working
mutual aid for
Tri-County Electric.
Photo: Tri-County
Electric Foreman
Steve Emmert

FOR MUCH OF KENTUCKY, Winter Storm Fern in late January and early February was a nuisance. Roads iced over and subfreezing temperatures kept some schools closed for weeks.

In Southern Kentucky, it was a disaster.

Members of electric cooperatives found themselves on the northern edge of a catastrophic ice storm that paralyzed large portions of Tennessee and Mississippi. Ice wrapped power lines, trees bent and snapped under the weight and poles failed. Of the more than 1 million Americans who lost power, 68,500 were Kentucky co-op members.

The hardest hit Kentucky co-ops, including South Kentucky RECC, Tri-County Electric, Jackson Energy and Farmers RECC got help from about 140 mutual

aid personnel from more than 20 cooperatives in Kentucky and Illinois.

Several Kentucky co-ops were also able to send more than 50 other personnel to assist sister co-ops in Tennessee and Mississippi.

Why restoration takes time—and why safety comes first

After an ice storm, restoring power safely follows the same steps every time: assess the damage, clear the right-of-way, replace broken equipment, rebuild destroyed infrastructure, verify clearances and only then re-energize the line. Every step matters.

A critical safety practice is lockout-tagout, a procedure that ensures lines are fully de-energized

What fuels are used to make electricity?



NATURAL GAS



COAL



NUCLEAR



HYDRO



WIND



SOLAR



LANDFILL GAS



FUEL OIL

NADINKO - MAHDI FOURLEAF/VEER/ADBE STOCK

before crews begin work. Visiting mutual aid crews—no matter how experienced—need a local lineworker present to guide switching, verify system conditions and coordinate every repair.

Co-ops restore power to all locations that can safely receive service, but if a home's service equipment is damaged—such as a weatherhead, meter base or service entrance—electricity must remain disconnected until repairs are completed and inspected by a licensed, state-approved electrical inspector.

For most of Kentucky, Winter Storm Fern was disruptive. In the hardest hit areas, it was life-altering. And for the lineworkers, dispatchers, right-of-way crews and support staff who worked through the bitter cold conditions, it was a reminder of why the cooperative model exists: to serve local communities.

Fuel is the largest cost in making electricity

Co-op members taking a closer look at their bill after the prolonged cold snap may question one of the most misunderstood words on an electricity bill: fuel.

When you see the word “fuel” on the bill from your local electric cooperative, it is not related to what it costs your co-op to fill the tanks of its fleet of trucks. Instead, the fuel your co-op is talking about is the raw material used to generate electricity, from the coal and natural gas at fossil fuel plants to uranium at nuclear plants, to the costs to buy power from other utilities.

For consumer-members of the five co-ops that

purchase power from the Tennessee Valley Authority, the line item on their bill is called the Fuel Cost Adjustment. Consumer-members of the 16 Kentucky electric distribution co-ops that own East Kentucky Power Cooperative, and the three co-ops that own Big Rivers Electric, will see Fuel Adjustment Clause (often referred to as FAC) on their bill.

These adjustments vary each month because the costs for coal, gas and purchased power vary, along with the weather. Changes in weather will dramatically change the amount of the fuel needed to generate power and the fuel charge. Both the Fuel Cost Adjustment and Fuel Adjustment Clause are designed to protect rate-payers from permanent rate adjustments when fuel costs experience temporary increases.

The fuel adjustment typically remains relatively steady, and sometimes can be a bill credit, but supply chain issues and inflationary pressures have increased the price of fuels.

Though the fuel adjustment charge is a line item on your local co-op's bill statement, neither the co-op nor its power supplier keeps that money. The fuel charge is strictly a pass-through to pay for the fuel.

While fuel prices impact electricity market prices, the power suppliers for Kentucky make long-term plans to protect members from the short-term volatility in fuel prices.

Co-op members are encouraged to conserve energy as much as possible to help control costs. **KL**

‘Inspiring examples of civic stewardship’

Beautify the Bluegrass honors homegrown improvements to public spaces

JOE ARNOLD | CEREMONY PHOTOS BY WADE HARRIS



▶ **ON THE HOUR IN DOWNTOWN** Loretto, the sound of bells rises from a clock tower that didn't exist just a few years ago.

Editor Shannon Brock, left, and Commissioner of the Kentucky Department of Tourism Mike Mangeot, recognize members of Beautify Loretto Inc. as the recipient of the 2025 Beautify the Bluegrass Governor's Award.

Where weeds and debris once filled a vacant lot, neighbors and visitors now stop, listen and linger. For the small volunteer team behind Beautify Loretto, Inc., the bells mark more than time.

“It's truly humbling,” says Diane Mattingly, the group's president. “The Clock Tower Plaza project was a labor of love.”

The Loretto Clock Tower Plaza is the recipient of the 2025 Beautify the Bluegrass Governor's Award, given by the Governor's office in partnership with Kentucky's electric cooperatives and *Kentucky Living*. The annual initiative recognizes homegrown efforts to improve public spaces.



Nominations are now open for the 2026 Beautify the Bluegrass on KentuckyLiving.com. The deadline to enter is July 20.

“We know when people beautify their hometowns, they are motivated by a sense of community



pride—they’re not seeking recognition,” says *Kentucky Living* Editor Shannon Brock. “But we want to share these stories as inspiring examples of turning that pride into action.”

In Loretto, an all-volunteer nonprofit transformed the site of a demolished train station into a welcoming anchor.

“It’s the first thing people see when they drive through town,” says Deana Cissell, a Beautify Loretto volunteer. “It shows that the people in the community really do love our town.”

The outsized impact of the clock tower project and four other 2025 finalists reflects the cooperative spirit that defines Beautify the Bluegrass and mirrors the mission of Kentucky’s electric cooperatives: improving the quality of life in local communities.

Preserving a legacy

Irvin Schoolhouse Renovation – Russell County

One hundred years after their great-grandfather built the Irvin Schoolhouse in Russell Springs, the Bernard sisters honored that legacy by rescuing and renovating the abandoned building.



◀ The Bernard sisters and community members restored the Irvin Schoolhouse in Russell County.

At the Beautify the Bluegrass ceremony in October, the four women beamed as Kentucky Tourism Commissioner Mike Mangeot described their efforts.

“We’re very proud and humbled,” says Belinda Doty. “We’re glad we can do something for Russell County and get something exciting going there.”

“It’s becoming more and more usable for the community,” says Dennis Price, a cousin of the sisters and pastor at Pleasant Hill Community Church. “We’ve had weddings, showers, sunrise services—it’s a beautiful opportunity.”



▲ **Carrying the torch**

The “Boo” Singleton Project honors its namesake by continuing river cleanup efforts in and around Pendleton County.

The “Boo” Singleton Project – Pendleton County
Robert “Boo” Singleton didn’t wait for permission to clean up the Licking River and other sites in Pendleton County. He simply went to work—pulling tires from creeks and picking up trash along roadsides, day after day.

“He was very passionate,” says Tami Vater, Pendleton County’s economic and tourism development director. “If he believed in something, there was nothing that got in the way.”

▶ Logsdon Valley Park has been reimagined with upgrades to Logsdon Valley Park Trail.

After Singleton died at the age of 66 amid historic flooding last year, volunteers made sure his work didn’t stop, launching the “Boo” Singleton Project to organize cleanups and create a waterways foundation dedicated to environmental stewardship.

“When we put Boo’s name on it, it really struck a chord,” says Lindie Huffman of the Pendleton County Extension Office. “People wanted to be a part of something they knew mattered to him.”

Trails that bring people together

Logsdon Valley Park Trail – Grayson County
In downtown Leitchfield, Logsdon Valley Park has been reshaped into a more accessible, family-friendly destination. New steps improved trail access, a washed-out bridge was rebuilt through donated labor and a stage now hosts concerts and community events.

“I remember looking down in that ravine years ago and thinking, ‘What could be done with that?’”



says Nancy Armes, president of the Public Trails Association of Grayson County. “I never dreamed it could be transformed into what it is now.”

For Grayson County Tourism Director Tiffany Decker, the improvements reflect broader momentum. “We’re proud to be a Kentucky Trail Town,” she says. “The park is really the heart of town.”



◀ Operation Community Cleanup in Owensboro honors the memory of Issac Sterett and is organized by a foundation established by his family.

Competition with a purpose

Operation Community Cleanup – Daviess County
More than five years after the death of an Owensboro fifth grader, his love of the outdoors is perpetuated by the Issac Sterett Adventure Foundation.

“We wanted to honor him in the best way we knew how,” says his mother, Katie Sterett. “We are trying to do projects and outreach that are important to our community, but also from a 10-year-old boy’s perspective, keeping children at front of mind.”

Operation Community Cleanup turns service into a friendly competition, drawing schools, families and businesses together each year.

“We have a trash trophy,” says Julia Tipmore, the foundation’s director. “We kind of figured that we needed to start the initiative ourselves and beautify our own community first and hopefully set an example for everyone.”

From clock towers and schoolhouses to trails and cleanups, Beautify the Bluegrass reflects a simple truth: communities are strongest when people step up together. That belief has long guided Kentucky’s electric cooperatives—and it continues to power hometown progress across the commonwealth. **KL**

Everyone loves a good before and after.



Beautify the Bluegrass

Across Kentucky, volunteers and communities work to Beautify the Bluegrass. We want to recognize these projects.

Plan your project to complete and enter by July 20 or nominate outstanding examples from your community.

DEADLINE TO ENTER IS JULY 20

Get information at KentuckyLiving.com/Beautify

KentuckyLiving



“Music is who I am”



▶ Vicki Bell directs the Kentucky Bach Choir and KBC instrumentalists at a spring concert in Lexington.

Bell helps lead Kentucky Bach Choir

HARRODSBURG

“Piano was always the basis for everything,” says Vicki Bell, a Blue Grass Energy consumer-member, whose interest in music blossomed at an early age. Bell shares a childhood story her mother, Betty Peavler, remembers: Rambunctious, 3-year-old Bell couldn’t sit still in her church dress while the rest of the family got ready for Sunday morning services. Peavler figured out if she sat young Bell at the piano, she’d press the keys and create music to entertain herself until the entire family was ready. Bell recalls, “Even as a little girl, I really loved touching pianos and hearing notes.”

By age 7, Bell was taking piano lessons. “For me, there was no going back from that,” she says. “I never wanted to quit.” Bell also learned to play the clarinet, later joining

Bell and Stephen Bolster are co-artistic directors of the Kentucky Bach Choir. They are shown at a December concert in Lexington. Photos: Matt Wells



UPCOMING PERFORMANCES

- **March 28:** Bach Marathon at St. Raphael’s Episcopal Church, 1891 Parkers Mill Road, Lexington. Time TBD; performance schedule posted early March. Free and open to the public. Sponsored by the Kentucky Bach Choir and the Lexington Guild of Organists.
- **April 12:** Kentucky Bach Choir will perform at 7 p.m. at First Presbyterian Church, 174 North Mill St., Lexington. Purchase tickets online or at the door.

For more information, visit www.kentuckybachchoir.org or Kentucky Bach Choir on Facebook.

the high school band. After graduation, she attended the University of Kentucky, earning three degrees, culminating with a doctorate in music theory. Bell joined the faculty at Asbury University, where she taught courses and directed a choir. She retired in 2023 after 30 years.

As an educator, Bell says, “Sharing what you know, what you’ve experienced, with students is just the best because you know you’re creating the next generation of musicians.” But Bell wasn’t finished sharing her musical expertise in the classroom; she continues teaching part-time at Asbury, and recently began a new position as co-director—alongside Stephen Bolster—of the Kentucky Bach Choir. The choir performs the music of Johann Sebastian Bach to inspire and educate audiences. Bell says live performances

“foster a dynamic connection with both fellow performers and listeners.” Upcoming presentations include this month’s annual Bach Marathon, celebrating Bach’s life and musical legacy while showcasing performers of all ages and experience levels. In April, the Kentucky Bach Choir will perform a program featuring four movements from the *St. Matthew Passion*.

Perhaps those childhood Sundays—when Bell sat plinking the keys on the family piano before church—were a prelude to her work as church organist for multiple congregations over many years.

“The real impact on my life and my perception of my life was when I realized that music is not what I do,” she says. “Music is who I am.” **KL**

AMY COBB is the author of two book series for children, *Band Geeks* and *Libby Wimbley*.



Smart plant, strong future

Toyota Boshoku America opens \$225 million Hopkinsville facility

JOE ARNOLD

ON THE NORTHERN OUTSKIRTS of Oak Grove near Fort Campbell, Christian County's manufacturing momentum took another step forward in December when Toyota Boshoku America, a global leader in automotive components and interior systems, formally opened its first U.S. "smart plant."

Shunichi Iwamori, president and CEO of TBA, says the \$225 million investment "marks more than a new manufacturing facility—it reflects our commitment to innovation, resilience and long-term growth." He emphasizes the new plant also "strengthens our partnership with this community, where we are dedicated to creating opportunities and contributing to shared prosperity."

Located on nearly 50 acres, the Hopkinsville facility is TBA's

first to employ smart-manufacturing technologies designed to improve efficiency and environmental performance. Production began last November on seat frame mechanism components—including seat tracks, recliners and motors with gear—for automakers across North and South America.

The company is part of Toyota Boshoku Co., headquartered in Japan. With more than 14,000 employees in 23 locations across the Americas, TBA manufactures interior and filtration components for brands such as Toyota, BMW and Subaru. With the opening of Hopkinsville's



plant, TBA now employs more than 1,100 Kentuckians across five locations in the commonwealth.

"Christian County and the southwestern Kentucky region continue to see phenomenal growth due to the investment and job creation from companies like Toyota Boshoku America," says Christian County Judge-Executive Jerry Gilliam. "We appreciate the company's corporate culture and commitment to being a good neighbor."

Pennyrile Electric, which will power the facility, sees TBA as a natural fit for the community's long-term economic plans.

"This is the kind of project that elevates an entire region," says Alan Gates, president and CEO of Pennyrile Electric. "Toyota Boshoku America brings innovation, high-quality jobs and a long-term commitment that strengthens the communities we serve."

Carter Hendricks, executive director of the Southwestern Kentucky Economic Development Council, says the project creates "transformational opportunities for regional residents and small businesses." **KL**



toyota-boshoku.com/us/

LOCATIONS:

Hopkinsville, Erlanger, Lebanon, Bardstown, Harrodsburg

INDUSTRY:

Automotive

ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES:

Pennyrile Electric, Owen Electric, Inter-County Energy

A statewide footprint, powered by co-ops

Kentucky's electric cooperatives play a large role in powering Toyota Boshoku America's operations in Kentucky. In addition to the new Hopkinsville facility served by Pennyrile Electric, the company's North and South American headquarters in Erlanger is served by Owen Electric. The Northern Kentucky campus oversees design, engineering, sales and corporate management for more than 14,000 employees across 23 facilities in the Americas, making it a strategic hub rather than a production site.

In Lebanon, where Toyota Boshoku is served by Inter-County Energy, the plant manufactures molded headliners and interior trim components that support major North American vehicle assembly plants.

The company also operates long-standing production facilities in Bardstown, known for its precision door-trim molding, and in Harrodsburg, where seat components and textile-based interior parts reflect the company's origins in fabric manufacturing. Together, these five Kentucky locations form a statewide network that strengthens the region's automotive supply chain and helps drive Toyota Boshoku's global interior systems business."

Shown at the December ribbon cutting are Hopkinsville Mayor James Knight, left, Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development Secretary Jeff Noel, Gov. Andy Beshear, TBWK President Yoshiyuki Ando, Toyota Boshoku Corp. President Masayoshi Shirayanagi, Toyota Boshoku America President & CEO Shunichi Iwamori. Photo: Office of the Governor

Gardening for the birds

How to rethink your garden
for wildlife habitat

GLENYE CAIN OAKFORD

Creating a bird-friendly yard isn't about manicured perfection. It's about providing the food, shelter, water and safe spaces that birds want and need. Luckily, the most powerful changes homeowners can make are often simple and easy—and they don't have to be expensive, either.

or
ds



A cedar waxwing perches on a branch. Plants like American holly, spice bush and chokeberry can provide crucial nutrition for native birds. Photo: Gary Bendig/Unsplash

Kentucky's native juniper species, eastern red cedar, provides food for winged visitors. Photo: Jimmy Woods

At bottom, an eastern bluebird eats a caterpillar. Photo: Roaming Lens Photography

Plant native species, take a more relaxed approach to yard tidiness, add a clean water source and supplement habitat with carefully chosen feeders, if you like. Those small efforts can have a surprisingly big payoff in drawing both resident and migratory birds to your property, from juncos to waxwings, orioles to rose-breasted grosbeaks, a wide range of woodpeckers and more.

But before you start buying plants, spend time observing your yard, suggests Alicia Bosela, who owns Ironweed Native Plant Nursery in Waddy. Notice where and when the sun shines, as well as how water drains from your yard. Mapping sunlight patterns, moisture and drainage can help ensure that new plants will thrive and support birds and the insects they eat.

Bugs are features

It might seem counterintuitive to invite insects and caterpillars into your garden, but that's the best way to attract and keep an abundance of birds. "Around 98% of our songbirds feed their young insects, especially caterpillars," says Michael Patton, an avian biologist with the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources. "They're not feeding berries or seeds. So a huge thing for providing food for birds is actually providing habitat for insects."

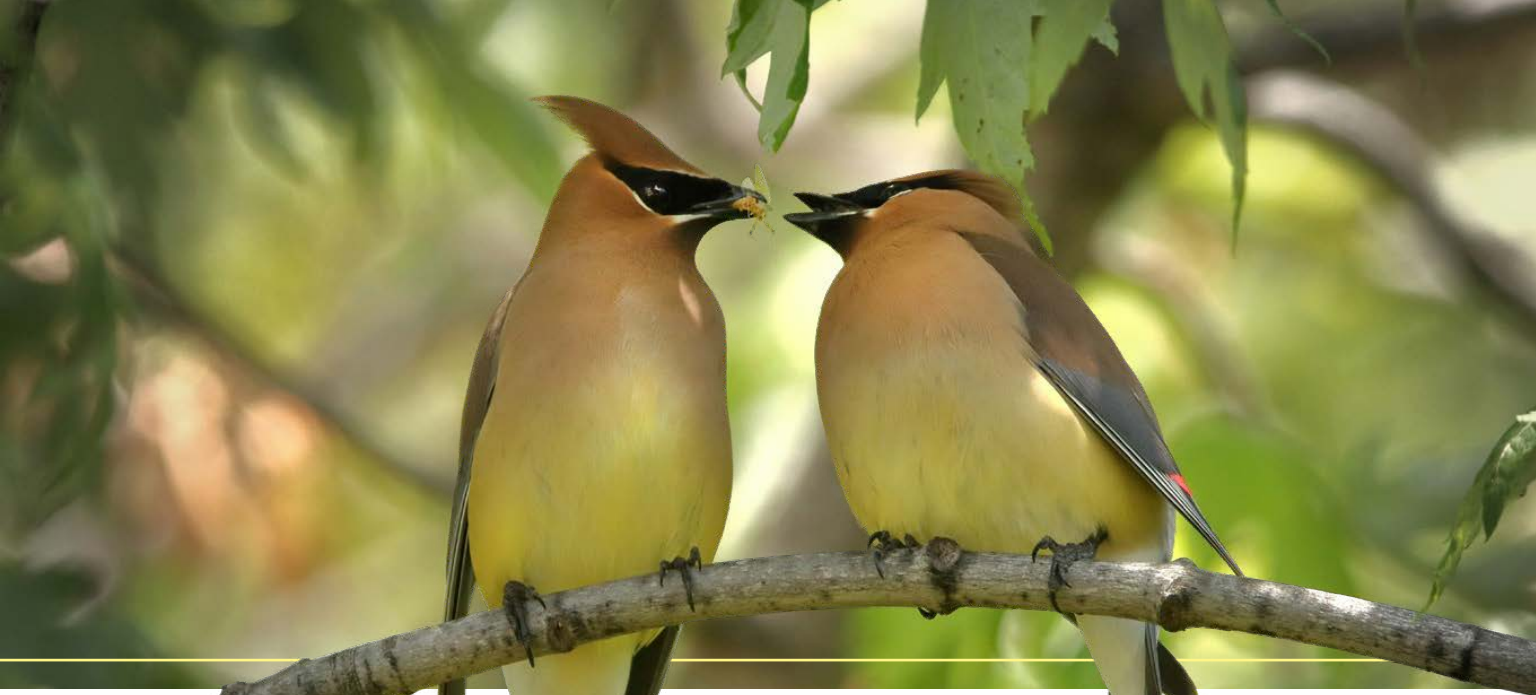
Native plants support far more insects than non-native ornamentals. Prioritize Kentucky flowering natives like rose milkweed (also known as swamp milkweed), which grows well across the state. Bosela recommends white wild indigo for Western Kentucky, hairy beard-tongue for central areas, and purple coneflower for Eastern Kentucky. All are food sources for the insects that birds eat, helping build a healthy food web right in your yard. By contrast, yards with turf grass and non-native plants and trees might look lush and healthy to us, but they'll look like deserts to insects and birds that are looking for a place to call home.

"If our native insects don't have food, our native birds don't have food," Bosela says. "The population-limiting factor is groceries—it's as simple as that."

All-season approach

Spring breeding season is a critical time for birds as they seek to feed their young, but ideally you want your yard to support birds all year.





“Every species of bird has its own specific dietary needs, and there are about 350 different species of birds that have been recorded in Kentucky,” says Lisa Hoffman, park naturalist at John James Audubon State Park in Henderson. “If they’re relying on our insect population, when that dwindles in the wintertime, a lot of those birds are migrants—they’re going to leave and travel to the tropics, where they can find bugs year-round. Other birds rely on insects for their protein and fat in the warmer months, then seasonally switch: in the winter, they’re going to go after fruits, berries and seeds that the plants have produced. So as long as you’re trying to provide some things in both directions for your yard, then you’re probably going to attract a wider variety of birds.”

Hoffman recommends a layered approach, using flowering native plants, berry-producing shrubs and trees that can create food sources for every season. Native shrubs and trees that produce a lot of berries are especially valuable to birds, Hoffman notes. “American holly trees, for instance—you can watch a flock of 50 robins descend on your yard, pick out every holly berry, and move on to the next,” she says.

In addition to flowering and northern dogwoods and the American holly, other reliable Kentucky natives that can create a rich smorgasbord include spicebush, juniper, black-eyed Susans, native grasses, and mulberry and persimmon trees. “American holly, spicebush and chokeberry can provide those nice red berries in winter, and the birds evolved with them,” Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Resources’ Patton says. “They’re really good for the birds, full of fats, and they’re not toxic to them.”

Be aware that some non-native ornamental favorites can be toxic to some birds. One notable example: nandina (also known as heavenly or sacred bamboo), which have alluring

▲
Cedar waxwings thrive on berries, but non-native ornamentals like nandina produce colorful berries that can sicken or kill birds. Photo: Gary Bendig/Unsplash

▼
Water features can make your yard a welcoming space for birds. Shown, a Northern cardinal perches on a bird bath. Photo: Trac Vu/Unsplash





Above left, white wild indigo is a beneficial native plant. At right, a Monarch butterfly perches on rose milkweed. Photos: Erin Hoagland

Thoughtful planting might bring colorful visitors, like this goldfinch, to your backyard. Photo: Mark Olsen/Unsplash



red berries that can sicken and kill cedar waxwings that gorge on them.

Another non-native, bush honeysuckle, has a high sugar content instead of the fats birds need. “So it’s not providing the proper nutrition they need, especially for birds migrating through the state,” Patton says. “It’s like filling up on junk food without giving them the energy they really need for long flights as they migrate down to the Southern U.S. or Central or South America.

It’s better to have fruiting trees and shrubs that are high in fat, and those tend to be our native plants.”

Even a single tree choice matters. “If you plant a sugar maple, you will support well over 150 different species of native insects that you would not support with a Norway maple,” Bosela notes.

Food and water

Features like water sources (think bubble rocks or a birdbath) and feeders can also make your yard more attractive to birds. But it’s vital to clean and disinfect birdbaths and most feeders in a 10% bleach solution

at least every two weeks to help prevent disease, Patton advises. He also recommends cleaning hummingbird feeders every three to five days.

Water sources, in particular, appeal to birds. “Having a birdbath, especially one with a heating element that prevents it from freezing in winter, really helps birds,” says Nic Patton of Wild Birds Unlimited in Lexington. “They need access to water not just for drinking, but also for bathing to keep their feathers clean. That allows them to fluff up and create that layer of insulation.”

For feeders, he recommends opting for high-quality ingredients like sunflower and safflower seeds and peanuts, and avoiding seed that’s mostly milo, cracked corn or ingredients vaguely labeled as “grain products.” Positioning your feeder 15-20 feet from a sheltered area like a shrub or tree can offer some protection for birds, “but you don’t want it right up against a bush or tree, because then predators like cats can hide in the bushes and get the birds while they’re feeding,” he explains. “If you have squirrel issues, place your feeder about 8-10 feet from any other structures, and you also can use a baffle to prevent access to the feeder.”

Feeders can help supplement their diets throughout the year, but birds will

For the birds ▶

More ways to improve backyard habitat

Visit KentuckyLiving.com for links to learn more about birds, gardening and Kentucky's native plant species.



A white-breasted nuthatch perches on a suet feeder. Photo: Mary Hammel/Unsplash

Golden-winged warblers require short grassland habitat. Photo: Matt Felperin/Wikimedia Commons (CC BY 4.0)

still seek food elsewhere in your yard to satisfy their nutritional needs. “At certain times of the year, birds can lose up to 80% of their body weight overnight, and they have to replace that during the daytime—their metabolisms are that much higher than ours,” Nic Patton says.

Mow less, smile more

Luckily, one of the most effective—and easiest—ways to make your yard bird friendly is simply to mow less and leave autumn leaves, which shelter insect eggs and larvae, on the ground. Even a modest patch or narrow strip of unmown native plants or unraked leaves can help, avian biologist Patton says.

“If you start having more ‘wilded’ backyards, you might be surprised at what might come into your yard,” he says. “During spring and fall migration, there’s a cacophony of different warbler species that’ll use our somewhat urban landscapes and glean insects that are in the trees. Personally, I’ve had things like blackpoll warblers and Blackburnian warblers in my backyard, and northern or Louisiana waterthrushes. If you have a lot of caterpillars, you might have a yellow-billed cuckoo coming to your yard.”

Think about how these birds have evolved over millions of years in these landscapes, he adds: “By creating kind of pristine yards, we’re making it so that these birds are no longer in the environments that they evolved to be in. So by allowing those environments to kind of come back to what they’re used to, we’re going to provide everything the birds need.” **KL**



UTILITY RIGHT-OF-WAY MAINTENANCE BUILDS HABITAT

Electric utility right-of-way corridors may look like scrap land to many homeowners, but for some of Kentucky’s threatened bird species, these open stretches can be essential habitat.

“These short grasslands are becoming, I don’t want to say endangered, but they’re becoming very, very infrequent, across the entire U.S.,” says Michael Patton, an avian biologist with the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources. As these areas decline, so do the species that rely on them.

Electric utility rights-of-way, like those maintained by Kentucky’s electric cooperatives, help preserve some of this vital space. Regular mowing or vegetation control keeps these areas open and sunny, preventing them from becoming forest.

“These rights-of-way break up the

forests and create these little bits of grassland that birds can use for breeding habitat,” Patton says.

Several species use these maintained corridors, including Henslow’s sparrows, grasshopper sparrows, loggerhead shrikes and ground-nesting golden-winged warblers.

“Golden-winged warblers are a species of greatest conservation need in Kentucky,” Patton says. “We find them in these powerline rights-of-way, because they need these short grasses in open, kind of sparsely planted areas.”

Utility corridors are designed to help deliver electricity to people, but they also can carve out pockets of grassland habitat that many declining bird species need to survive—an example of how human environments can also benefit birds.

2026
Lawn &
Garden
Issue



Spring is planting time—and planning time. Gardeners can add canning, freezing, drying and fermenting to their toolkit to preserve the produce they plant this spring. Photo: Joe Imel



PLAN TO CAN

Preserving food—
and a way of life

BY MEGHAN CAIN-DAVIS



If you ask Connie and Chuck Metcalfe what their favorite season is, they'll tell you it's "canning season."

Canning together for over 50 years, the couple, Meade County RECC consumer-members, transformed their garage into an outdoor kitchen they call the Canning Room. Every year, they turn their garden harvest into rows of gleaming jars, and last year they put up more than 1,000 quarts.

"Anything you can put in a jar, I can it," Chuck Metcalfe says. The garden, he says, "not only supplies us with food, but it brings back memories. Canning keeps me in touch with my past."

Canning is in his DNA. He started at 6 with his mother and grandmother, and when he and Connie married in 1974, she joined in. They canned as a family until his grandmother and mother passed away.

Connie cherishes those memories.

"It wasn't all work. It was fun listening to their stories, even if they told the same ones every year. It was still funny," she says.

They continue the tradition with kids, grandkids, neighbors and friends. Each September they make apple butter using a copper kettle that's been in Chuck's family for 140 years. They fill it with Jonathan apples simmering over an open flame for 11 hours. Everyone gets a turn to stir.

"It's dark when we start and dark when it's done," he says. "Everyone likes it, and it brings our community together."

Preserving food: the basics

What the Metcalfes do each year is more than charming tradition—it's a deeply Kentuckian way of caring for land and family. According to food preservation experts across the commonwealth, it's never too late to start—but right now is the time to plan how you're going to preserve summer's garden bounty.

Local Extension offices teach preservation classes year-round, following University of Kentucky research-based standards. Food safety is central. Most people start with canning and expand to freezing, dehydrating and fermenting.

Canning: the classic Kentucky method

Canning includes water-bath and pressure canning. The United States Department of Agriculture recommends Mason-type jars with two-piece caps that should be washed well and sterilized. For safety, follow an up-to-date, research-based recipe.

"Make sure you have reliable information," says Kendyl Redding, Powell County Extension agent for Family and Consumer Sciences, whose office is served by Clark County RECC. "Although nostalgic, old, handwritten recipes without details aren't the safest.



Chuck and Connie Metcalfe's granddaughters love to help during canning season. Gracie Graham, top, shucks corn and Aubree Robbins cuts kernels off the cob. Photo: Chuck Metcalfe

We teach best practices and follow publications from UK."

Water-bath canning, which is used for high-acid foods like jellies, salsas and pickles, is ideal for beginners. Jars are filled to the proper headspace, submerged under an inch of water, and boiled for the time listed in the recipe.

"I love using a water bath for tomatoes, hot peppers, relish and pickles," Chuck Metcalfe says. "I raise my own dill, so I love to add that to my cucumbers."

After processing, jars cool undisturbed for 12 hours so seals form. Properly stored, they last up to two years.

Pressure canning is required for low-acid foods like green beans, corn, soups and meats.

Despite old stories about exploding jars, modern canners are designed with safety features.

"I wish people weren't scared of pressure canners," Redding says. "I hear people say 'I have one but I'm afraid to use it.' I want to emphasize that nothing bad will happen as long as you watch it."

Her counterpart in Adair County, Dylan Gentry, affirms that modern canners are designed to prevent explosions.

Continued on page 27

Continued from page 26

“You just need to stay present and mindful,” says Betty Knifley, Adair County Extension Homemakers member. “I go down to my basement stove-top, knowing that’s what I’ll be doing for a few hours.”

Freezing: fast and simple

Freezing is a quick preservation method. Vegetables freeze well after washing and blanching. Fruit also freezes well, especially using the simple dry-pack method for berries.

“Some of my favorite memories are freezing corn,” says Knifley, a Taylor County RECC consumer-member. “We would make an assembly line. Some were shucking, some were silking and



▶ The Metcalfes have several pantries dedicated to their canned garden produce. Photo: Chuck Metcalfe

SUPPLIES FOR PRESERVING

Whether preserving food from your garden or from a bulk purchase from your favorite grocery store, here’s what you’ll need, according to University of Kentucky Extension publications.

Canning

Whether you use the boiling water method or the pressure canning method, you’ll need the proper supplies. These items are useful for home canning:

- Mason-type jars in various sizes (make sure you get “canning jars”).
- Two-piece metal caps with screw bands and flat lids. Flat lids are one-time use, but screw bands can be reused if sterilized.
- Large, deep stockpot with lid and rack for water-bath canning. It needs to be deep enough to cover the top of the canning jars by at least 1 inch. If you have an electric range, your canner pot must have a flat bottom for heat distribution.
- Pressure canner for low acidic vegetables, meats and soups.
- Canning funnel to pour liquids into jar.
- Flexible spatula or plastic knife to release trapped air in the cans (do not use metal).
- Jar lifter to raise hot jars out of boiling water.
- Lid wand to transfer metal lids from hot water to canning jars.

Freezing

Proper packaging is crucial for retaining flavor and preventing

freeze burn in your frozen food. Containers should be labeled “made for freezer storage” and/or have a snowflake symbol. Vacuum sealing is also an option. When choosing your packaging, look for these qualities:

- Moisture-vapor resistant.
- Durable and leak-proof.
- Strong and pliable, yet crack-resistant at very low temperatures.
- Resistant to oil.
- Able to protect foods from absorbing unpleasant odors.
- Easy to seal and label.

Drying/Dehydrating:

It’s best to dry food in a dehydrator because the heat is evenly distributed. These are usually around \$30. It’s important to store dried food properly. Let it cool completely, but quickly store it so it doesn’t reabsorb moisture in the air. Containers must be clean and dry and must seal.

Options include glass jars, plastic freezer containers with tight-fitting lids, plastic freezer bags and vacuum packaging.

Two more tips

Label each package with contents and dates to ensure you know how long you’ve had them and package them in amounts you’ll eat in one sitting.



◀ Violet Graves scoops out salsa for participants during a canning class at the Adair County Extension Office. Photo: Dylan Gentry

My favorite things to dehydrate are Asian pears.”

Because her office is near Red River Gorge Geological Area, a popular spot for outdoor recreation, Redding teaches dehydration classes for hikers. “Dehydration pulls out the moisture and makes it lighter,” she says. “If you don’t have the freezer space, this method is great.”

A basic dehydrator costs around \$30 and offers more consistent heat than an oven.

A CLASSIC RECIPE

One of the most popular recipes in local Extension offices’ canning classes is salsa. Here is a basic recipe that Kendyl Redding, Powell County Extension agent for Family and Consumer Sciences, teaches in her classes. She says it’s a great place to start your canning journey.

Traditional Salsa

- 7 C diced, seeded, peeled and cored tomatoes
- 6 green onions, sliced
- 2 jalapeno peppers, diced
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- ½ C vinegar
- 2 Tbsp bottled lime juice
- 4 drops hot pepper sauce
- 2 Tbsp minced cilantro
- 2 tsp salt

Peel tomatoes by dropping into boiling water for 30–60 seconds or until skins begin to split. Remove from boiling water and dip immediately into cold water. The skins will slip off easily. Remove cores and seeds; dice.

Combine all ingredients in a large saucepan. Bring mixture to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer 15 minutes. Ladle hot salsa into hot pint or half-pint jars, leaving 1/2-inch headspace. Remove air bubbles and adjust headspace if needed. Wipe jar rims with a dampened clean paper towel; apply two-piece metal caps.

Process 15 minutes in a boiling water canner. Yield: about four pint jars or eight half-pint jars.



Fermenting: old-fashioned but trendy

Fermented foods like sauerkraut, shown at left, and kimchi are rising in popularity. Redding teaches sauerkraut classes where students pack cabbage and salt into jars to ferment for about 10 days.

“Fermentation has built an interest because of the probiotic benefits and gut health,” she says. “It’s basically controlled rotting. But you only let it rot to a certain degree. It’s a fine line, but you want to look for signs of spoilage like mold or discoloration.”

The Metcalfes still use the 100-year-old “kraut cutter” from Connie’s grandmother.

Why preservation still matters

Food preservation is a thread woven through Kentucky generations—and with rising grocery costs and an interest in clean, local food, it’s seeing a revival.

“A lot of people are becoming interested in being more self-sustainable by having home gardens,” Redding says.

some were boiling. It was always a big day together.”

She began preserving with her mother and grandmother and now helps younger generations. “I’m happy to see younger people come into the classes,” she says.

Drying and dehydrating

Dehydrating is one of the oldest methods for preserving food and works for apples, herbs, peppers, mushrooms, tomatoes and onions.

“I had never dehydrated before learning from Dylan,” Knifley says. “I love it.

More food preservation info

County Extension Offices and the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension offer expertise, classes and publications on food preservation. Find your Extension office here: extension.mgcafe.uky.edu/county; local programs fall under the Family and Consumer Sciences umbrella.

UK Cooperative Extension has research-based info and publications at fcs.mgcafe.uky.edu/publications/food-and-nutrition; scroll down to Food Safety and Preservation.



Aubree Robbins helps her grandparents during canning season.
Photo: Chuck Metcalfe

Modern pressure canners are far safer than older models.
Photo: Kendyl Redding

“They like to be in control of what they’re eating. When you preserve your own

harvest, you know exactly what’s in it and where it came from.”

Preservation also keeps Kentucky-grown goodness alive all winter. “When we get snow days and cabin fever in the winter, I like to open a tomato sauce or soup I’ve canned,” says Gentry, the Adair County Extension agent. “It’s a life saver—a reminder of warmth.” **KL**

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TEAM KENTUCKY



Strawberry fields

A favorite perennial crop

STRAWBERRIES ARE A FAVORITE

crop in many home gardens, and for good reason. Follow a few guidelines for planting, harvesting and maintenance, and your strawberry vines will reward you year after year.

Because strawberries are perennial, they require a dedicated space in your garden. For 15 dormant crowns or potted plants, you'll need a 16-foot row or a 4-foot by 4-foot space. Plant in early spring—and remember that strawberries need a well-drained site in full sun. A raised planter is a great option because it offers good drainage and helps keep plants contained.

If you start with dormant crowns, remove the flowers that appear the first spring to help the crowns fully establish. Once established, fruit ripens each year from May to early July and should be picked daily. June-bearing strawberry varieties produce the largest harvest throughout Kentucky, but ever-bearing (fruiting in the spring and fall) and day-neutral (fruiting throughout the growing season) varieties are also widely available.

In early July, following fruiting and harvesting season for June-bearing varieties, you need to renovate the planting to keep it productive and healthy by removing older plants and excess runners.

To renovate your planting, thin new runner plants down to one plant per square foot. These runners



SHELLY NOLD

become the parent plant that blooms and produces strawberries next year. Once you've done this, top-dress the planting with half an inch of good soil or compost. Repeat this process each year after fruiting.

In the fall, cover your strawberry planting with 2 inches of straw to protect the plants over winter. In the spring, remove straw from the plants, but leave some on the soil to keep flowers and fruit off the ground. Keep extra straw nearby in case of a late spring freeze so you can protect your upcoming harvest. **KL**

SHELLY NOLD is a horticulturist and owner of The Plant Kingdom. Send stories and ideas to her at The Plant Kingdom, 1000 E Market St., Louisville, KY 40206.

ASK THE gardener



When should I prune and transplant hostas?— Mark and Zan Sawyer-Dailey

A Hostas can be cut back after a hard freeze, when the foliage has turned yellow/brown. This allows plants time to store the optimal amount of energy for the next growing season. You can also cut them back in early spring before any new growth begins. This is only recommended for healthy hostas, to prevent overwintering any potential disease or insect issues. If you prefer a tidier garden, fall is a good option. As far as transplanting, the best option is early spring, just as new growth emerges. Moving hostas in the spring gives them an entire growing season to get established.

» Angie Oakley



IRENE FOXVADOBÉ STOCK

Have a gardening question?

Go to KentuckyLiving.com, click on Home & Garden, then "Ask the Gardener."

READER
recipe

A pantry staple

Transparent PieSubmitted by **Angela Gilbert**

Consumer-member of Nolin RECC

A Kentucky favorite with a long history, transparent pie is made from simple ingredients that farm kitchens were likely to keep on hand. Angela got this recipe from her mother-in-law, who is from the hills of Eastern Kentucky.

- 1 stick butter, melted**
- 2 C sugar**
- 1 C heavy cream**
- 4 eggs, beaten**
- 2 Tbsp flour**
- 1 tsp vanilla extract**
- 1 unbaked deep dish pie shell or**
- 2 unbaked shallow pie shells**

Preheat oven to 375°. Mix butter and sugar in stand mixer on medium speed for a couple of minutes. Add cream and mix on high for about two minutes until the cream is slightly thickened and mixture is light and fluffy. Add the beaten eggs, vanilla and flour and mix well. Pour batter into unbaked pie shell(s) and cover edges of crust with foil. Bake about 45 minutes, until top is golden brown and no longer jiggly in the center. Cool completely before serving. Serves 8.



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at KentuckyLiving.com/Cook

Go to KentuckyLiving.com/submit-a-recipe*Kentucky
comfort food**The taste of home in every bite*

THERE'S NOTHING QUITE LIKE walking into your childhood home to find a warm, home-cooked meal waiting on the table. Pulling up a chair to share your favorite dish with family—that's the kind of comfort that feeds both the body and the soul. It's a feeling of love in every bite.

Mac and cheese is the ultimate Southern comfort food. I made it a little extra this month with crispy bacon bits stirred in—because why not? But our reader recipe just might steal the show. It's one of the Bluegrass State's most beloved desserts—simple, satisfying and unmistakably Kentucky.

Mac and Cheese with Crispy Bacon Bits

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| ½ lb bacon | 2 ½ C whole milk |
| 1 lb pasta | 2 C mild cheddar, shredded |
| 1 Tbsp butter | ¼ tsp salt, plus more to taste |
| 1 Tbsp flour | ½ tsp freshly cracked black pepper |

In a large skillet, cook bacon over medium heat until crispy. Drain on paper towels, then crumble and set aside. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Cook pasta until al dente according to package directions, then drain and set aside. In the same pot, melt butter over medium heat. Whisk in flour and cook 2–3 minutes. Reduce heat to medium-low and gradually whisk in milk until sauce is smooth and creamy and starts to thicken. Slowly stir in shredded cheddar, salt and pepper until cheese melts completely. Add cooked pasta and bacon, stirring to coat. Taste and adjust seasoning if needed. Serve immediately. Serves 8-10.

HEATHER BILYEU, raised in Southern Kentucky, is the owner and voice behind the food blog, *Fueling a Southern Soul*.



Gathering place

Ruby's Café and Dairy Bar meets a community need

JOEL SAMS



RUBY'S CAFÉ AND DAIRY BAR is one of two places to eat for miles in rural Greenup County. For owner Maria Grimes, that makes it more than just a restaurant. She sees it as a way to serve her neighbors.

Maria, 25, stresses that running the restaurant is a family effort. Her parents, Matthew and Kimberly Maggard, helped clean and restore the space before it opened in 2021. Her nieces, Maddy and Sophia, help on busy days and are always eager to test cookie and cake recipes.

“My whole family is so at home here, and it’s just a gathering place for us to serve our community as a family,” Maria says.

The regular menu includes staples like burgers, sandwiches and wraps, along with soft serve in the summer and hard dip ice cream year-round. On Wednesdays and Thursdays, Maria cooks homemade specials like chicken and dumplings or soup. Fridays and Saturdays are pizza days, featuring Kimberly’s homemade pizza dough recipe. Homemade baked goods, like bread, cinnamon rolls and cakes, are offered daily.

“It’s very much a ministry to our community,” Maria says.

James Imel is a regular customer who lives near the restaurant. Maria says he doesn’t have family nearby and doesn’t like to cook for himself, so he comes in nearly every day the restaurant is open. He’s regular enough, now, that whenever he’s going to be late or absent, he lets Maria know so she won’t worry. “Because I will call him,” she says.

Served by Grayson RECC, Ruby’s Café and Dairy Bar is located at 24239 State Route 7 in Greenup, open 11 a.m.-7 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday.

ADDISON CRISP

Ruby's Café and Dairy Bar Chicken and Dumplings

Serves 8-10

- 1½ sticks butter, divided
- ½ C onion, diced
- ½ C celery, diced
- ½ C carrot, diced
- 1 whole chicken
- 3 C self-rising flour
- 1⅓ C all-purpose flour
- 2 C buttermilk
- 1½ C milk
- Salt and pepper to taste

Melt 1/2 stick of butter in stock pot and saute onion, celery and carrot until golden brown. Add whole chicken, then add enough water to cover it. Bring to boil, then decrease heat to simmer and cover until cooked through and tender, about two hours. Remove chicken from pot and shred meat off the bones. Return to simmering broth and season to taste with salt and pepper.

To make dumplings, add both flours, milk, buttermilk and 1/4 tsp black pepper to a bowl, along with the remaining stick of butter, melted. Mix until a thick batter forms. Spoon batter into boiling broth one large spoonful at a time. Cover and simmer on medium heat. Do not stir or break up dumplings until all are cooked through.



MARIA GRIMES

It's not the heat (or cold), it's the humidity



What is the best way to control indoor humidity year-round?

JAMES DULLEY is a nationally syndicated columnist who writes on energy efficiency and do-it-yourself energy topics

Although there can be humidity-related problems year-round, they're typically worse during winter in the North and during summer in the South.

While there is not one ideal indoor humidity level, a target of 40% to 45% relative humidity is usually ideal for personal comfort. Most people can be reasonably comfortable with a relative humidity ranging from 30% to 50% and can tolerate 20% to 60%. You can purchase an inexpensive hygrometer at most hardware stores to measure to indoor relative humidity.

The keys to maintaining a comfortable and efficient indoor humidity level are controlling the sources of moisture and ventilating them efficiently. For example, cooking for a family of four produces five cups of moisture per day.

Exterior moisture sources include leaky roofs, plumbing, windows and doors.

HUMIDITY AND HEALTH

When the relative humidity level is too high, it may create serious health problems related to allergies, dust mites, mold, mildew and other harmful microbes. At the other extreme, with relative humidity too low, a person's mucous membranes may dry out, increasing the susceptibility to cold and respiratory illness. Some nasty microbes also prefer excessively dry air.



Once you take care of these problem areas, check the slope of the ground around your home. It should slope slightly downward away from the house walls. Soggy soil around your home lets excess moisture indoors year-round.

Humidity fixes

Installing new efficient replacement windows or exterior storm windows is the best method to control a humidity-caused window

▲ Bathroom fans help remove humidity after showers. Ventilation is key for proper humidity levels. Photo: Weatherization Assistance Project Technical Assistance Center

condensation problem. This also saves energy during the summer cooling season.

New bathroom vent fans with humidity sensors that come on automatically and run until the humidity level drops can help there. Check the seal around the clothes dryer duct leading to the outdoor vent.

You can also install a new furnace/heat pump with a variable-speed blower and compatible thermostat to enable it to run in an efficient dehumidification mode during summer. Make sure the damper handle on the central humidifier is set for the proper season. **KL**

In like a lion

Be prepared for spring's fickle weather

WEATHER DISASTERS can occur year-round, but most of the worst storms Kentucky receives come in the spring, so be prepared.

Before a storm hits, make sure your cellphone is charged. Consider purchasing an external phone battery charger. Have a battery-operated radio to stay updated on the latest weather watches and warnings.

Unplug appliances and other electrical items, such as computers, to prevent damage from power surges caused by nearby lightning strikes. Have an emergency kit ready and create a family communication plan.

After the storm, while checking for damage outside your home, be aware of hazards from exposed nails, broken glass and broken tree branches dangling on other limbs. To avoid the chance of a fire or explosion, use a flashlight instead of a candle or torch to inspect your home in the dark. Stay away



ND700/ADDBE/STOCK

from any downed power lines—always assume they are live.

When cleaning up damage, wear proper safety gear like work gloves, safety glasses, heavy-duty pants and long-sleeved shirts, and steel-toe boots. These will protect you if you are clearing large amounts of broken, splintered or sharp debris.

When clearing fallen trees and branches—or anytime—it always bears repeating: stay away from power lines. If you see a downed power line that is sparking or on fire, call your co-op immediately.

Stay away from damaged buildings or structures. If a building has been subjected to flood waters or high winds, it may not be structurally safe. Never operate gasoline-powered equipment indoors. Gas engines emit carbon monoxide—an odorless, colorless and poisonous gas you should never breathe.

If you are driving and come upon fallen power lines, turn around. Never drive over or around fallen lines. If a downed power line falls on your vehicle, stay in the vehicle. Call 911. Exit only if your life is in immediate danger from a fire or other reason. Jump clear of your vehicle, keeping your feet together, and never touch the vehicle and the ground at the same time. Then shuffle away, keeping your feet touching at all times. **KL**



MIKE MASON
is Manager of
Internal Resources at
Shelby Energy

**YEARS IN THE
INDUSTRY: 17**

**WHEN I'M NOT
WORKING I'M:**
Spending time with
family, hunting, fish-
ing and taking care of
the family farm.

Ready or not?

Here are some tips to help keep you storm-safe:

- Have an emergency kit ready and create a family communication plan before a storm hits.
- Program the number of your electric utility into your cellphone. This will make it easier to report a power outage.
- Use plumbing and bathroom fixtures with caution—they can conduct electricity.
- If you notice frayed wiring or sparks or smell a burning odor, shut off the electrical system at the main circuit breaker immediately.
- Know how to properly use portable generators if you lose power during the storm.

Movement every day

How to make regular exercise a habit



DATAWAVE/PEOPLEIMAGES.COM/ADOBESTOCK

LONG HOURS AT a desk, in class or on the couch can easily add up. But research continues to show that regular movement, even in small amounts, has a big impact on both physical and mental health.

Movement doesn't have to mean a trip to the gym; it's about finding ways to move more throughout your day and creating habits that keep your body strong and your mind energized.

The benefits of daily movement

Regular physical activity boosts cardiovascular health, strengthens muscles and bones and improves flexibility and balance. It also plays a key role in preventing chronic

diseases such as diabetes, heart disease and obesity.

But the benefits go beyond the physical. Movement helps regulate mood and reduce stress by releasing endorphins—the body's natural feel-good hormones. Even brief activity breaks during the day can improve focus, creativity and overall mental well-being.

Incorporating movement can offset the negative effects of prolonged inactivity. Our bodies were made to move, and even five minutes of stretching or walking each hour makes a difference. The key is consistency. It's recommended for adults to get 150 minutes of moderate-intensity activity each week, but every bit adds up.

Simple ways to add more activity

- **Take short movement breaks.** Set a timer to stand up, stretch or walk for a few minutes every hour.
- **Walk when you can.** Park farther away, take the stairs instead of the elevator or hold walking meetings.
- **Sneak in strength work.** Bodyweight exercises like squats, lunges and planks can be done anywhere.
- **Make it social.** Join a fitness class, intramural team or walking group to stay motivated and accountable.
- **Find what you enjoy.** Dancing, gardening, yoga—any activity that gets you moving counts.

Start small and keep moving

If you've been inactive for a while, begin with short sessions and gradually build up. Focus more on progress, not perfection.

Whether it's taking a quick walk across the building, stretching between meetings, or dancing in your kitchen, moving your body daily is one of the simplest and most powerful ways to support your health. **KL**

DEE DLUGONSKI, PH.D., is director of the Active Girls Healthy Women Program in the University of Kentucky's Sports Medicine Research Institute and an associate professor in the Department of Athletic Training & Clinical Nutrition.



The Kentucky Garden Trail

Natural beauty across the state

BY MEGHAN CAIN-DAVIS



From beautiful pavilions to walking trails, education opportunities and classes, kayaking and pedal boats on Lake Pee Wee to a championship disc golf course, Mahr Park offers something for everyone. Photo: Mahr Park Arboretum

FOR MOST FOLKS, a passport means adventure abroad, but in the Bluegrass State, you don't need a plane ticket to explore new—natural—worlds. All you need is a tank of gas, walking shoes and curiosity. The Kentucky Garden Trail and its corresponding passport, created by Kim Hydes, executive director of Oldham County Tourism & Conventions, invites visitors to discover some of the state's most beautiful green spaces.

"I wanted to create a project that promoted multiple regions of Kentucky and was something new—something that could change things, like the Bourbon Trail," Hydes says. "Then I realized something was missing. There was no



statewide garden trail in Kentucky."

At any of the 12 botanical gardens and arboreta across nine towns, visitors can pick up a soft-touch passport journal with garden information and space for notes and passport stickers.

From castle grounds to cemeteries, universities to nature preserves, the Kentucky Garden Trail is filled with surprises. Here are five destinations to get you started.

Doran Arboretum, Murray State University

The Doran Arboretum at the edge of Murray State's campus sits on the original 44-acre Pullen Farm, donated by Stanley and Mabel Pullen. The 1935 barn still stands, offering "a tangible connection to the site's agriculture past," says Dava Hayden, Pullen Farm and Arboretum manager.

"Its blend of education, conservation, accessibility and quiet beauty makes the arboretum a distinctive and meaningful space for both the campus and the community," Hayden says.

Visitors wander a 1-mile trail through diverse plant collections, watch butterflies at a pond encircled with pollinator



▲ At the Doran Arboretum, visitors are encouraged to walk the 0.8 mile-long track. The Arboretum is over 13 acres and displays a collection of local and introduced plants, emphasizing native Western Kentucky trees, shrubs and flowers.

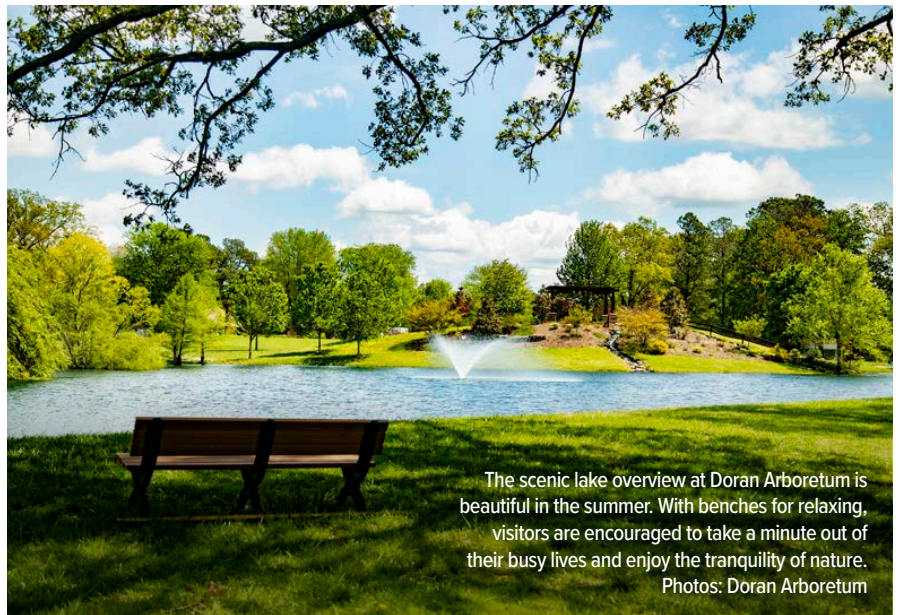
plants, explore a butterfly-themed play pocket and observe honeybees at the active apiary. Students even study plant diversity at Doran Arboretum.

“Whether someone is visiting for education, relaxation or exploration, the arboretum is designed to foster curiosity, learning and connection,” says Hayden.

Mahr Park Arboretum, Madisonville

Once the private estate of Merle and Glema Mahr, the farmland that hosts Mahr Park Arboretum was gifted to the community for future generations.

“I love the history,” says Ashton Robinson, Mahr Park Arboretum



The scenic lake overview at Doran Arboretum is beautiful in the summer. With benches for relaxing, visitors are encouraged to take a minute out of their busy lives and enjoy the tranquility of nature. Photos: Doran Arboretum

superintendent. “It used to be a farm with Black Angus cattle and the family home. It has deep roots.”

Now a Level II arboretum, the park features more than 150 tree species, a native garden, a 1-acre community

garden, a 7-acre pollinator garden and restoration projects with more than 25 native plant species. Visitors can tour the Mahr Historic Home, stroll a 2.5-mile paved trail, hike wooded paths and romp with their pooch in the dog parks or



Visitors enjoy spring flowers in bloom at Creasey Mahan Nature Preserve. With 9 miles of easy to moderate trails that meander through woodlands and open meadows, there's a little bit of nature for everyone. Photo: Creasey Mahan Nature Preserve



On the Kentucky Garden Trail, each stop is “a hidden gem,” trail creator Kim Hydes says. From a castle to a nature-inspired playground and from sculptures to a pollinator garden, the trail has something for everyone to enjoy. Learn more at kentuckygardentrail.com.

Doran Arboretum at Murray State University

300 Hickory Drive, Murray
 Murraystate.edu, then search Doran Arboretum; Facebook: The Doran Arboretum at Murray State University; (270) 809-3841.
 Hours: Daily, dawn to dusk. Free admission.

Mahr Park Arboretum

465 Mahr Park Drive, Madisonville
 mahrparkarboretum.com, Facebook: Mahr Park Arboretum; (270) 584-9017.
 Hours: Daily, dawn to dusk. Free admission.

Creasey Mahan Nature Preserve

12501 Harmony Landing Road, Goshen
 creaseymahannaturepreserve.org, Facebook: Creasey Mahan Nature Preserve; (502) 228-4362.

Hours: Grounds, daily from dawn to dusk; Nature Center, Wednesdays and Fridays 1–4 p.m.; Saturdays 10 a.m.–2 p.m. Free admission.

Liberty Hall Historic Site

202 Wilkinson St., Frankfort
 libertyhall.org, Facebook: Liberty Hall Historic Site; (502) 227-2560.

Hours: Grounds, daily from dawn to dusk; guided tours Monday–Saturday at 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Free admission.

The Arboretum, State Botanical Garden of Kentucky

University of Kentucky, 500 Alumni Drive, Lexington
 arboretum.mgcafe.uky.edu, Facebook: The Arboretum, State Botanical Garden of Kentucky; (859) 257-6955.

Hours: Grounds, daily from dawn to dusk, except for University of Kentucky home football games; Dorothea Smith Oatts Visitor Center, Tuesday–Saturday, 9 a.m.–4 p.m. Kentucky Children’s Garden opens in April. Free arboretum admission; \$4 for Children’s Garden (under 2, free).

More parks and arboreta on the Kentucky Garden Trail

Western Kentucky Botanical Garden

2731 West 2nd St., Owensboro
 wkbg.org, Facebook: Western Kentucky Botanical Garden; (270) 993-1234.

Hours, March through October: Monday–Saturday, 9 a.m.–4 p.m. and noon–4 p.m. Sunday, November through February: Monday–Friday, 9 a.m.–3 p.m.

Western Kentucky Botanical Garden features a serene Path of Hope and Healing, the region’s largest public daylily display and a historic 1840s home.

Admission: \$8, adults; \$5, veterans and seniors 65+; \$2, children 18 and under.

Cave Hill Cemetery & Arboretum

701 Baxter Ave., Louisville
 cavehillcemetery.com, Facebook: Cave Hill Cemetery and Arboretum; (502) 451-5630.
 Hours: daily, 8 a.m.–4:45 p.m.

Cave Hill is as much a botanical destination as it is a resting place. Home to rare trees, sculptural monuments and peaceful walking paths, Cave Hill boasts more than 600 different tree and shrub species. Free admission.

Yew Dell Botanical Gardens

6220 Old LaGrange Road, Crestwood
 yewdellgardens.org, Facebook: Yew Dell Botanical Gardens; (502) 241-4788.

Hours, March–December: Tuesday–Saturday, 10 a.m.–4 p.m.; Sunday, noon–4 p.m. Winter hours: Tuesday–Friday, 10 a.m.–4 p.m.

Founded by plantsman Theodore Klein, Yew Dell features hardscaping, private garden nooks, formal and informal plantings, historic architecture and an education center.

Admission: \$12, adults; \$8, veterans and seniors 65+; free, 5 and under.

rent kayaks, pedal boats and bikes. Kids love the nature play space, built entirely from natural materials and planted with 300 native species.

“The natural appearance and design is very unique,” Robinson says. “It’s very interactive, very enriching to the senses and offers a space for imaginative play. We hope it develops love for the outdoors early on.”

Creasey Mahan Nature Preserve, Goshen

Just east of Louisville is Creasey Mahan Nature Preserve—170 acres of fields, forests and streams.

“It’s natural, welcoming and slightly old-fashioned,” says Executive Director Tavia Cathcart-Brown. “Come get your green time instead of screen time. Nature is healing for everyone.”

Donated by Virginia Creasey Mahan and Howard Mahan, the land is a haven for wildlife like coyotes, deer, foxes, owls and countless birds. Butterflies and hummingbirds flit through 30 acres of pollinator meadows. Families enjoy the nature center, forest school and ADA-accessible Forest Friends playground with 15,000 square feet of play space, a four-season restroom and a climbable “Rockasaurus” boulder.

“When I started working here, I tried to take everything in at once,” says Miranda Legg, marketing and events coordinator. “Now I focus on the little things—flowers, insects, even a snake slipping under leaves. Life is in the details.”

Liberty Hall Historic Site Gardens, Frankfort

Along the Kentucky River in Frankfort, Liberty Hall is a peaceful step back in time. The 4.5-acre site includes a formal four-square garden and two historic homes from the John Brown family. Boxwood hedges, heirloom roses, fragrant herbs and seasonal blooms make it one of the city’s most charming green spaces.



Virginia bluebells (*Mertensia virginica*) are flowers that bloom at Liberty Hall Historic Site during early spring. Photo: Isabel Cochran

REWARDS FOR YOUR JOURNEY

Receive prizes as you travel along the Kentucky Garden Trail. After six visits, you’ll receive a custom seed packet. Once you’ve been to all 12 locations, you’ll receive the grand prize — either a tote bag or a T-shirt. The garden staff will sign your passport. After that, take a photo and upload it to the Kentucky Garden Trail website, kentuckygardentrail.com.

April 18, 2026

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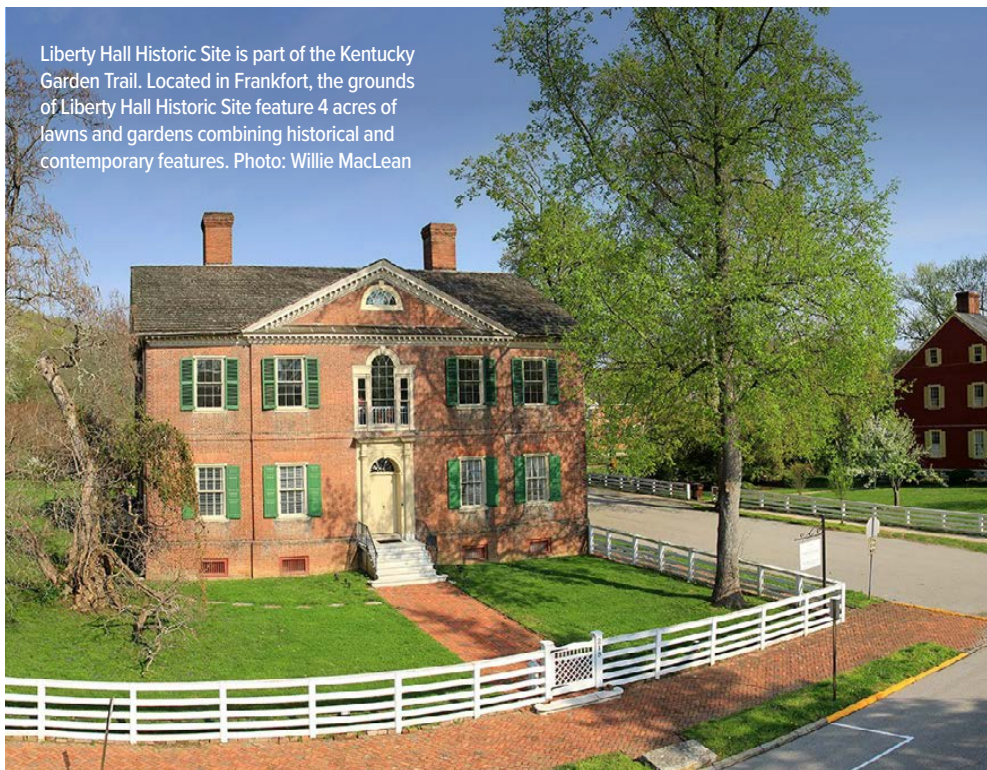
Adventure's Beginning!

TWO-DAY ITINERARIES

If you're looking to make a week-end out of these road trips, the Kentucky Garden Trail website has already done the work for you. With two-day itineraries for each location, you'll find information about the tastiest places to eat, the most fun places to explore and the best places to sleep. Go to kentuckygardentrail.com/plan-your-trip.

Snowdrops, hellebores, dogwoods, daffodils and forsythia burst into color each spring, says Isabel Cochran, garden curator.

"We want visitors to learn and develop a passion for local history and the beauty around us," says Sam Dunn, executive director. "We hope this space helps people slow down and appreciate nature."



Liberty Hall Historic Site is part of the Kentucky Garden Trail. Located in Frankfort, the grounds of Liberty Hall Historic Site feature 4 acres of lawns and gardens combining historical and contemporary features. Photo: Willie MacLean

The Arboretum, State Botanical Garden of Kentucky, Lexington

Rounding out these trail highlights is The Arboretum, State Botanical Garden of Kentucky. Home to more than 700 species of trees and woody plants, it welcomes over 250,000 visitors annually.

Its signature Walk Across Kentucky path guides visitors through the state's seven geographic regions without leaving Lexington. Families picnic under maples, joggers share trails and the Children's Garden buzzes year-round. Early spring brings purple, yellow and white ephemerals, but color is found in every season, says Director Scott Smith.

"Part of the joy of working here is seeing how people enjoy it," he says. "It's a place for memories." **KL**

MEGHAN CAIN-DAVIS is a freelance writer, mother and fitness instructor in Kentuckiana. She loves writing about her adventures in Kentucky and around the world.

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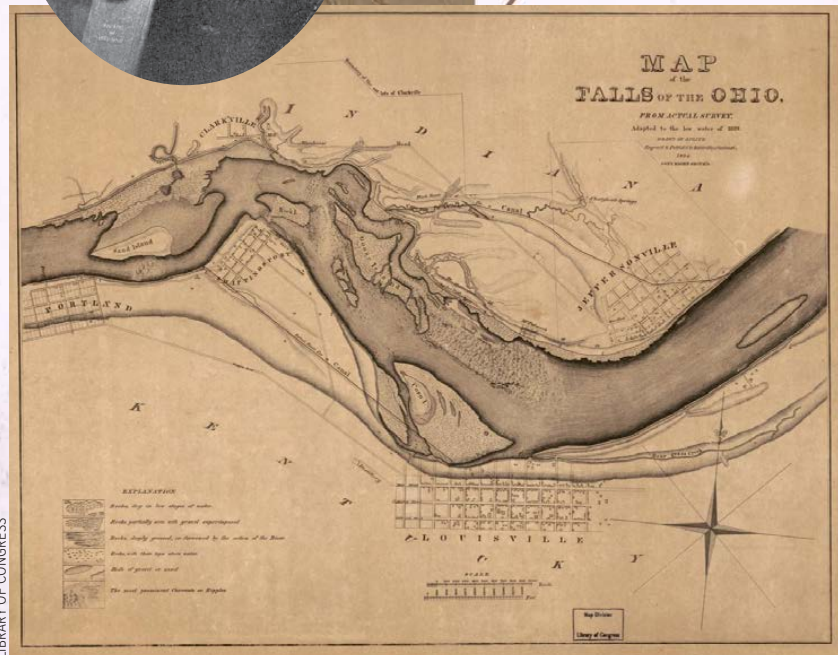
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Resurrecting a scent

When Christina Agapakis, a Massachusetts-based synthetic biologist, had the idea to recreate the scent of an extinct flower, her team chose a legume called the Falls-of-the-Ohio Scurfpea. Not seen alive since 1881, the clipping was at the Gray Herbarium of Harvard University, thanks to Kentuckian Dr. Charles Wilkins Short. Despite its age, the scientists believed there was enough surviving DNA to recreate scent molecules.

Once a food source for bison, this species of scurfpea has only been observed on Rock Island, at the Falls of the Ohio near Louisville. As civil engineering projects happened at the falls, Rock Island disappeared below the surface. Since it was the only known site in the world to support the scurfpea, the plant disappeared with it.

Short, of Woodford County, built one of the finest private curated collections of dried and pressed plants in America. Once a doctor in Lexington and Hopkinsville, Short accepted a teaching position at Transylvania University in 1825. By the time he relocated to teach at the University of Louisville, botany had become his driving passion.

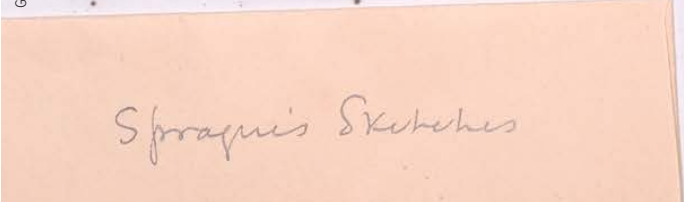
When Short died in 1863, he had willed his collection to the Smithsonian. At the time, the institution had no satisfactory way to care for his collection of 15,000 plants. Instead, it was given to the Philadelphia Academy of Natural Sciences.

In 2019, Agapakis and her team successfully approximated the scent, once lost to history. At New York's Cooper Hewitt Museum, a device suspended from the ceiling wafted the aroma to guests in an exhibit called *Resurrecting the Sublime*. The Kentucky plant was described by guests as "sweet" and "citrusy," while Agapakis remembers something more "peppery."

Recently, a company called Future Society used the work done with the scurfpea to create a commercial perfume called Grassland Opera, which is available online and at the Frazier History Museum.

Story: Mick Sullivan

GRAY HERBARIUM OF HARVARD UNIVERSITY



EVENT CALENDAR

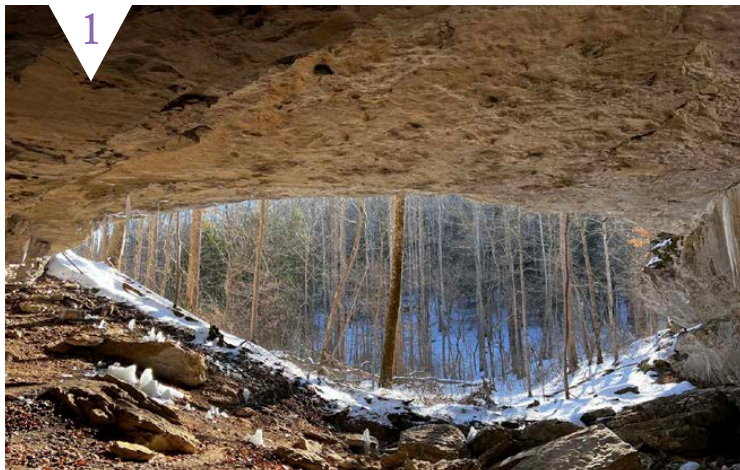


PHOTO: VISIT FRANKFORT SCULPTURE RILEY FICHTER

1 ROCK STARS

You'll rock it on a free guided geology hike March 7 at Carter Caves State Resort Park. A Kentucky Geological Survey geologist leads the 3.6-mile moderate trek along the scenic Three Bridges Trail. Learn about natural arches, fractured rocks and geologic history while hiking through three fascinating bridge formations. Hike starts 10 a.m. from the Welcome Center. Bring a packed lunch and wear appropriate clothing and shoes. Info: (606) 286-7009, parks.ky.gov.

2 DIG IT

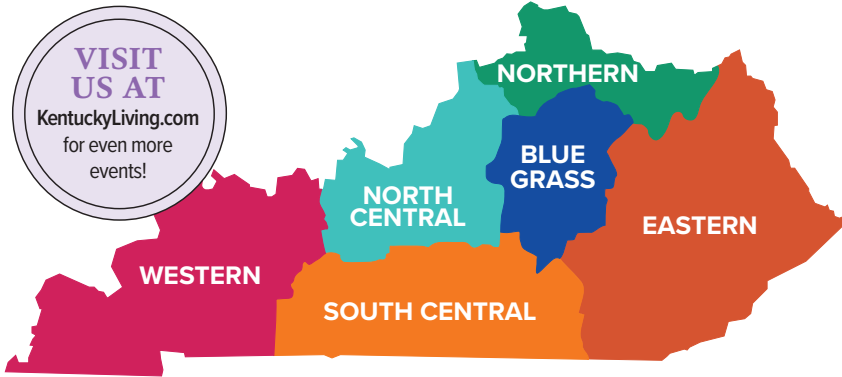
The Can U Dig It? gardening workshop celebrates the nation's 250th year with the theme of Rooted in the Past, Growing for the Future. The March 14 event is 9 a.m.–3 p.m. at the Hardin County Extension Office and features nationally recognized speakers, a make-and-take project and garden store. It's for anyone from hobbyists to pros. Register (\$25, includes boxed lunch) by March 4 at hardin.mgcafe.uky.edu/events. More info: (270) 765-4121.

3 ARTISTIC THANKS

Frankfort's Josephine Sculpture Park thanks visitors, supporters, artists, volunteers and the community at Joy Full: A Gathering of Gratitude, March 20, 5–8 p.m. The park celebration includes dancing and live music from Sorry Atari, hands-on art activities, festive treats, cocktails from Castle & Key Distillery, nibbles and, for purchase, slices from a pizza truck. Warm up during the evening with bonfires. Free, but please register in advance at josephinesculpturepark.org/events. Info, (502) 352-7082.

4 HAVE A HEART

The Tymeless Hearts Spring Fest, March 28 at Hopkinsville's Trail of Tears Commemorative Park, is fun for a heartfelt cause. The 11 a.m.–4 p.m. fundraiser supports families impacted by congenital heart defects. Easter egg hunt, car show, live music, bounce houses, pony and unicorn rides, petting zoo, food trucks, vendor booths and lots of games. Many activities are ticketed (\$1). For info, tickets: tymelesshearts@live.com, Facebook: Tymeless Hearts Spring Fest 26.

**FRIDAY, MARCH 27**

Triple Crown Spring Market, thru 28th, (859) 307-7544, Florence Baptist Church

SATURDAY, MARCH 28

Moors & McCumber, (484) 686-8087, Downtowne Listening Room, Burlington

SOUTH CENTRAL**FRIDAY, MARCH 6**

Jane Austen's Lady Susan, thru 8th, (270) 361-2101, Plaza Theatre, Glasgow

Home Expo 2026, (270) 781-3375, Sloan Convention Center, Bowling Green

SATURDAY, MARCH 14

Wyatt Cole Invitational High School and Junior High Rodeo, thru 15th, (606) 787-4740, Central Kentucky Ag Expo Center, Liberty

Amish Spring Consignment Auction, (606) 787-5158, Casey County Produce Auction, Liberty

SATURDAY, MARCH 21

Sip and Shop: Spring Market, (270) 853-1718, Bluegrass Vineyard, Smiths Grove

SATURDAY, MARCH 28

Spring Arts & Crafts Show, (270) 622-1887, Allen County-Scottsville High School

WESTERN**TUESDAY, MARCH 3**

Chamber Music Recital: Evren Ozel, Piano, (270) 821-2787, Glemma Mahr Center for the Arts, Madisonville

SATURDAY, MARCH 7

Owensboro Symphony: Tribute to John Williams, (270) 687-2770, RiverPark Center, Owensboro

FRIDAY, MARCH 13

Uptown, (270) 826-5916, Preston Arts Center, Henderson

SATURDAY, MARCH 21

Botanical Watercolor Pencils for Beginners: Daffodils, (270) 753-4059, MAG Community Art Center, Murray

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BLUEGRASS**THURSDAY, MARCH 5**

Pablo Sainz-Villegas & Friends, (859) 236-4692, Norton Center for the Arts, Danville

FRIDAY, MARCH 6

Kentucky Crafted Market, thru 8th, (859) 233-4303, Alltech Arena, Lexington

FRIDAY, MARCH 13

Missy Raines & Allegheny, (859) 236-4692, Norton Center for the Arts, Danville

SATURDAY, MARCH 14

Pinkalicious, thru 28th, (859) 254-4546, Lexington Children's Theatre

THURSDAY, MARCH 19

Michael Carbonaro: Wonder Boy, (859) 236-4692, Norton Center for the Arts, Danville

FRIDAY, MARCH 20

The Underpants, thru April 5th, (859) 873-0648, Woodford Theatre, Versailles

SUNDAY, MARCH 22

Lexus for the Little Ones Raffle Drawing, (859) 233-2000, Lexus of Lexington

EASTERN**THURSDAY, MARCH 12**

Madeline McDowell Breckinridge: "Votes for Women!", (606) 329-8888, Highland Museum and Discovery Center, Ashland

FRIDAY, MARCH 20

Return of the Super Bull, thru 21st, (606) 258-2020, The Corbin Arena

SATURDAY, MARCH 21

Rowan County Regional Quilt Show, (606) 356-7893, Morehead Conference Center

SATURDAY, MARCH 28

The Grascals, (606) 945-5999, Meadowgreen Appalachian Music Park, Clay City

NORTH CENTRAL**THURSDAY, MARCH 5**

Basket Weaver's Retreat in Western Kentucky, thru 7th, (859) 740-8324, Rough River State Resort Park, Falls of Rough

SATURDAY, MARCH 7

Heartland Hunter's Night Out, (270) 748-0882, Pritchard Community Center, Elizabethtown

Blessings in a Backpack: Pack the Sack Fundraiser, (502) 882-8748, The Olmsted, Louisville

SUNDAY, MARCH 8

Indigo Fabric Dyeing Adult Workshop, (502) 589-0102, KMAC Contemporary Art Museum, Louisville

MONDAY, MARCH 9

NouLou Chamber Players: Schubertiade, (615) 417-2110, Oxmoor Farm, Louisville

SATURDAY, MARCH 21

Elephant & Piggie's We Are in a Play!, thru April 4th, (502) 584-7777, The Kentucky Center for the Performing Arts, Louisville

Bloom & Balance: The Equinox Market, thru 22nd, (859) 806-0521, Pritchard Community Center, Elizabethtown

SATURDAY, MARCH 28

Time to Paddy 5k/10k & Lucky 13.1, (760) 669-6471, Broad Run Park Cliffside Playground, Louisville

NORTHERN**THURSDAY, MARCH 5**

Singin' in the Rain Jr., thru 15th, (859) 654-2636, Kincaid Regional Theatre, Falmouth

TUESDAY, MARCH 24

The Gist Boys: Sequoyah & Gratz, (502) 732-7020, Carroll County Public Library, Carrollton

CALL BEFORE YOU GO as event days can change. **SUBMIT ALL EVENTS ONLINE AT KENTUCKYLIVING.COM.** For FREE print listing consideration of Kentucky events, submit two months in advance, **by April 1 for the June issue.**

TO ADVERTISE YOUR EVENT IN PRINT, CALL (800) 595-4846



1 SWEET DREAMS

Big brother Lawrence Jackson gives little sister Naomi a naptime kiss. Photo by mother, Bella Jackson, Richmond, a consumer-member of Clark Energy.

2 LITTLE FARMER

Walker High rides a tractor that belonged to his mom, Sandy, when she was a child. Photo by Sandy High, Tompkinsville, a consumer-member of Tri-County Electric.

3 OUT OF ITS SHELL

Clara McFall took this picture of a surprise visitor to her home last summer. McFall lives in Albany and is a consumer-member of South Kentucky RECC.

4 WISE OLD OWL

A barn owl found a perch on a county road sign in Breckinridge County. Photo by Charla Coats, Falls of Rough, a consumer-member of Meade County RECC.

SEND US YOUR SNAP SHOTS! We're looking for spring photos.

Submit up to five photos monthly for a chance to **BE FEATURED IN KENTUCKY LIVING**. Photos with people work best, as well as those with seasonal interest. Remember to identify people or pets in the photo left to right and tell us their relation to you.



Visit **KENTUCKYLIVING.COM** and click on **CONTESTS** to submit photos.

KENTUCKY kids

A crunchy snack

Carrots contain vitamin A, which helps keep your eyes healthy and helps the immune system make white blood cells.



Green Team Tip

When drinking water, use the same reusable bottle all day.

— Coraline Russo, age 6



Send us your green team tips!

Enter KIDS Contest

Submit a Green Team Tip or Joke online at KentuckyLiving.com: Magazine/Submissions for a chance to win a prize!

SOUTHERN FLYING SQUIRREL

Southern flying squirrels are small and gray-brown, with white bellies. They are about 8 to 10 inches long. They do not really fly—they glide. A stretchy flap of skin between their legs helps them glide from tree to tree. They can glide more than 150 feet.



These squirrels live in forests across the eastern United States. They sleep in tree holes, nest boxes or old bird nests, and sometimes cuddle together to stay warm. They eat nuts, seeds, fruit, fungi and insects. Because they are active at night, most people rarely see them.

Always on time

Tracy wants to get to her dance practice on time. It takes her nine minutes to walk to the dance studio. If dance class starts at 4 p.m., what is the latest time she should leave home?



Answer: Tracy should leave for practice by 3:51 p.m.



Did You Know?

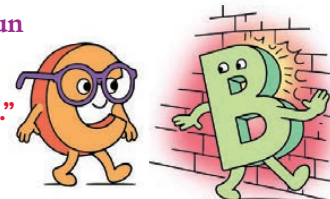
Leafcutter ants are very strong. They can carry leaf pieces that weigh up to 50 times more than their own bodies over long distances.

Tell us a joke!

Why did "B" run into a wall?

He couldn't "C."

— Sophia Akin, age 12



GREAT OUTDOORS

Support vulnerable species

Get involved through Kentucky Wild

IF YOU LOVE WILDLIFE and the outdoors, Kentucky Wild is program that should be on your radar.

Created in 2018, Kentucky Wild is a membership program of the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources that funds conservation projects, research equipment purchases, and habitat creation and improvement for non-game species. More than 15,000 members in all 50 states have joined Kentucky Wild to support species that face threats like habitat loss, non-native species competition and disease. In addition, members have opportunities to join biologists in the field to experience conservation firsthand. Past experiences have included guided reptile and amphibian walks, fall songbird banding and “glitter tagging” freshwater mussels before they are released in the wild.

Geoff Roberts, the Kentucky Wild program coordinator, says animals like songbirds, mussels, bats, pollinators and salamanders can be easy to overlook—but they all have an ecological role to play. Many of them are known as indicator species, meaning that their presence indicates healthy ecosystems and habitats. When they start disappearing, it’s bad news for everyone.

“The reality is that many of our non-game wildlife species are vulnerable or declining, or are at high risk for decline,” Roberts says. “Kentucky Wild helps fund the conservation efforts that our biologists are involved with throughout the state for many of these vulnerable species.”

For example, Kentucky Wild supports Motus tracking in our state. The Motus system is a fascinating global collaborative network of receiver towers that records signals from tiny, specialized transmitters attached to birds, bats, butterflies and larger insects. When tagged animals fly near a Motus station, researchers obtain valuable information about animal movements, including the timing of migration. Active projects in our state



include studies on the field sparrow and wood thrush, once common species now in decline.

One of my favorite examples of conservation through Kentucky Wild is the ongoing effort to survey for Eastern hellbender, which was recently proposed for listing as a federally endangered species. This giant salamander was once widespread in many of Kentucky’s creeks and rivers, but it is now extremely rare. Kentucky Wild supports ongoing surveys not only to locate healthy hellbender populations in Kentucky, but also to captively raise young that will be released to bolster existing populations.

Many years ago, I was fishing with a friend when we stopped to speak with some researchers who were wading in the river, looking for hellbenders. One of them had a big grin on her face—she’d just found a healthy hellbender, and her excitement was contagious.

Through Kentucky Wild, you can feel some of that same excitement, knowing that you are supporting critical conservation work. And who knows—you might even have a chance to get your feet wet. Learn more about the program at fw.ky.gov/kywild. **KL**

▶
Avian Biologist Michael Patton installs a Motus station in the Daniel Boone National Forest. Photo: Geoff Roberts

KEN MCBROOM, an outdoors writer/photographer, created RamblingAngler.com. McBroom grew up in Lynchburg, Tennessee, and now lives in western Kentucky.

Kentucky Living 2026 PHOTO CONTEST

Enter the *Kentucky Living* 2026 Photo Contest
March 1-31 at KentuckyLiving.com.

Submit up to two entries per category:

- Animals
- People
- Kentucky Travels
- Plants and Flowers
- Landscapes and Scenery
- America 250 – **NEW for 2026!**

Prizes in each category:

- 1st place – \$100 gift card
- 2nd place – \$50 gift card
- 3rd place – \$25 gift card

Winners will be published in the July issue.

Six People's Choice winners:

- \$50 gift card for each category winner

People's Choice weekly voting begins
July 1 at KentuckyLiving.com.

Contest is open to co-op
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public, both amateur and
professional photographers.
Entries accepted for ages 13*
and up.

* Ages 13–17 must have consent from
a parent or guardian when they
enter online.

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CLOCKWISE FROM TOP, PHOTOS BY: KAROL WELCH, NICK
SMALLWOOD, TOM EBLEN, JULIANNA LEACH

KentuckyLiving.com

WAYNE GARMON

RULES FOR ENTRY: Read and follow all rules carefully or your photo may be disqualified. Entries must be the original work of the photographer making the submission. **LIMIT TWO ENTRIES PER CATEGORY PER PERSON**, age 13 or over, USA. Entries accepted for ages 13–17 with consent from a parent or guardian. Submit Online: Use entry form and read official rules at www.kentuckyliving.com. Complete a separate form for each photo submitted. Photos must be in .JPG format and high resolution for print purposes, preferably 1 MB minimum and 8 MB maximum file size. **SUBMISSIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY MARCH 31.**

Contest is open to persons age 13 or over, in the Continental United States, except for employees or immediate family members of Kentucky Association of Electric Cooperatives, Kentucky Living, Kentucky's electric co-ops and their respective divisions, subsidiaries, advertising and promotion agencies. Go to KentuckyLiving.com to read the Official Rules.

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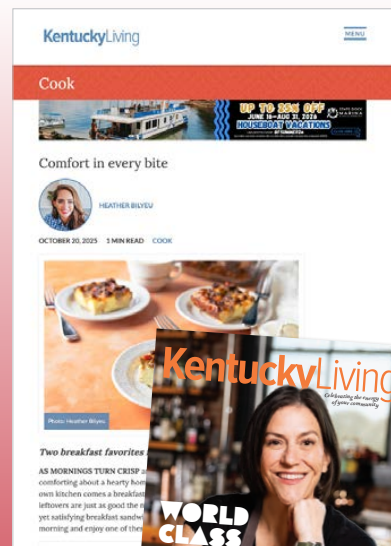
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BYRON CRAWFORD is Kentucky's storyteller—a veteran television and newspaper journalist known for his colorful essays about life in Kentucky. Contact Byron at KentuckyLiving.com: About/People.

WHEN JOHN AND CARLA Gerding of Henry County went to Denver to see their grandchildren, a neighbor offered to care for their 25-year-old Icelandic horse named Hraunr, a derivation of the Nordic word “hraun,” meaning “lava field.”

“When he was born he looked like a lump of lava rock,” John recalls.

But we digress. While the Gerdings were in Denver, the neighbor called with news that the horse, which has a pulmonary condition, was having some difficulty breathing. Veterinarian Chase Turner of the Henry County Animal Clinic in nearby New Castle made a night visit to treat Hraunr with a steroid that helped relieve the symptoms. He left steroid tablets to be given the animal over several days.

One morning after the Gerdings returned, Carla was in a “huge rush” to keep an appointment.

“It was the typical Gerding morning,” she says. “The trash can fell over, spilling trash and coffee grounds on the floor, and the telephone rang ... and I had laid the pill for the horse on the counter, and had failed to take my pills. In my rush to leave, I swiped up that little pink pill and popped it in my mouth. A steroid pill for a 1,000-pound horse!

“Before it hit my esophagus I knew what I’d done, and I thought, ‘What an idiot!’”

She immediately phoned the vet clinic and was told that the vet who treated her horse was in surgery, so she called Muncey Pryor, a veterinarian friend who lives near the Gerdings in the Lacie community of rural Henry County. He recently retired, but helps part-time at the clinic, and told her he thought she’d be okay, but that she might have trouble sleeping for a while. He checked on her in the hours that followed.

“I’m not a particularly quiet person to begin with,” Carla says, “so this just exacerbated



a personality problem that I have. As the day went on, I felt stranger and stranger—like my arms and legs were going to fly off in opposite directions. I slept absolutely not a wink, but I soldiered on. When you take a pill for a 1,000-pound horse, there are side effects. But after three or four days I came back down to what we call normal.”

It wasn’t the first such incident Pryor had encountered, he assured her. He shared the story of a woman with an autoimmune disorder who accidentally gave her dog one of her pills, and took a pill that Pryor had prescribed for the dog.

When Carla asked the outcome, Pryor said it all ended well: the dog was fine, and the woman never contracted worms.

Pryor, who like the Gerdings is a consumer-member of Shelby Energy, says he’s kept a journal of many unusual stories over his 48 years as a country veterinarian answering calls for all kinds of animals—including a bison that got into a swimming pool!

He’s considering publishing the collection. **KL**



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