

Dust Bowl '25

BY BETSY SMITH
EDITOR

This weather! What in the wide, wide world of sports is going on here? The heat in my house is programmed to come on at a certain temperature, and the radiators have been hot the last three mornings. The heat has never come on in August in the 23 years I've lived in this house!

According to WLEX 18 Storm Tracker Chief Meteorologist Bill Meck, I am not wrong in finding this unusual. In an Aug. 28 Facebook post he noted temperatures of 48° Tuesday morning; 46° Wednesday morning; and 48° Thursday morning.

Meck said this is the first time in Lexington's 142 years of weather record

keeping that there have been three days in August with temperatures in the 40's.

In fact, he said it's only the 19th time in those 142 years that August temps have dipped into the 40's at all.

This, of course, comes right on the heels of the weeks of surface-of-the-sun weather we enjoyed from late June through mid-August.

And let us not forget the drought. According to the U.S. drought monitor, as of last Thursday, Aug. 28, we were only labeled "abnormally dry," but apparently no one at the agency has been in my back yard.

The area inside the fence where Radar, Ruthie and

Vivian play-fight every morning is nothing but fine dust that flies around them in great clouds as they tussle.

When I was in college I did an honors thesis on the Great Depression and read horror stories of the Dust Bowl—arguably one of the worst manmade ecological catastrophes in history.

The deep-rooted native grasses gone, the land plowed to death, farms on the Great Plains dried up in the prolonged droughts of the 1930's and blew away, their topsoil borne east on dust storms that carried dust particles as far as the Atlantic.

The storms, sometimes called black blizzards, roared through the plains. One particularly terrifying

storm on April 14, 1935—a date designated Black Sunday—carried winds of 60 miles per hour, dropped temperatures 40 degrees and sent a massive, blinding dust cloud soaring hundreds of feet in the air.

On an everyday basis, residents of the Dust Bowl dealt with fine particles seeping into every crack and crevice of their homes. Thick layers of dust covered everything inside and outside, causing health issues. It was impossible to keep dust out of food. Imagine trying to keep your house clean or hang out the laundry. What would be the point?

I don't have to imagine. Fine dust coats my back porch. The dogs carry it in on their fur, and it lands on

every surface in the house. There is no keeping up with the dusting. My inhaler is always at the ready.

So yes, it feels like a drought at my place.

I think I speak for us all when I say Mother Nature needs to get it together.

It feels like 2025 has been one weather-related catastrophe after another. Remember the treacherous "ice sandwich" in January? The February floods? The April floods, storms and hail? The tornado that ripped through London in May?

There's talk of Kentucky being included in the infamous "tornado alley" but meteorologists are not prepared to commit just yet.

I found myself in a meeting of the Interim Joint

Committee on Veterans, Military Affairs & Public Protection in Frankfort last Wednesday, and an Emergency Management official noted that of Kentucky's 120 counties only six or seven (I wasn't taking notes) have not been declared a disaster area at some point this year.

No matter how technologically advanced humans become, there's nothing like weather to humble us and bring us to our knees so quickly. Whether it's a rained-out festival or a cataclysmic flood or tornado, no amount of planning or preparation can stop what Mother Nature plans on dishing out.

One thing is clear, though, we're definitely on her bad side this year!

Sailing the bounding main

BY BRUCE FLORENCE
COLUMNIST

Wonder why it is that young boys are so enamored with rafts? I wouldn't suppose there would be any more dangerous way to traverse an expanse of water than with a raft. There is almost nothing to help stabilize, direct or steer such an ungainly craft. And rafts are not even easy to assemble. The logs are heavy, the rope stretches or rots and once assembled you have the task of getting this heavy, ungainly craft into water calm enough not to sink it immediately.

While our native Americans may have once in a while resorted to a raft,

their craft of choice was the beautiful canoe. A canoe gives one a trusty vessel that serves well, but rafts still remain the craft of choice for mountain kids living on the edge of forests and woods filled with all the raft building supplies they might need.

Which brings me to another story of my baby brother, Logan and his best buddy, Johnny.

These two, one tall and skinny and the other shorter and rounder, but not by much, were quite a pair when it came to scaring up adventures for themselves. Many of these escapades would have turned their mothers prematurely gray, if they had

known. But they didn't know.

Remember this was the era where kids gobbled breakfast, grabbed leftover cornbread and fatback and headed out for the day. They didn't head for the streets—living in the mountains there were no streets—but there were plenty of creeks, grapevine swings, ancient boulders, gigantic trees, cliffs and caves waiting to be explored. These afforded the boys all the recreational toys they needed and, paired with their active imaginations, they considered themselves masters of their universe.

Along with this kind of freedom it is only fair to

mention that they were strong, funny and not afraid of hard work, if the work involved something they loved doing—like restoring a wartime Willys Jeep or building their own cabin high in Kentennia forest.

Today, though, the project was raft building. They cut trees—remember they had a world of trees at their disposal high on their mountain—drew a plan, prepared their logs and worked long hours binding them together with whatever rope or wire they could scavenge.

They were bright enough to build this raft very near a mill pond so the transporting of the heavy craft would not be so tough. Finally,

they were ready for the big day, and with more excitement than good sense they laid down sapling tracks and slid their creation down the bank and into the water.

And, you guessed it, somehow in all their plans and preparations they did not account for water displacement and it sank almost before they could take their first ride. It was far too heavy, and in desperation they hauled it back up the bank and puzzled what to do next.

Logan's dad sailed the oceans during WWII, knew all about sailing, boats and rafts and was immediately consulted about their sinking raft. I have to give him credit, he did not tease the

boys or belittle their efforts. I think maybe he was as much a kid as the boys, and the advice he gave them was exactly the solution to their problem.

The raft did indeed sail for a short spell. Enough time for the boys to feel immensely proud of their little ship floating down the headwaters of the mighty Cumberland River.

It would not be long before even the best efforts of a seasoned sailor and two eager kids could not prevent the elements overriding their hard work, and the raft began to come apart.

It was not the last of the boys' water exploits, but those are stories for another day.

TURNING BACK THE CLOCK

10 YEARS AGO ... SEPT. 3, 2015

- Birth announced this week: Shiloh Easton Fox was born to Tim and Tiffany Fox on Jan. 16.

- A rash of dog thefts in the Folsom-Jonesville Road area has left pet owners bereft. Residents reported a man in a pick up truck taking dogs out of their yards.

- A hat trick by Ashton Johnson led the Braves soccer team to a 6-2 road win

over Henry County.

25 YEARS AGO ... SEPT. 7, 2000

- Births announced this week: Lincoln L. Caldwell was born to Mark and Charlotte Caldwell on July 8; Rynne LaDale Cannon was born to Terry and Ronelle Cannon on May 8; Samuel Emerson Harney was born on Nov. 6, 1999. He arrived in the United States on March 31 where parents Phil

and Cindy Harney were waiting for him.

- Marigold Day activities begin today with an arts and craft show and a hymn sing. Saturday will bring a bicycle contest, hat contest, dance contest, parade, "surprise appearance," children's games, an adult talent contest and local entertainment by Tisha Ireland, Highway 36 Band, Southern Exposure and Tequila Rose.

50 YEARS AGO ... SEPT. 5, 1975

- Births announced this week: David Allen Osborne was born to Mr. and Mrs. Terry Osborne on Aug. 21; Jerry Wayne Oaks was born to Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Wayne Oaks on Aug. 18.

- The Williamstown Volunteer Fire Department has a new Seagraves fire truck that can pump 1,250 gallons of water per minute. The cost of the truck and its related

equipment totaled \$57,000.

- Grant County High School varsity cheerleaders attended the NCA Cheerleading Clinic at the University of Kentucky. Those attending were Judy Jones, Tricia Fortner, Machele Welash, Saly Bell, Cheryl Fisk, Carolyn Simpson and Leslie Schwes.

- Grant County 4-H'er Doug Landrum won a blue ribbon at the Kentucky State Fair 4-H Variety Show. He

performed the song "He Touched Me."

125 YEARS AGO ... 1900

- Crittenden has telephone connection with all of Boone County now.

- The Crittenden public school will commence the third Monday in September.

- Delia is the best watered village in Grant County, having three natural artesian wells and a fine pool for bathing purposes.

Corinth faces higher USPS rent

BY DEBORAH LUCAS ANGEL
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

Meeting on Aug. 27, the Corinth City Council was called to order at 5 p.m. by Mayor Dalaney Bishop. On the agenda were the 2025 property tax ordinance, United States Postal Service (USPS) Office rental and updates of letters sent to problem areas of the City.

First reading of Ordinance Number 25-03 was held. No changes are in the tax rates for the 2025 tax year. The amounts remain at "0.265% for Real Property, for each \$100 of value

and a tax of 0.326% for Tangible Property, for Businesses Only." A second reading will be held not later than the week of Sept. 1.

During the July meeting, the upcoming USPS rental renewal was discussed. At that time, a rental amount lower than the current rate was proposed by the USPS. City Clerk Tara Wright had contacted USPS personnel concerning a potential reduced rate. It was discovered the proposed amount was, indeed higher.

At this time, the rental is \$19,200, paid in \$1,600/month increments. The increase will be to \$20,693/year

to again be paid in monthly increments of \$1,724.42.

Wright will continue to discuss the rates with USPS. She noted they will not agree to any amount until a letter or email is in-hand stating the higher amount has been received.

With no answers received from certified and/or regular mail letters that were sent out to owners in violation of the City's ordinances covering property conditions, the City will confer with City Attorney Pete Whaley to determine the next step to take with all affected properties.

A meeting will be held Sept. 18

between Whaley and Wright to determine next steps. Wright will report findings and recommendations to the Council at the next scheduled meeting. Council will then decide how to move forward on these issues.

Also, the burned out house on Main Street has been advertised in the paper for cleanup. The next step will be to clean it up.

Wright noted the City has a "load of gravel" to be used to fill remaining potholes in the City streets.

While the weather and personnel scheduling have prevented pouring concrete in the Pavillion at the City

Park, the City plans to have it done as soon as it can be scheduled by this fall.

The City has signs to replace their street and stop signs. These will be replaced as time and personnel permit.

While a special meeting will be held within the next two weeks for the second reading of Ordinance Number 25-03; the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Corinth City Council will be September 22 at 5:00 p.m. at 215 Thomas Lane, Corinth. For more information, call (859) 824-5922.

SUIT

FROM PAGE A1

it is proposed that for a larger development(s) such as a subdivision:

- Subcommittee meets prior to a public hearing being scheduled, will meet with applicants for questions, etc.
- Commission schedules a public hearing
- Committee reports to the commission any conditions or changes for the application
- The public, applicant, etc. can address the Commission
- Once finished, recommendations based on the hearing and subcommittee results will be sent to the appropriate legislative body.

The changes would be more in line with how other counties conduct their process.

1. IMI Concrete is located next to his home. The company has both a concrete operation and a store. Zimmerman asked if the plant could park their concrete trucks in the store's lot.

King noted the "Board has no jurisdiction" on this matter and that it would be for the local legislative body to decide. In this case, the City of Dry Ridge.

2. There is a trailer park next to IMI. Zimmerman asked what "variance of distance" is allowed for a business such as IMI.

Again, King referred him to the City of Dry Ridge to answer that question, as the County Planning Commission has no jurisdiction in that matter.

The next meeting of the Board is scheduled for Monday, Sept. 22, 2025 or at the call of the Chair. The meeting will be held at 7 p.m. at the Courthouse, 101 North Main Street Williamstown. For more information on this meeting, call Becky Ruholl at (859) 250-3753.

THORNE

FROM PAGE A1

Thornes is a native of West Virginia and a respected resident of Williamstown, Kentucky, who enlisted in the USMC in 1965.

"He would go on to graduate from the Marine Corps Recruit Depot at Parris Island and Infantry Training School at Camp Geiger. He served briefly with 1st Battalion, 2nd Marines, at Camp Lejeune before joining 2nd Battalion, 9th Marines and being deployed to DaNag, South Vietnam, where he served as a rifleman, M-79 Grenadier, fire team leader, and squad leader.

"He would ultimately serve two tours of duty in Vietnam, during which he was assigned to various locales across the country in support of many critical military maneuvers and suffered multiple injuries in the line of duty, as well as exposure to Agent Orange, which ultimately led to him developing Parkinson's Disease.

"During his military career, he would also serve in Lebanon and Somalia as



Betsy Smith

Sen. Matt Nunn, Sgt. Major Jimmy Thorne and Rep. Savannah Maddox pose after Thorne was honored in Frankfort on Aug. 27.

part of peace-keeping forces before completing his military career on American soil. He is a highly decorated soldier who has earned numerou military

honors, including an Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Purple Heart, Meritorious Service Medal, Navy Commendation Medal, Combat Action Ribbon, and many others.

"In addition to his extraordinary service to his country, he is a generous supporter of various civic and charitable programs within his community and serves on behalf of the Grant County Sheriff's Office as president of Volunteers In Community Events (VICE).

"Inasmuch as Sgt. Maj. Jimmy Thorne (USMC, Ret.) has consistently served in the interest of his country and community, both as a soldier and civilian, and made unimaginable sacrifices to preserve peace and freedom for his fellow Americans and citizens around the world, he is offered sincere commendation and gratitude for his years of valiant service; is extended best wishes for the utmost safety, success, and good fortune in the future, and, on the motion of Senator Matt Nunn, Representative Savannah Maddox, and the members of the Joint Committee on Veterans, Military Affairs, & Public Protection is hereby deemed by this honorable body most worthy of its recognition."

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