

# THE WOODFORD SUN

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## YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION RATES

**\$50, Woodford County residents**  
**\$38, Woodford County senior residents**  
**\$60, Kentucky residents**  
**\$65, out of state**



## Thinking Backward: Our Public Schools

**LYNN PRUETT**  
**GUEST COLUMNIST**

I believe public schools are the best tool for creating a democratic society. So, I have been puzzled recently about the out-of-state push to take money away from them and give it to private schools.

How did this come about? Bear with me as I think backward to an answer. In the past decade, there has been an uptick in the number of children who are home-schooled or who attend private schools. Some blame Covid, which, before vaccines and treatment, was a deadly, highly-contagious disease. Schools were incubators for it so public schools were shut down to protect students.

After vaccines were available and students could return to class, a significant number did not. There must have been something else as parents began to think about how safe their children were at school.

A different epidemic has threatened school children the past twenty years: school shooters. It's mostly teen-aged boys and young men who have access to assault rifles, legally or illegally. While mental health issues are often present, there are typically other contributors like childhood trauma, antisocial behavior, history of violence, accessibility to guns, misogyny, substance use and suicidal ideation. Regardless of the contributing factors, they

target schools where the population of the vulnerable is most concentrated.

Parents who can afford it send their kids to private schools. Those who have the time and the ability home school. Both are expensive propositions—either in tuition or in time out of the work force for the Moms who generally run the home-schools.

Many politicians love the money the gun lobby showers them with. They love it more than American school children. The political compromise is clear: keep the gun money flowing in to politicians but give terrified parents money to keep their children out of vulnerable public schools.

Instead of creating a democratic society, this model teaches children stratification and value based on income.

If assault weapons were banned and laws were tougher on gun ownership, our children would be safer in public schools. Our politicians should be required to go through a school shooter drill before they vote on gun legislation ever again. Maybe, then, they will understand what KiddoKicks shoes on the ground means.

*Lynn is a farmer who lives near Troy, and a Sun contributing columnist.*

# From Our Files

## 10 Years Ago August 13, 2015

Woodford County Fiscal Court dealt with a longstanding problem: whether the correct spelling of a major Woodford County road was “Cummins Ferry” or “Cummings Ferry.” The issue became more acute when the county listed the road as “Cummings” in an inventory provided to the U.S. Postal Service. Several residents on the road have complained of the problem. Marilyn Daniel spoke on behalf of a group who reviewed the historical record using maps and deeds as well as mailing a poll to all residents that showed all but one preferred “Cummins.” Since there is currently a vacancy in the 911 coordinator position, the court voted to request that Sheriff John Wilhoit send a letter to the postmaster requesting the name be officially know as “Cummins Ferry.” Ashout of “finally” was heard in town coming from the southern part of the county.

Woodford County residents Drew and Heather Curtis held a news conference on Monday at the State Capital building announcing their slate’s candidacy for Governor as independents. Tuesday was the deadline for independents to enter the race. Jack Conway and Sannie Overly are the Democrat nominees and Matt Bevin and Jenean Hampton are on the Republican ticket. Curtis said he and his wife are “citizen candidates,” and rejected the labels “liberal and conservative”, instead describing their approach as “ultra-pragmatist.”

Billy F. Van Pelt II, the CEO of Woodford Forward, a citizens advocacy group which is focused on growth and economic development issues, published a column in the Sun “”strongly oppos(ing)” the city of Versailles proposed annexation of 326 acres currently

zoned as A-1 known as the Edgewood Farm property next to the new Kroger Marketplace development. Van Pelt pointed out this was not contemplated by the current Comprehensive Plan, not appropriate under city and county ordinances, was done with very little public notice, will likely lead to costly litigation, and as a backhanded attempt to expand the urban service boundary.

Nikolai Wagener, a member of Boy Scout troop 14, worked with American Legion Post 67 and the Woodford County Public Schools to install a flag pole at the Safe Harbor Academy on Main Street for his Eagle Scout project. The school did not have a flag pole, but thanks to Nikolai and the volunteers he pulled together and supervised, the school had a brand new flag pole to open the new school year.

Haley Freeman of Versailles, a student at the University of Auburn’s veterinarian school, married Christopher Hancock, employed at Snyder-Lance in Columbus, from Sturgis, at St. Leo’s Catholic Church. The couple are both grads of Western Kentucky University, and after a honeymoon cruise to Belize-Mexico-Honduras, they will reside in Auburn, Alabama.

The sports section had season previews of the WCHS girls and boys soccer teams..

## 25 Years Ago August 10, 2000

Students attending Woodford County Public Schools surpassed their peers from across the state and nation in the latest Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills released last week.

Announcing their candidacies this week are Roy Benson, for reelection to the Versailles City Council; Vinson Straub for a seat on the city council, and Tom Tipton for the Woodford

County Board of Education. All six incumbents have filed for the city council, including Benson, Owen Roberts, Mary Ellen Bradley, Luther Bland Jr., Nickie Shryock, and Geoffrey Reid. Challengers, including Straub, are Jackie Young, Paula England, Matthew Amberg, and Paul Downey.

Candidates for Woodford County Junior Miss are Courtney Burge, Nicki Logan, Amy Stencel, Rebecca Hovenkamp, Kristen Lowe, Rebecca Burkich, Cassy Fish, Kami Brumley, Kristin Hartley, Jessica McCoun, Erin Filipp, Amanda King, and Stacy Zeleznik.

Robert C. Stilz III of Versailles has received a bachelor of arts degree from Emory University, Atlanta, Ga.

Earning academic honors at Purdue University were William Thomas Smith and Amy C. Wells of Versailles.

## 40 Years Ago August 8, 1985

James Greer has been sworn in as assistant commonwealth’s attorney.

Brereton C. Jones of Midway has been named by Gov. Martha Layne Collins to head the state’s Special Medicaid Program Review Team.

James T. Walters of Versailles received a Price Waterhouse award presented by the University of Kentucky chapter of Beta Alpha Psi, a national accounting honorary fraternity.

Lt. Kathy Eaves Mokris, USMC, was the honor graduate of the Ground Supply Officer Course which concluded recently at Camp Lejeune, N.C. Her average of 99.88 percent was the second highest in the history of the course.

Mark Goode of Versailles was the winner in the boys’ 15-17 division at the recent Central Kentucky Swim Conference championships.

# Habitat for Humanity needs volunteers for newest build



**HABITAT HOME #44 has its foundation laid and is ready for volunteers to build the new house at 252 Douglas Ave. Join Habitat for Humanity this Saturday, Aug. 16, at 9 a.m. to help out. All are welcome! (Photo from Woodford Habitat for Humanity)**

**BY SCOTT WHITE**  
**MANAGING EDITOR**

Woodford Habitat for Humanity kicks off its newest construction project, “Habitat Home #44,” on Saturday, Aug. 16, at 9 a.m. and is seeking volunteers to help with the construction.

“As we know, in the last year, the Versailles City Council convened a task force to address the need for affordable housing in our area,” Bill Reed, with Woodford Habitat, said. “This Habitat build is one step in the direction of addressing this issue.”

Located at 252 Douglas Ave., construction of its 44th home recently began with the pouring of the foundation on the four-bedroom home. Habitat invites any and all to come and help out with the construction of the

home; they will be working on exterior and interior framing.

The completed house already has a new family selected to turn it into a home. The new owners’ purchase via a loan program will immediately begin building their equity through their work on the house. Other homeowners who now live in homes built by Habitat will also work on the project, increasing their own equity.

Woodford Habitat paid \$30,000, plus small incidentals, to purchase the lot on Douglas Avenue. It estimates spending an additional \$110,000 to \$120,000 for materials and professional services.

Reed added, “Of course, most all of that is spent at various Woodford County businesses.”

## JONES

**Continued from p. 1**

Central Office purpose statement emerged from the input of leaders.

*At the heart of everything we do, the Central Office is committed to our children and community. We ensure the smooth day-to-day operations of the entire district, develop enriching educational opportunities, and actively advocate for the well-being and success of every student in Woodford County.*

Every Central Office employee who’s not regularly in the schools will serve in a school in some way this school year, Jones said. “The response has been so positive. They are so excited about it,” she said, describing the schools as “the life of our system.”

Going forward, Jones said, “We have to collaborate ... and integrate all of our offices (here at Central Office) regularly because all of that has to center around the function of our schools. And so I believe in regular collaborative meetings that are focused, agenda-driven.”

The weekly meetings are her Central Office Hive, and they help to ensure decisions are not made in isolation, she said.

“I’m a leader who believes in two-way communication and getting input from others,” said Jones.

“We have to move in one direction together,” she said later. “If we’re not moving in one direction together, then there’s division, there’s lack of focus. So we’re going to move in one direction together,” with input from all stakeholders.

Jones said she knew she wanted to be a part of Woodford County Public Schools because of the work that’s gone into developing the Portrait of a Learner initiative, as well as the commitment to excellence, family and the education of this community.

Her teaching experience at the elementary, middle and high school levels has shown Jones that “students need the same things no matter what. They do,” she said. No matter the grade, students “need a sense of belonging. They need to be challenged. And they need to know I have high expectations for them, but I’m going to support them in getting there. It didn’t matter what age.”

It’s been 25 years since Jones said she began her career in education and “I find that to be true today.” And whenever her time is finished in WCPS, she said, “I want to leave it better than I found it. That’s my goal.”

*Editor’s Note: We are continuing with excerpts from the Woodford Weekly (WW), which was published in Versailles sometime in 1869. These excerpts are being published “as is,” warts and all, and will include pejorative and racist terms for not only Black-Americans, but other ethnicities and nationalities used at that time by those in power and control of the country’s institutions. Our purpose is to reprint what was happening here at that time, to give contemporary readers as accurate a historical sense as possible. Please bear this in mind when reading these excerpts.*

**Readers should be forewarned that this week’s Clippings recounts the double-lynching of Rev. Will Turpin and Jim Parker by the Ku Klux Klan in Woodford County.**

## The Woodford Weekly August 12, 1870

[Headline: The Ku-Klux, Grim Death Among Us]: We have to record the doings of the King of Terrors among us – king of terrors and terror of kings; the doings of Death. He came ghastly, if reports be true; and the work he did appeared ghastly enough on yesterday’s (Thursday) morning. He came on horses in ghostly form – in the shape of men, but with no visages of men displayed; he came with white veil over the face and visor up. What he left for the shocked and bewildered gave to all a gaze of the stiff forms of Will Turpin and Jim Parker, two negroes of Versailles, who must have made themselves obnoxious to his rule.

Turpin was a Methodist preacher who caused a split in a colored congregation in this place a year or so ago, and who, with his followers, formed a new society of his own and built a house of worship a quarter of a mile from town in a negro settlement on the Clifton Road, near the cheese factory. Turpin had the reputation of being a dictator among the negroes – a leader of iron will. When a portion of his followers at one time elected a political deputation to Frankfort, which he did not like, he set about constituting another delegation more to his taste; and two delegations of (pejorative term for Blacks) went on one and the same errand. Lately, if reports are true, he has been subjecting his flock to military drill in the chapel. He appeared to be about 45 years old, an

ugly, repulsive negro, of the lower stratum of the cornfield variety.

Jim Parker is represented as a man of no force of any sort hardly, but full of evil designs, and a pliant tool in the hands of the crafty. He is about 40 years old.

The verdict of the jury summoned by Dr. Redd, the Coroner, was to the effect that Turpin “came to his death from wounds inflicted by firearms in the hands of a party of unknown men in mask who came to his house.” The verdict in Parker’s case was that he “came to his death from wounds inflicted by firearms in the hands of a party of unknown men in mask, who came and left on horseback.”

Most of the witnesses were negroes, and they testified that there must have been at least 15 or 20 men among the strange visitors, all on horses.

[Headline: Correction]: Our statement last week that Mr. Crusoe was acting as a policeman when he struck the negro was incorrect. We understand the blow was given for pretty much such an offense as General Buford dealt a blow to a man at Saratoga not long ago; namely, for impolite and insolent interference in a private conversation. If one white man may, in the heat of the moment, “punish” another white man for a thing of this sort, at all times offensive, we do not see that there could be less reason for a white man bringing a negro to summary account. But the difference is that Gen. Buford floors his man and goes along afterward

unmolested, his action does not affect his standing with an observant public, for in a short time he meets his old classmate, General U.S. Grant at Long Branch where they are hail fellows and “talk horse” to their hearts content. Whereas in Crusoe’s case, although he had passed the ordeal of the police court, we hear of the torch being applied to his property in a few nights succeeding his difficulty with this negro.

[Headline: The Election in Kentucky]: The election shows a Democratic victory and large Democratic majorities (statewide). This is the first time that the negro vote has been polled. The Republicans were in hopes that it would change the political status of Kentucky, but they have been miserably disappointed. It is still as immutably fixed to the Democratic Party as the Rock of Gibraltar is impervious to the surrounding sea. The majority will doubtless be counted by tens of thousands. All hail to the gallant Democracy of Kentucky! The 50,000 new negro votes have not affected us.

[Headline: Militia]: The young men of Versailles and vicinity have formed themselves into a military company. The officers include E.M. Wallace, as captain, and James P. Amsden, as first lieutenant. This is something which has been very much needed; and we hope our citizens will encourage the beginners of this laudable movement in all their power.

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