

LAKE

from FRONT

The company's name reflects both its mission and its mindset. The kingfisher bird, known for its precision and success when diving for prey, serves as a symbol of the approach Byrd and his team bring to each job.

"They don't just dive—they dive with a purpose," Byrd said. "That's what we strive for. We plan carefully, execute with precision, and focus on getting the job done right the first time."

That level of preparation and execution was recently demonstrated during a repair project at Holmes Bend Marina in early March. The company responded after a dock had shifted approximately 25 feet into a cove, eventually coming to rest against the bank.

Divers determined that while the anchor cable itself remained intact, a broken shackle had caused the failure. Working in zero-visibility conditions common to local lakes, the team conducted a series of dives to locate and repair the issue.

The first dive focused on tracing the cable and identifying hazards, including submerged trees and debris that could pose entanglement risks. The second phase involved searching for the anchor itself, which was buried roughly 10 inches beneath the lakebed. Divers used their hands to sift through silt until the anchor was located and marked.

During the final dive, the team reconnected the cable to the anchor using a new shackle, stabilizing the dock and completing the repair in a matter of hours.

"In those conditions, you're not using your eyes—you're using your hands, your experience, and your instincts," Byrd said.

While the work itself can be technical and demanding, Byrd emphasized that the company's success is rooted in its people.

"Our crew is what truly sets us apart," he said. "From experienced divers to new hires, everyone understands the expectations we have. We keep communication open, and ideas can come from anyone. We show up to solve problems together."



Nate and Rachel Byrd are the specialists for everything around and especially everything in the waters of our region's lakes. (Photo source: Kingfisher Marine)



Before and after: The team of Kingfisher Marine recently fixed the broken anchor of the dock at Holmes Bend Marina. (Photo source: Kingfisher Marine)

Rachel Byrd, who co-owns and operates the business, brings a scientific perspective to the operation through her background in biology and chemistry. She said that foundation has helped her better understand the behavior of water and the challenges involved in underwater environments.

"The science of the water and the physics of boat docks keeps me always learning," she said. "My education gave me a foundation, but this work has taken it much further."

In addition to their professional responsibilities, the Byrds balance the demands of running a business with raising their three children. Maintaining that balance requires structure and intentional planning, including setting aside family time and limiting work discussions outside of business hours.

"We keep a schedule board in the kitchen and make sure we plan time together," Rachel Byrd said. "After a certain time of day, we try not to talk shop."

Looking ahead, the couple plans to continue expanding Kingfisher Marine's capabilities. While diving and salvage work remain at the core of the business, future plans include moving into full-scale dock design, fabrication, and installation.

The goal, Byrd said, is to provide a complete "shore-to-floor" service—handling everything from construction above the waterline to maintenance below it.

"We want to be more than just a repair company," he said. "We want to be the name people trust when it's time to build, maintain, or fix anything on the water."

As demand for marine services continues to grow in the region, Kingfisher Marine is positioning itself to meet those needs while staying grounded in the values that started it all: hard work, precision, and a deep connection to the water.

More information: <http://kingfishermarinellc.com> and on Facebook "Kingfisher Marine"

BOARD

from FRONT

both the middle and high school levels. Thirty-one Adair County Middle School Beta students attended the Kentucky Junior Beta State Convention, competing in a range of academic and creative categories. Two students earned top placements and will advance to the National Junior Beta Convention in Nashville this June. Michael Cash Hare, a sixth grader, placed first in social studies, while eighth grader Maddie Weddington placed fifth in language arts.

At the high school level, students qualified for national competition in 11 events. Individual recognitions included Hannah Cotter, Claire Lloyd, Ashley Lloyd, Pierce Stotts, Crystal Mendoza, Colt Keene, Kelly Kewbridge, Chloe Acanto, Treely Kearns, and Sarah Gass, along with the club's team scrapbook entry. Faulkner praised the students for representing the district well across multiple disciplines.

Secondary Instructional Supervisor Sarah Hatton then presented the district's ASCEND Awards for February, which focused on the value of community. The first award went to Family Resource Coordinator Pam Bivens, nominated for her consistent support of students and families. According to her nomination, Bivens works quietly behind the scenes, connecting families with resources, coordinating outreach programs, and offering daily encouragement to students facing challenges. Hatton noted that many students enter Bivens' office with stress or concerns but leave with a renewed sense of support, reflecting her commitment to service and compassion within the school community.

The second ASCEND Award recognized Laura Willis, whose work spans both the classroom and the broader school environment. Willis was commended for fostering meaningful connections between students, staff, and the community. Her efforts include organizing student-led initiatives such

as an eighth-grade formal, revitalizing school spirit through Pep Club, and leading freshman activities at the high school. Willis was also credited with designing the school's achievement wall to celebrate student success. Her nomination emphasized her ability to create opportunities for student leadership and belonging, while continuing to excel in the classroom as a science teacher.

The district-level ASCEND Award was presented to Melinda Knight, recognized for her dedication and willingness to support others in any capacity. Knight was described as a team player who consistently anticipates the needs of staff and students, often going beyond her assigned duties to ensure a positive school environment. Her colleagues praised her strong work ethic and commitment to maintaining a welcoming atmosphere across the campus. Hatton and Faulkner both noted that Knight's contributions reflect the collaborative spirit necessary for a successful school community.

In addition to the ASCEND recognitions, the board presented the February attendance award to Jordan Williams of Adair County Elementary School.

Board members approved several items unanimously, including the district's match for the FY2026 KETS Second Offer of Assistance. The board also approved multiple requests to waive facility fees, allowing the Adair County Chamber of Commerce to host its annual Community 5K on

May 2, Kentucky Future Stars to use the football field in June, and Canine Search Inc. of Kentucky to conduct training on school property in April.

The board also approved the creation of a new literacy interventionist position to serve Adair County Elementary School and Adair County Primary Center. Federal Programs Director Holly Trowbridge explained that the position will be funded through two Read to Achieve grants from the Kentucky Department of Education, which are expected to provide long-term support for literacy improvement efforts.

Following approval of the monthly Director of Transportation and Maintenance Anthony Darnell provided an update on facilities and grounds. He reported that mowing and seasonal maintenance have begun and praised the work ethic of his staff, noting their willingness to handle last-minute tasks without complaint.

Faulkner echoed those sentiments, highlighting recent improvements to athletic facilities, including new shot put and discus areas, as well as ongoing work at the new middle school construction site. He also recognized community support for a new flagpole installation at the football field, noting that the finished structure will stand 70 feet tall. Faulkner emphasized that continued progress across district facilities reflects a strong collaborative effort among staff and community partners.



Pam Bivens, Laura Willis, and Melinda Knight got the ASCEND Awards for the month of February from the hands of Superintendent Jason Faulkner.

HAPPY TAIL

from EDITORIAL

time. We jumped into the truck and raced to the airport. We got there in time for Chip to leap out, give me a hug and a kiss goodbye, and board his flight.

I cried all the way back to Columbia. The way back I did? I was leaving my son a thousand miles away. I knew nothing about Kentucky, except for the horse park. Was this a foolish move?

When I pulled into the yard, two of my horses were missing. There was a gate in the back pasture that was open and Rose and Cat decided to investigate their new surroundings. I hiked through the woods searching for them. I came upon a beautiful clearing with daffodils in full bloom. Beautiful. I went back empty-handed.

I drove to town to report the lost horses and grabbed some food. I still couldn't get into the house until the closing, so I made myself

at home on the carport. I had an air mattress to lay my sleeping bag on and luckily, I had water from the hydrant at the horse barn.

I decided to go to sleep since it was dark and there was nothing else I could do. The air mattress leaked so I slept on the cold cement floor. I had barely fallen asleep and I saw headlights at the foot of the driveway. Someone had found my horses. They showed up at their house on Wheeler Hill. I hooked up the trailer and followed them. There were Rose and Cat enjoying some hay. I loaded them up and took them back to their new home.

They stayed in the trailer that night. In the morning I checked the fences and then put them back in the pasture. The closing was supposed to be on that day. I received a call from the bank that the closing would be postponed until Tuesday. I made the most

of it. I washed up at the hydrant and explored my new surroundings. Another night on the carport floor.

Tuesday afternoon I headed to the bank for the closing which was in Russell Springs. I got on the Louie Nuhn, headed in the wrong direction! The exits are far and few between. I panicked. Would this delay the closing again? Luckily everyone was patient and waited for me.

I now had the keys to the house. First thing, call to have the electricity hooked up. Again, central time vs. eastern time. Taylor County RECC was closed. I slept in the dark house. At least I had a carpeted floor to sleep on.

Twenty years later I'm still here. I don't regret the move. I love it here. We've made so many friends. There's no place like home.

"Hope your Easter finds you well and surrounded by people you love."

WRITERS

from FRONT

Next, Adair Progress Editor Mig Feuser shared a pair of intriguing short stories involving a werewolf and strange occurrences surrounding a hotel room, as well as a poem by an anonymous author.

Following that, Mike Watson told a funny tale of an incident that had happened at a local country store and gave a thoughtful speech about time and remembrance.

Next, Pamela Hoots announced with several announcements regarding the Mark Twain Storytelling Festival before sharing some of her own poetry from a book she had written years ago. Some were left fascinated, noting that they hadn't known the mayor was a writer.

From there, Lanny Tucker shared excerpts from two of his books, titled "Harp's Head" and "Outlaw Days." The first was a horror retelling of historical events, and the latter was a western.

Linda Waggener, owner of the Columbia Magazine, was next with a heartfelt recounting of her life, her dreams of seeing the world, and her eventual realization of how she could do that through the work of others.

Award-winning poet Chad Horn followed with an energetic and amusing display of some of his works, including a memorable short tale set in Adair County. Additionally,

he spoke about some of his experiences in life and as a writer.

Right after him, John Compton recited several of his poems, which tended to focus on darker topics, allowing the crowd to form vivid images from his words.

The final exhibitor before the lunch break was Stephen Rodriguez, who treated the crowd to multiple examples of his poetry, as well as some clever and interactive riddles.

The afternoon session opened with Katelynn M. Molesky, reporter for The Adair Progress, who presented a narrative centered on violence and its lasting impact. Her piece set a serious tone and invited the audience to reflect on the human side of difficult events.

Rita Spalding, recipient of the 2025 Murray State University Outstanding Senior in Sociology Award, followed with several original poems. Her work offered a more reflective tone, using verse to explore personal and social themes.

Event organizer Darlene Campbell then read passages from her books, continuing the focus on storytelling while encouraging local writers to share their voices. Campbell has long supported creative efforts in the community through events such as Writers' Day.

Dennis Crump followed



Poet Chad Horn impressed again with his works, presented with the help of small organs.

with readings from his books on religious topics. His appearance was notable, as he took part in the event just one day before leaving to begin missionary work in Vietnam.

The afternoon concluded with an open mic session, where Chad Horn and Rita Spalding delivered an improvised performance that blended spoken word and collaboration.

In closing, Campbell reflected on the importance of poetry and creative expression, noting that while often seen as non-essential, they remain a meaningful part of life, and she thanked everyone for attending: "There are many people who do like poetry, but all of my life I was made to feel like poetry was not essential. Although it's like music. Music is a non-essential thing, too. But we sure do need it. Life would be a lot less fun without music and without poems. And the truth is, every life in this room is a story."

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