

Marion County Conservation District Awards



Photo provided

The Marion County Conservation District presented Calvary Cattle Company- Joe & Joey Lee with the 2026 Master Conservationist Award at their annual Jim Claypool Art & Conservation Writing Banquet held March 13. Joe & Joey Lee are great assets to conservation and Stewards of the Land. We appreciate all they do to help to contribute to our natural resources. Pictured from left to right, back row, Joe Paul Mattingly with (MCCD), Master Conservationist Joey Lee, II & his wife Stephanie, Master Conservationist Joe Lee & his wife Mary Edna. Front Row, left to right, is Joey & Stephanie's children, Luci & Joey Lee, III.



Photo provided

The Marion County Conservation District held their annual Jim Claypool Art & Conservation Writing Banquet on March 13. The theme for the 2025 Contest was "Kentucky Wetlands Up Close." Students were asked to express their opinion of how wetlands contribute to conservation and their importance and how we as individuals can help protect our wetlands. Students from grades K thru 5th participated in the art contest & grades 6th thru 12th participated in the writing contest. Pictured back row, left to right- D'Nayah Morris, Arie Wayne, Arhea Spalding, Whitney Magana, Keli Blanford, Amelia Mattingly, Adam Blanford, & Brittany Browning. Front Row, left to right- Easton Morgan, Bethany Riggs, Ava Mays, Ryleigh Owens, Quinn DeSpain, Paris Weakley, Ava Mattingly, & County Writing Winner- Piper Jones. Not pictured is County Art Winner- Davis Shewmaker, Landon Caldwell, Nolan Deering, Brayden O'Daniel, & Ethan Gootee. Art County Winner- Davis Shewmaker & County Writing Winner- Piper Jones, also won for Area 4 for their category. Area 4 includes 7 other counties.



GRACE PORTER OWENS

Owens to celebrate 95th birthday

Grace (Porter) Owens of S. Spalding Avenue, Lebanon, will be celebrating her 95th birthday on April 3, 2026. She was married to the late George Owens, Jr. for 70 years.

To this union 7 children were born: Grace Owens (deceased), George Owens, III (deceased), Lydia Ann (Owens) White, Joseph Louis Owens, Charles Sylvester Owens (deceased), William Thomas Owens (deceased), and David Lee Owens. She also has 13 grandchildren, over 40 great-grandchildren, and over 12 great-great-grandchildren.

A special birthday celebration was held on March 28, 2026, at St. Augustine Parish Hall in Lebanon.

LEADERS

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lead today."

Last year, 13 students who also participated in the weeklong Washington Youth Tour in the nation's capital were inspired to host voter registration drives in their hometowns, resulting in hundreds of newly eligible voters becoming registered.

"Co-ops Vote helps students understand that civic engagement starts now, not someday," said Secretary Adams. "By encouraging young Kentuckians to register, speak up, and get involved, we're empowering them to shape their communities and the future of our Commonwealth."

Co-ops Vote does not advocate or endorse a particular party or candidate. Instead, the initiative reminds elected leaders of the priorities of rural electric cooperatives, whose members elect boards to represent their interests.

"A cooperative is uniquely suited to understand and serve a community because it literally belongs to the people it serves and was built by people in that community," explained Mallory Wafizig, the association's manager of cooperative outreach. "We are so grateful to our elected leaders and to the rising young leaders on the youth tour who share a passion for service and a demonstrated commitment to the democratic process."

CALVARY

FROM PAGE B4

Dalton Lee
Zane Litherland
Taylor Mattingly
Liam Mays
Karter Milby
Kash Mills
Tyler Richardson

Caden Richerson
Kennedy Rittmiller
Myah Smith
Laney Staten
Gage Tharp
Grayson Traylor
Addy Tucker
Kinsley VanHook
Barrett Violette
Anna Beth Wheatley
Brayden Wilson
James Wohner

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Three flavors of THC-infused beverages will be sold under The Real Cornbread Mafia name.

Real Cornbread Mafia beverage launch begins

THC-infused drinks on sale in Kentucky

BY PAXTON MEDIA GROUP

The Real Cornbread Mafia beverage brand is launching statewide, unveiling a THC beverage said to be inspired by Kentucky heritage and crafted for today's social gatherings.

Rooted in tradition but designed for today, the Real Cornbread Mafia beverage blends Kentucky storytelling, distinctive flavors and modern innovation to offer a contemporary alternative to alcohol, the company announcement says.

The name Cornbread Mafia was popularized in a book that described a group

of Kentucky men in Marion and neighboring counties who created the largest known domestic marijuana production operation in United States history. While convicted of illegal activity, the reputation for outlaw ingenuity has become a badge of honor in some circles and a stigma in others.

The beverage launch is in response to growing interest in alcohol alternatives and hemp-derived drinks, according to the marketing release issued Monday.

Each can includes five milligrams of Delta-9 THC and just 30 calories. Drinks with up to about 5 milligrams of THC have been legal in Kentucky for almost a year.

The brand offers a beverage for those seeking a fresh way to gather and connect beyond conventional drinking culture, the news release touts.

"I've lived the story that inspired this brand," said Joe Keith Bickett, co-founder. "Being part of the original Cornbread Mafia means carrying a piece of Kentucky history with you. This beverage is about honoring that heritage while creating something fresh that reflects how people gather and celebrate today."

The three flavors available are called Peach Haze Tea, Blueberry Dream Lemonade and Grape Berry Kush Soda.

The Real Cornbread Mafia beverage joins the rapidly expanding THC-infused beverage category, catering to consumers seeking alternatives to alcohol.

The Real Cornbread Mafia beverage will launch in select markets across Kentucky with retail placement, tasting events and promotional activities planned.

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