

BRIDGE

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engineered to ensure the safe passage for all motorists. Work began in October of 2024.

The original contract called for the bridge to be closed to traffic for only 75 days, with an overall project completion date in mid-April. However a combination of factors resulted in both of those schedules being delayed, including severe weather conditions of both the winter variety (snow, bitter cold temperatures that would prevent concrete from setting correctly) and spring storms and flooding.

Additionally, in December, crews found greater deterioration than expected upon removing the old deck. While these issues posed no immediate safety concerns, the decision was made to replace the beams entirely, with the extra work also contributing to the amended timetable.

“They got down here and got an early start, opened the bridge up, and we found the bridge (needed) a little more work than we anticipated,” said KYTC District 8 Chief Engineer James Jones during the ceremony. “... They worked every opportunity they had. They worked every day that they could have, and maybe a few that they

shouldn’t have. They were safe, but there were a few days out there when it was cold, and I (told them), ‘Man, you guys might want to go home today. It’s too cold.’”

Jones also thanked the people of Nancy for their patience and cooperation, saying, “This has been a long project. ... It’s impacted travel, it’s impacted business, but you all are very patient and very understanding and saw the need of the improvements, (that) it’s time to get them done and time to get this thing ready for the next generation.”

During the closure, motorists had to detour on the Cumberland Parkway, but the Nancy exit has created longer travel times for many in the community, particularly those attending local attractions like Haney’s Appledale Farm or the Mill Springs Battlefield National Monument Visitors Center and Mill Springs National Cemetery.

Branscum, who represents a portion of Pulaski County, serves of the Kentucky House of Representatives Transportation Committee and was instrumental in getting funding for the project. He spoke to those gathered on the Nancy side of the bridge Thursday morning for the ribbon-cutting ceremony, with many parked at nearby Lee’s Ford Marina or alongside the roadway, waiting to be among

the first motorists to cross the revamped bridge.

The funding for the bridge work was designated by the state legislature in the 2022 the 2024 biannual road plans, noted Branscum, and he thanked his colleagues in the State and House and Senate, particularly Pulaski’s own representatives and Sen. Rick Girdler, for supporting the project and helping make it a reality.

Branscum called the decision to replace the beams, upon the discovery of deterioration, a “responsible and forward-thinking decision” that would ensure “the long-term performance and safety” of the Fishing Creek Bridge.

“This wasn’t just a repair job; it was a careful balance of preserving the history while securing our future,” he said. “One standout detail ... is the reconstruction of the bridge rail, which was thoughtfully designed to mimic the original 1951 rail, and it’s a subtle, meaningful nod to our bridge’s past.”

Branscum noted the crews’ work “through some of the harshest weather conditions we’ve seen in years” including “two significant flood events,” offering his appreciation to all involved, and also thanked the public — “I can honestly say ... (that) everyone was so understanding of the need for this to be done. I know it wasn’t easy for any of us who

frequently use this bridge, but I hope you’ll agree, it was worth it.”

He added that they weren’t just cutting a ribbon Thursday, but “reconnecting neighbors, restoring commerce, and reaffirming our commitment to safe, modern, and enduring infrastructure.”

Adkins, a veteran of the House Transportation Committee and, unlike any of Pulaski’s state lawmakers or the majority of the state legislature, a Democrat, took the opportunity to share a message of bipartisan cooperation, and championed his fellow Democrat Beshears’ efforts to improve Kentucky infrastructure, including here in Pulaski County.

“(T)he governor is very proud of this project,” said Adkins, who also complimented Kentucky Transportation Secretary Jim Gray for his efforts. “... This bridge, to be very honest with you, is, I think, a culmination, and I think it really sets the standard that when people work together, guess what? Great things happen.

“This is a recommendation that was made by the governor that was approved by the legislature,” he added of the project. “... This bridge, let me make it really clear to you, is not a Democrat or Republican bridge. This bridge is a bridge for the people of this community, the people of Pulaski

County, the People of Somerset, and really the people that come here from many states across this country to enjoy this beautiful resource you have here called Lake Cumberland.”

Adkins added that, with summer approaching, “the timing could not be better” for the bridge opening. He also talked about talking to Nancy residents and business owners Thursday morning about the difference that the bridge makes for them, noting that he was told that Nancy’s restaurant The Rex saw 40% of their traffic flow impacted by the closure.

Following Adkins’ address, a ceremonial check was presented on behalf of the governor’s office for \$8,654,842 to represent the cost of the project.

The Fishing Creek Bridge, stretching across a tributary of Lake Cumberland in western Pulaski County, first opened in 1951, and sees more than 5,200 motorists travel across it every day.

Although the bridge is now open to traffic, it is still an active construction zone while the finishing touches are made. Motorists are encouraged to stay alert and avoid distracted driving while crossing the bridge for the safety of both themselves, other drivers, and those continuing to work on the bridge.

SOMERSET

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—Chief Harold Lewis Catron, Sr. was attacked outside of his home in 1957 and suffered shotgun wounds that ultimately led to his death on September 16, 1964.

—Nearly 40 years later, Harold Catron’s son, Sheriff Samuel Wilson Catron was running for re-election when he fatally shot by a sniper as he left a fish fry on April 13, 2002.

In addition to the officers honored who are buried at the Somerset Cemetery, there have been six other PCSO officers who have died in the line of duty: Deputy Sheriff James Marshall Richardson, End of Watch (EOW) Feb. 1, 1988; Deputy Douglas Frank Hutton, EOW Dec. 1, 1961; Special Deputy Ambrous (sometimes spelled Ambrose) Murphy Johnson, AEW July 27, 1932; Deputy H.M. Holloway, EOW March 12, 1911; Deputy J.T. Lovett, EOW March 12, 1911; and Deputy Andy Downs, EOW July 4, 1907.

All but Richardson were killed due to gunfire, whereas Richardson suffered a heart attack while training.

Nancy Catron attended Wednesday’s ceremony, paying respect to two members of her family. She said she lost her father, Harold Catron, when she was just 10 years old. Then, she lost her brother Sam Catron.

“My brother didn’t have to go into law enforcement. He knew what happened to Daddy, but that was his passion. You’ve got to follow your passion,” Nancy Catron said.

And while she said that the feeling surrounding the loss of her family never get better, she said that it was important that the ceremony to honor them and other fallen officers takes place year after year.

“It’s very important that history be remembered, because if we don’t have history, we can’t learn and we will just repeat, potentially, the same mistakes,” she said. “It’s important to honor and learn from those (officers), and to keep the memories and to hopefully learn from them, and to remember all the good.”

She added that seeing the officers who attended the ceremony honoring her father and brother means “there’s a wonderful group of people in the world, and there’s more good than bad. And we need to support them, and we all need to try to be better people, and be kind and respectful and help do the right thing.”

Both current PCSO Sheriff Bobby Jones and current SPD Chief Josh Wesley were on hand during the ceremony. Jones shared his own personal memories about Sam Catron.

“I was fortunate enough to be hired by Sheriff Sammy Catron. ... I was there the night he got assassinated, so it’s a somber moment,” Jones said of the ceremony.

Chief Wesley said he did not have any direct memories of either Sam or Harold Catron, but Nancy Catron had brought some police artifacts to the office that she had found among her mother’s belongings.

“It’s kind of a neat touch to have that personal connection,” he said of the Catron family.

Wesley added that he felt it was important to continue to honor those who had fallen in the line of duty, as they were the ones who laid the groundwork for the current police force.

SPD was founded in 1888, he pointed out. The ceremony, he said, helps for “remembering that we didn’t just show up here, that there’s a lot (who) went before us and made a lot of sacrifices and served this community to make us the department we are today.”

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REACT

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Thursday morning, held on the Nancy side of the structure.

The closure meant motorists coming to and going from Nancy had to detour on the Cumberland Parkway. For those in Nancy proper and areas closer to the bridge itself, including Lee’s Ford Marina and the Mill Springs National Cemetery and adjacent Mill Springs Battlefield National Monument Visitor Center, it could mean going out of one’s way by an extra 10 minutes or so each trip.

Someone very knowledgeable about the area and those affected by the bridge’s closure is Mark Haney, who is both in touch with local agriculture given his tenure as Kentucky Farm Bureau President and his family’s business, a staple of the Nancy community, Haney’s Appledale Farm.

“I’m just very tickled that the bridge is open,” said Haney on Thursday morning, noting that it was built the same year he was born, in 1951. “(The repairs) needed doing. We all knew that it needed to be rebuilt and updated and fixed back.”

He noted that the resulting inconveniences have “been kind of painful.” For Haney’s Appledale Farm, the closure of the bridge happened after they started winding down for their always busy fall and summer season, so “the timing is good for us,” but others had to make bigger sacrifices — though cooperation with the state helped mitigate the problems the closure would cause.

“They did a really good job not starting it until most of the farm work was done,” said Haney of the project. “We have a lot of farmers who farm on both sides of this bridge, so they have to move around. ... It’s been awkward, but they allowed people to be able to get their (farming) equipment on the Parkway, which is not supposed to happen, but that’s the only way they had to get here.”

The result of the lessened traffic on West Ky. 80 was drastic, Haney noted; “You could almost pull out of your house and not even look. ... There was nobody on the road.”

Patrick Richardson, Superintendent of Pulaski County Schools, saw the ramifications of the closure every school day, with travel to and from some

of the area’s educational institutions involved in the detour.

“Honestly, it probably impacts our parents more than it impacts us,” he said while Thursday’s ceremony. “Yes, we’re taking the long way around with our shuttle buses from the middle school and the high school, but I think the big inconvenience has mostly been with the parents. It’s put our schedule back about 10 minutes as far as the (bus travel).

“... I think it’s just going to be great (to have the repaired bridge) for the whole community,” he added. “It’s going to be good to get that traffic flow back.”

Nancy area resident Claude Trimble was present for the bridge opening Thursday — and for its original construction back in 1951, when he was 15 years old and riding a bicycle.

“I just rode up to the edge and looked over in there,” he said. “I remember seeing a big truck down in there and some men down in there working on dry ground. They were just starting the work.”

In the years since, “I’ve been across (the bridge) I don’t know how many times,” he said. “I’ve never been on the lake, but I’ve been across it a lot.”

One careful observer of the more recent bridge work was Dr. Robert Drake, who attended Thursday’s reopening in a uniform associated with his work with the Boy Scouts organization. Drake, who lives nearby with a keen view of the bridge, took the opportunity to snap numerous photos of the bridge at various stages of the renovation and offer online updates based on what he would learn.

“I enjoy coming down and meeting all the builders and the contractors and the individual workers; it was just amazing watching them work,” he said. “... It was just very interesting, watching and learning. The state was good and supportive. They didn’t want you on the bridge, but they let us come down and talk to them some, and we enjoyed serving them lunch at The Rex Restaurant a few weeks ago. That was a highlight, really. The first time they ever had a group picture was when we were with them there.”

James Jones is the chief engineer for the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet District 8 office, which oversees state roads in Pulaski County,

called the bridge’s reopening “a big relief,” both for his office and the community. Along the way, both severe weather conditions and the discovery of the need for originally unforeseen repairs caused delays from the state’s original timetable — the opening was originally supposed to be months earlier, with a project completion date in mid-April.

“We had to replace all of the floor beams on here; they were rusted more than (was expected),” said Jones. “... When you’re 100 feet above the water, walking on a two-foot beam, knocking out rivets from the 1950s, it takes a little time, (with) the wind blowing (and it being) 26 degrees. ... When the flood came up, the cranes floated up, and we had to re-station those.”

Jones said that “the community was very respectful and very understanding,” adding, “They’re ready to get this thing open, but they understood the need for this project and the need to get it done right.”

Pulaski County Judge-Marshall Todd was also present Thursday, along with multiple Fiscal Court Magistrates.

“Today we celebrate more than a bridge. We celebrate renewed connection, opportunity, and a safer, smoother journey for everyone who relies on this vital link between Nancy and the rest of Pulaski County and beyond,” said Todd. Speaking to the community, he said, “Thank you for your patience during the closure, and thank you to those who worked so hard to bring us to this day.”

Jason Turpen, a Nancy resident and First District Magistrate on the Pulaski County Fiscal Court, said that the community is “very excited” to be able to use the bridge again.

“The small businesses in the area rely heavily on the thru traffic and are happy to see it flowing again,” he said. “The residents are also happy to have another option when driving to Somerset. We are proud to have a beautiful and safe bridge to welcome everyone to our area.”



Submitted

The local Humane Society will be hosting a fundraiser this Saturday to help animals such as this one.

HUMANE

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silent auction, meaning guests must write down their bids on the sheet of paper in front of the item.

Organizers Candice Girkey said that the dinner will begin at 6 p.m., with guests allowed to split their time between eating and checking the auction sheets of all the items up for bid.

The bid sheets will be taken off the tables at 6:45 p.m., and winners for each item will be announced around 7 p.m.

Winners will check in at the cashier’s table, and runners will collect items from the silent auction tables and bring them to the table for the winners.

Girkey said that, for the most part, winners must be present to win. Bidders will need to make prior arrangements if they cannot be present.

“We’ll work with anybody that has to leave early, but they need to let us know and get it approved ahead of time,” she said. They will also work with those who might win more items than they can take home in one trip.

Items up for grabs this year include gift certificates, items donated from local businesses, vintage glassware and more.

Girkey talked about three of the large-ticket items: A 1977 Fred Thrasher print of Mill Springs, a hand-crocheted afghan made by someone

from the Somerset Junior Woman’s Club, and a large brass lantern that would have hung on the side of a train.

“It’s 3 feet tall, it’s really cool looking,” Girkey said of the lantern.

The dinner will feature pulled pork, pizza, hot dogs, vegetables, possibly lasagnas, and “lots of desserts,” she said. All food is donated, so it depends on what is brought on the evening.

Food will be served buffet-style, with servers on hand to help guests fill their plates, she said.

And those eating dinner don’t have to stick to just one trip to the buffet, she said. Second and third trips are welcome.

All money raised will go to help the Humane Society. “We incur a lot of vet bills throughout the year because we take care of a lot of injured animals and abuse cases,” Girkey said.

She encouraged guests to keep an eye on the Furbabies 2025 Facebook page, as the Humane Society will try to post photos of auction items so people can get a look at them beforehand.

The Facebook page also has a link to the Humane Society’s website, bhumane.org, where people can purchase tickets to the dinner in advance. Tickets will also be available at the door.

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BURNSIDE

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Kentucky University and the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial in Washington D.C., but not yet in Burnside itself.

“I’d like to honor these guys in their local community, where they gave their lives serving the community,” he said.

They include:

— John Coomer, who succumbed on October 1, 1913, to a gunshot wound he received six weeks earlier;

— Hiram Gregory, who was

shot and killed during an arrest on April 23, 1926;

— Charlie Wright, appointed marshal after Gregory’s death and mortally wounded by a shooting six months later, dying on November 15, 1926;

— George Prentice Southwood, shot and killed on September 30, 1948.


Hill has managed to get in contact with the families of all four marshals, and said somebody will be on hand at Saturday’s ceremony representing each family.


“We’ll fold a flag and give it to the closest living descendant of each officer that day,” said Hill.

THE WEATHER REPORT

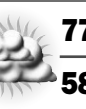
AccuWeather. Visit [AccuWeather.com](https://www.accuweather.com)

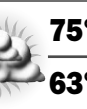
SOMERSET FIVE-DAY FORECAST

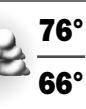
TODAY
 81°
A few t-storms, some severe; humid

TONIGHT
 62°
A few t-storms, some severe; humid

SATURDAY
 80° 56°
Breezy; a stray morning t-storm

SUNDAY
 77° 58°
Mostly cloudy

MONDAY
 75° 63°
Clearing and a t-storm in the area

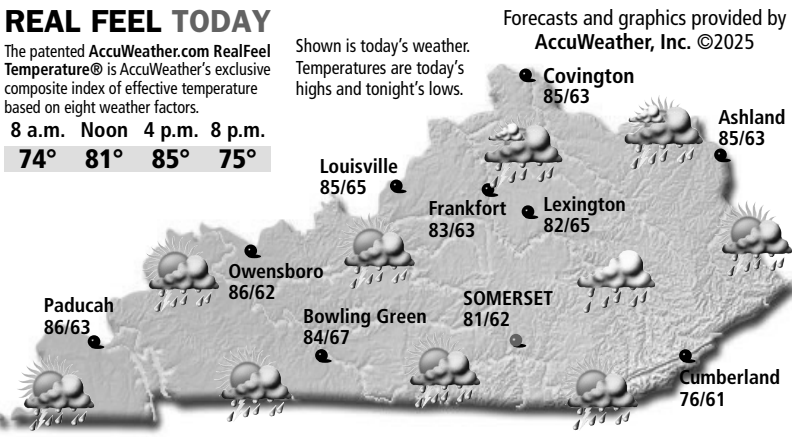
TUESDAY
 76° 66°
Humid; an afternoon thunderstorm

ALMANAC DATA	
Somerset through 2 p.m. Thu.	
Temperature	
High	82°
Low	70°
Normal high	76°
Normal low	56°
Precipitation	
24-hour total	0.00"
Month to date	2.05"
Year to date	25.36"

SUN AND MOON	
Sunrise today	6:29 a.m.
Sunset tonight	8:41 p.m.
Moonrise today	none
Moonset today	9:05 a.m.

REAL FEEL TODAY	
The patented AccuWeather.com RealFeel Temperature® is AccuWeather's exclusive composite index of effective temperature based on eight weather factors.	
8 a.m.	Noon
4 p.m.	8 p.m.
74°	81°
85°	75°

Shown is today's weather. Temperatures are today's highs and tonight's lows.



INDICES

UV Index Today
4
The higher the AccuWeather.com UV Index™ number, the greater the need for eye and skin protection. 0-2 Low; 3-5 Moderate; 6-7 High; 8-10 Very High; 11+ Extreme.

Golfing Today
1
The Golf Forecast considers past and current weather effects on the greens and on your own safety and comfort to describe how suitable the day will be for golf. 0-2 Poor; 3-4 Fair; 5-6 Good; 7-8 Very Good; 9-10 Excellent.

Arthritis Today
5
The Arthritis Pain Forecast combines weather factors that may affect arthritis sufferers, and summarizes potential likelihood and severity of weather-related arthritis pain.

Asthma Today
5
The Asthma Forecast combines the effects of asthma related environmental factors to provide a scale showing the overall probability and severity of an asthma attack.
Arthritis and Asthma ratings: 0-2 Beneficial; 3-4 Neutral; 5-6 At Risk; 7-8 High; 9-10 Extreme.