Cowboys for Kids horse show at Meade County Fairgrounds

Photos by Earlene Bohannon

A rider successfully completed her run for the poles competion.

Cody Smith, Bradley Butler and Michael Tate manned the auction at the Cowboys for Kids horse show.

Earlene Bohannon
Editor

On Saturday, September 27, 2025, Cowboys for Kids, a 501c3 nonprofit organization benefiting Camp Quality Kentuckiana, which is a camping and year-round support program for children with cancer, gathered at The Meade County Fairgrounds for a day filled with family, fun, horses, competition, auctions, and food. All monies earned from the day will benefit Camp Quality Kentuckiana.

Children diagnosed with cancer are offered the chance to attend a free weeklong summer camp at Camp Quality Kentuckiana. This camp is funded by Cowboys for Kids. Every camper is paired with a companion dedicated to their care throughout the week. This relationship creates bonds that often continues long after camp is over, sometimes for years to come. The mission at Camp Quality Kentuckiana is "Letting kids with cancer be kids again."

Jenni Pendergest, who is a longtime volunteer for the organization, said, "Cowboys for Kids has always been about one simple thing—it is all about the kids. Years ago, part of our horse show family gathered to give some of those children a chance to ride a few horses, and from that heart, this event was born. Hoppy and Barbara Sosh took that vision and ran with it, pouring in their love, passion, and dedication to make it what it is today. Even after 27 years, it is still our horse show family coming together to raise money for these kids, and I am so grateful to Hoppy and Barbara for keeping that heartbeat alive year and year."

Cowboys for Kids could not survive without volunteerism. From the ones who worked the entry booth to tracking the contestants to sitting in the call booth to serving concessions to the tractor drivers to the barrel setters and so many others, this was a true gathering of hearts willing to set aside a day to raise funds to help support children with cancer.

The riders who load up their horses and make the trip to participate are the event's main attraction. Many families arrived at The Meade County Fairgrounds the night before to set up camp and get prepared for Saturday's show, "we all know each other, so it's really fun," said one of the participants, "sometimes we don't get to see one another for a while, but then we show up at something like this, and not only is this a good thing to do, but it's a great way to catch up with each other's lives."

The Meade County Fairgrounds was instrumental in providing a comfortable and safe environment for Cowboys for Kids to meet, "Russ Fackler, Sarah Fackler, Jim Bruce and so many others came together to make our location change happen at the last minute. There is no way to list all the people who come together each year to put this amazing show together."

The day's events began at 2:00 pm. First up in the competitions were the children's events. Pee Wee Pole, Youth Pole, and Open Pole riders performed. The Pee Wee Barrels were one of the most enjoyed events of the day. Midway through the day a spirited auction was held offering fire pits, homemade quilts, circular saws, homemade baked goods, metal art, and other items. After the auction, the show held Open Flags, Youth Flags, Open Barrels, Youth Barrels, Adult Barrels, and Masters Barrels. Despite having a timer issue late

Cowboy
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Meade County Democrats meet

Photo submitted by Rachael Brown

Members of the Meade County Democratic Party gather for a meeting beneath a pavilion in downtown Brandenburg at the River Front park.

Joe Hager
Messenger Staff

The Meade County Democratic Party Leadership Team held its regular monthly meeting on Tuesday evening at a downtown riverfront pavilion. That arrangement gave a backdrop view of the Ohio River barge traffic as the meeting progressed.

Rachael Brown, Co-Chair, called the meeting to order. The first item on the agenda for discussion was to remind everyone to bring an item of non-perishable food to the next meeting. It was stated that many folks do not have the financial ability to purchase the increasingly expensive items of personal care like toothpaste and bodywash. It was suggested that these items could help meet the needs of less fortunate folks in our community, along with baby diapers and other such necessities. The collected items will be dispersed throughout the county to various foodbanks.

The Meade County Democratic Party sponsored Bean Supper fundraiser has been revived and is scheduled for November 4th at 6:00 PM. The Meade County Fairgrounds Home and Garden Center has been reserved for the event. It was announced that a cake auction has been planned, along with a silent auction. Last year's event raised nearly $10,000 and that sum has been utilized to promote the Democrat Party and its candidates for office. A suggestion to expand the Bean Supper to include a chili cook off in future years was discussed and accepted.

A Day of Action will be held to address postcards and make promotional phone calls to get Democratic voters more involved in future elections. Rachael Brown stated "the true focus of this organization is to find and promote candidates for public office. Recruiting good candidates is the main objective." To further involve Democratic members, this leadership group will ask them to write opinion pieces to make them available to the public.

It was pointed out during the meeting that the filing deadline for candidates to run in the 2026 primary election will be from November 5, 2025, to January 9, 2026.

"Megan's Mission" lives on with annual Miles for Megan 5K race

Photo by Stephen Spohn

Members of Meade CrossFit helped to make Miles for Megan 5K a successful event through sponsorship and participation.

Stephen Spohn
Messenger Staff

On Saturday, September 27th, a group of runners, walkers, and supporters gathered at Buttermilk Falls in Brandenburg, Kentucky. They came together to honor the life of Megan Haynes and raise awareness about Acute Myeloid Leukemia (AML). The event also helped raise money for a scholarship in Megan's name.

Beautiful fall weather made for a peaceful morning on the banks of the Ohio River as the community made their way onto the trail. The race was a 5K course, an out-and-back route with rolling hills, streaming waterfalls, and chirping birds and squirrels. People of all ages took part in this family-friendly race. Some ran, some walked, and others cheered from the sidelines. After the race, awards were given to the top three finishers in each age group and gender. Everyone celebrated the effort and the cause.

Megan's Mission began with Megan Lorraine Haynes. She created it while she was in the hospital, looking for a way to make a difference. Megan was diagnosed with leukemia on June 4, 2014. She was only 19 years old at the time. She decided to fight the disease and help others learn about it. Sadly, Megan passed away on January 26, 2015, at the age of 20. Her family describes her as a social butterfly. She loved the river, boating, camping, and spending time with loved ones. She grew up attending Salem Baptist Church and was active in the youth group at Brandenburg United Methodist Church. Megan graduated from Meade County High School in 2012 and was studying nursing at the University of Louisville before her passing.

Acute Myeloid Leukemia is a fast-growing cancer that affects the blood and bone marrow. It happens when the bone marrow makes too many abnormal blood cells. Studies show that in 2024, about 20,800 people in the United States were diagnosed with AML. Megan's mother, Heidi Haynes, and her army of family and friends helped organize the race. This year, the race had right around 200 participants. This was the 11th race held in Megan's honor. Heidi was pleased to say that she is honored that Megan got to take part in the very first race before her passing in 2015. The family has hosted events for the past 12 years, only skipping one year due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Top finishers from this year's race, based on age and gender, were as follows: (Female 13 & Under) Belle Lawson- 1st, Cameil Caster- 2nd, Tessa Hardin- 3rd; (Male 13 & Under) Drake Hardy- 1st, Oakes Redmon- 2nd, Sawyer Mattingly- 3rd; (Female 14 to 20) Alyssa Garcia- 1st, Logan Compton- 2nd, Katherine Winters- 3rd; (Male 14 to 20) Austin Lane- 1st, Austin Cain- 2nd, Ender Wheatley- 3rd; (Female 21 to 30) Bailey Durbin- 1st, Kenzie Compton- 2nd, Amanda Powers- 3rd; (Male 21 to 30) Tyler Haynes- 1st, Levi Benham- 2nd; (Female 31 to 40) Cassie Rockwood- 1st, Amanda de la Pena- 2nd, Kacie Livers- 3rd; (Male 31 to 40) Ryan Stith- 1st, Matt Johnson- 2nd, Ben Sheeran- 3rd; (Female 41 to 50) Jamie Alexander- 1st, Tiffany Hardenstine- 2nd, Kellie Stull- 3rd; (Male 41 to 50) Brian King- 1st, Jesse Carnley- 2nd, Luke Wilson- 3rd; (Female 50 & Over) Donna Kirkwood- 1st, Gina Greenwell- 2nd, Cindy Shutters- 3rd; (Male 50 & Over) Troy Winters- 1st, Troy Wright- 2nd, Jeff Roberts- 3rd. The overall winner was Ryan Stith.

Over the years, Megan's Mission has raised more than $62,250. The money has been used to give scholarships to high school seniors who plan to study nursing. The family has also held golf scrambles and kickball tournaments to support the cause. The Haynes family is thankful for the community's support. They appreciate every sponsor, runner, and volunteer who helps keep Megan's Mission alive. A special thank you to this year's sponsors who included J & L Technology, Adkisson Overhead Doors LLC, County Line Lawn Care, Dirt Works Unlimited, Dowell's Overhead Doors, Flaherty Chevrolet, Good Earth Landscape & Excavation, Kentucky Farm Bureau Insurance Co., Lusk Mechanical, MC Screen Printing, Meade CrossFit, Nancy Tate, KY State Representative, Russell Skid Steer Specialties, Larry and Pam Powell, Joyce Hayne, Mike and Denise McCoy, Jim and Dianne McCoy, and Jimmy and Lise Miller. Through these events, Megan's legacy continues to inspire others and make a difference in the world.