

WILSON

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the gate closed, customers were few and far between. Gone is the lunch or late coffee crowd that would come off post to grab a bite or drink on their hour-long break then head back through Wilson Gate.

Applebee’s general manager Linda Ashby said the difference in her lunch sales since the closure is almost \$1,000 a day during the week at the Wilson Road restaurant.

With traffic being forced through the other two gates — Chaffee and Brandenburg, each further from the establishment — Ashby said even the afternoon happy hour crowd is affected.

“So they get an hour for lunch and by the time they drive off the post to get here, they’ve wasted 20 minutes,” Ashby said. “And then 20 minutes to get back. So the best they could do is probably get something to go for lunch.”

With the traffic patterns changed and the civilian workforce being diverted through gates further away with only one lane to exit the post, Ashby said workers are telling her what used to take 10 minutes now takes 45 minutes to an hour in the morning to access Fort Knox and even longer to leave.

Even the boon that CST family days and graduations used to provide the restaurant are gone, Ashby said.

“The only thing bene-

fitting from this change is Fort Knox,” Ashby said.

Jaun Choi, whose family owns Song’s Restaurant on Wilson Road, said lunchtime sales have declined 35 to 40% since the closure.

“It’s been a lot slower now, because they have to go all the way to the main gate and then the traffic’s bad going back in, the traffic’s bad coming out,” Choi said. “So we lost a lot of military customers, so it’s more family based now.”

Fort Knox Garrison Command Col. Chris Ricci said in an address Wednesday to the Lincoln Trail Area Development District, part of the reason for the closure is a hiring freeze for garrison employees in place, which doesn’t allow him to fill open guard positions to man the gate.

“I mean, clearly the Fort Knox community wants to get the gate back open,” Ricci said in an interview after the meeting. “Right now, we’re under some resource constraints, and we’re continuing to work through the challenges with the units on the installation. So right now, it’s still in discussion, how we’re going to get to a solution.

While he told the ADD board Fort Knox command is developing a plan, he is aware of the complaints about the gate’s closure.

“That has not been fun as a city manager/non-elected mayor or whatever you want to call me, at Fort Knox,” Ricci said to the board. “But man, those spouses and

civilian employees are giving it to me.”

With the help of Fort Knox senior command, they have been able to maintain the two remaining gates, but Ricci said there is “going to be a future point where we get Wilson Gate reopened.”

“At some point, the hiring freeze is going to lift,” Ricci said. “The rumor being told to us right now is the next fiscal year. We’re an October to October calendar year for the government. So we’re hearing October the potential for the hiring freeze lifts, so that will help.”

Ricci said he has been in touch with Radcliff Mayor J.J. Duvall and he understands how the closure is affecting the economy directly outside the gate.

“Absolutely considered,” Ricci said in the interview. “Local leadership, specifically, the leadership in Radcliff and Mayor Duvall. We’ve had discussions, we understand.”

Choi said she thinks her family’s restaurant has the staying power to make it to October, but she is hoping for a quick solution to the gate’s closure.

Suratt wasn’t as sure. “I’m grateful that they’re looking at a solution for October, but we still have half of July, all of August, and all of September,” Suratt said. “I’m a small business and I employ people. So it could change my hours. It could change my days. It could change everything for my staff. I hate to say it, but it’s the first time in almost seven years — I’m six and a half

years — it’s the first time I’ve ever had to consider that.”

While she’s weathered hard economic times, Suratt said this time is different.

“See, that’s the hard part,” Suratt said. “Like, with COVID, we survived COVID. We were only a year old and we had just opened our downstairs. We survived COVID because our customers were still coming. This feels very different to me than even COVID did because, they’re just not coming. And before, they still did.”

While the slower traffic at the restaurant might force staffing changes, Ashby said she has backing when the locally owned businesses don’t.

“I’m fortunate, I’m corporate,” Ashby said. “It’s the mom and pop shops. They don’t have that financial backing that I do that if I don’t make my sales, my corporation’s still going to pay my electric bill. They don’t have that.”

Ashby said she also has had conversations with Duvall to help find solutions to the gate closure.

“You know, whatever we got to do, because not only does it affect the business, but it also affects the morale of the people who are working out here on the military base whether they’re civilian or not,” Ashby said. “They like to have the freedom to do what they want on their lunch, and now they’re feeling trapped.”

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Submitted

Kentucky Lions Eye Foundation helped 2,526 guests receive free vision screenings at last year’s Kentucky State Fair in Louisville.

LIONS

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founded the Kentucky Lions Eye Foundation.

“We assist in getting eye services for the community,” Kelly said. “It’s important to detect any eye diseases early.”

As the state fair draws closer, the Lions Club is looking for volunteers to help work at the eye screening machines.

The North Hardin Lions will be running the eye exams between 2 and 7 p.m. Aug. 14.

“I need about 15 to 18 people in order to do this,” Kelly said. “I only need a few more volunteers, but I want to make sure that I have enough people so I can accom-

modate the crowds that come.”

Kelly said volunteers don’t have to be trained in order to volunteer at the fair.

“You don’t have to be a Lions Club member in order to volunteer,” Kelly said. “Passes will be provided to cover the cost of entrance and parking into the fair.”

The Kentucky State Fair ends Aug 24. The eye screening booth is in the health horizons section of the fair.

If interested, contact Lions Club member Bill Albano at William.s.albano@gmail.com or contact Kelly at 270-351-9441.

Kodee Brinegar can be reached at 270-505-1413 or kbrinegar@thenewsenterprise.com.

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Crews already have started clearing land at the site of a new Kroger Marketplace, which officials will celebrate with a groundbreaking ceremony Friday, at the corner of Ring Road and Patriot Parkway in Elizabethtown.

GINA CLEAR/The News-Enterprise

KROGER

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has been helping Kroger work through that part development

plan to manage traffic. The city is working with both KYTC and Kroger in partnership to help manage the influx of traffic flow in this area.”

The chain recently announced it would be closing some of its less

profitable locations as it begins to invest in other locations to meet the challenges of the new competition, including a store at 4211 S. Third St. in Louisville. Across the commonwealth, Kroger operates 35 stores.

HARDIN

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events, which are held nightly Tuesday through Thursday, “will help get resources for the upcoming school year.”

“We found several years ago at our open houses that community agencies would go to one elementary school’s open house and try to make another open house in the same day,” Wright said. “Their staffs were so thin that they couldn’t make it to everyone and they would try to be in 10 places at once.”

Wright said HCS came up with the idea of back-to-school bashes to help make sure that community agencies get their information out more effectively.

“We broke the bashes up into feeder patterns. For example, students in the Central Hardin feeder pattern would be the main target for the Bruin Fest,” Wright said. “However if a student couldn’t attend their fest, they can attend another.”

The fests will host community organizations and partners who provide families with back-to-school information and fun. There will be games, inflatables, airbrush tattoos and items distributed. Food and drink vendors will also be on site.

“This is not the time to get information on schedules, classrooms or anything like that. This is the time to learn about our community partnerships,” Wright said. “This is a festival about getting back to school.”

For students attending schools in the John Hardin High School feeder system, the Bulldog Fest is from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. Tuesday at the high school. Students and their families from Heartland elementary, New Highland elementary, Woodland elementary, Bluegrass middle, College View Education Center and John Hardin high schools are invited to attend.

Trojan Fest, for students attending schools in the North Hardin High School feeder system, is from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. Wednesday at the high school. Students and their families from Meadow View ele-

mentary, North Park elementary, Radcliff elementary, Rineyville elementary, Vine Grove elementary, Woodland elementary, James T. Alton middle, North middle, North Hardin high schools are invited to attend.

The final fest, Bruin Fest, for students attending schools in the Central Hardin High School feeder system, is from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. Thursday at the high school. Students and their families from Cecilia Valley elementary, Creekside elementary, G.C. Burkhead elementary, Lakewood elementary, Lincoln Trail elementary, East Hardin middle, West

Hardin middle and Central Hardin high schools are invited to attend.

Schools begin open houses the following week. For more information on when open houses are, go to the Hardin County School website under the parent tab.

School starts Aug. 7. “These back-to-school fests start the wheels in motion,” Wright said. “These back-to-school fests get the ball rolling for the start of the 2025-26 school year.”

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# ABSOLTE AUCTION

## SATURDAY, JULY 26

### 10:00 AM CDT

#### 449 PINE HURST BAY, CLARKSON KY 42726

Incredible opportunity to own a large, scenic property on beautiful Nolin Lake.  
**SELLING 156.348 SURVEYED ACRES**, this land is ideal for potential development, recreational use or private retreat. This property will be sold in 3 tracts:

- **TRACT 1- 6.686 ACRES**, mostly wooded.
- **TRACT 2- 149.145 ACRES**, included an older home possible hunting cabin with a well, a doublewide (56x26) with a barn (40x36) with a well.
- **TRACT 3- 0.517 ACRES**, mostly wooded.

The Auction will be held at the doublewide on Tract 2. Selling tracts with opportunity to group. All tracts are located near the lake, offering privacy, natural beauty and easy access. Don't miss this rare chance to invest in Nolin Lake property at absolute auction – no reserves, no minimums.

**TERMS AND CONDITIONS:** 10% buyer's premium will be added to all winning bids to determine sale price. 15% down day of auction, balance due with deed within 30 days of auction. Buyer's agent welcome. Property Taxes for 2025 will be prorated between buyer and sellers. Possession with deed. Property sales as is with no warranty. Robin Frazier Cooperating Realtor.

**Contact Brad Hilton at 270-234-3722 for more information.**  
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