



**SPRING HOME IMPROVEMENT SPECIAL**

FRESH IDEAS • EXPERT TIPS  
LOCAL SERVICES

**RENOVATE, REMODEL, REFRESH**

- Contractor Spotlights
- Landscaping Tips
- Energy-Saving Upgrades
- DIY Project Guides
- Special Offers from Area Businesses

# The Crittenden Press

2 SECTIONS, 16 PAGES | VOLUME 144 | NUMBER 17

THURSDAY, MAY 8, 2025

We've Got Home Improvement Covered | Section B

24/7 BREAKING AND LOCAL NEWS / THE-PRESS.COM

AN INDEPENDENTLY-OWNED, LOCAL NEWSPAPER SINCE 1879

TWO DOLLARS

## \$36 911 fee staying on county tax bills

A \$36 annual E-911 fee will remain on property tax bills in 2025, and going forward. There had been some question as to whether the fee would be removed after the county recently tripled the occupational tax from 0.5% to 1.5%. County leaders had originally focused on creating a new tax district to help fund the ambulance service and offset E-911 funding shortfall. Yet, that idea was shelved and the occupational tax was favored for generating more income to offset needs for those services. Judge-Executive Perry Newcom said removal of the 911 fee was predicated by the ambulance tax district taking shape. As it is, he said, the county still needs that \$36 fee to support E-911, and part of the newly generated occupational tax funds will supplement 911 operations. The occupational tax increase will go up on July 1.

## 2 outdoors events are on tap for Saturdays

Two outdoors events coming up this month are supported by Marion Tourism Commission. The first will be held this weekend. On Saturday, May 10, the Big 10 Kentucky State Bowfishing Championship returns to the Crittenden County Fairgrounds. With a \$100 entry fee, which includes Big Fish competition, anglers will compete on public waters across the state and weigh in in Marion. Guaranteed payouts include \$1,000 plus 70% of entries for first place and \$500 plus 30% for second. Registration is from 6 to 6:45 p.m., with weigh-in at 3 a.m., Sunday. Cash drawings will be held at weigh-in.

The following weekend, Outlaw Off-Road Racing rolls back into town with an event at the Sugar Creek facility off Sugar Grove Church Road in rural Crittenden County. There will be three days of activities and competition May 16-18. Gates open at 8 a.m., daily, with racing starting Saturday morning at 10 a.m. Classes include Youth ATV, Side by Side, Pro-Am and Unlimited Bouncers. Weekend passes are \$50; Saturday-only passes are \$30. Kids under 8 enter free. Saturday night features live music by Richie Lindsey and concessions from Lady Rocket Boosters. More details on both events are in this week's Early Bird.

## UPCOMING MEETINGS

- Marion Code Enforcement Board meets at 5 p.m., Monday, May 12, at city hall.
- Livingston County Board of Education meets at 5 p.m., Monday, May 12.
- Caldwell County Fiscal Court meets at 9 a.m., Tuesday, May 13, at the courthouse.
- Crittenden County Conservation District meets at 6:30 p.m., Thursday, May 15, at its office on East Bellville Street.

### LISTEN ONLINE - Monday | Thursday

Have you heard The Press News Podcast? Our news and sports program is on Mondays and Thursdays. Find it two mornings each week at The Press Online.



The Crittenden Press

USPS 138-260 / Marion, Ky.



©2025, The Crittenden Press Inc.

The contents of this newspaper, including stories and advertising, are protected by U.S. copyright laws.



## Double Play

It's unclear whether Haven Brown and Jase Hill were working on strength training or just clowning around – maybe a bit of both – just before a youth soccer game recently at Marion-Crittenden County Park. Youth soccer is in full swing, and the Crittenden Youth Soccer Association is planning an open 7v7 co-ed tournament June 13-14 that will welcome players of all skill levels and ages. Find out more at CYSA's social media.

# SS Fairness Act benefits teachers like West

BY CHRIS EVANS  
PRESS EDITOR

Carol West can finally breathe a little easier, and so can nearly 70 other former government employees who live in or near Crittenden County.

A retired Crittenden County teacher and widow, West recently began receiving Social Security survivor benefits from her late husband following passage of the Social Security Fairness Act, a federal law repealing the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO).

"When Wayne passed, I was told I wouldn't be eligible to draw anything off of him," said West. "That was a drastic change in income. I was shocked and heartbroken."

Like millions of public servants across the country, West had been penalized by outdated policies that reduced or eliminated Social Security benefits for those who also received a public pension – even if they had worked in the public sector and paid into the SS system. Because she paid into Kentucky's teacher retirement system during her 21 years of

service, those rules barred her from receiving Social Security benefits, including spousal benefits she believed she was entitled to have, like other widows.

West retired at age 60 in 2020, planning carefully for her financial future. But the unexpected death of her husband Wayne changed everything. The WEP and GPO rules meant she would receive no survivor benefits, leaving her monthly retirement income at around \$2,000.

"I remember standing in the hallway at work, saying I wouldn't get to draw anything from Wayne's Social Security," West said. "A friend stopped me and said, 'What did you just say?' No one could believe it."

For more than four years, West leaned on her pension and worked part-time as a substitute teacher and tutor to make ends meet.

"But, it also gave me something to look forward to," she said. "I still love teaching."

Through a Facebook group of retired Kentucky teachers, West stayed informed about the growing grassroots movement to



Carol West stands with her grandson Drake Young inside a classroom where she now spends time as a substitute.

See **SECURITY**/page 4A

# Yates becomes Trooper

STAFF REPORT

Dylan Yates of Marion is among 33 new Kentucky State Police troopers who graduated from the KSP Training Academy last week. Yates will be stationed at Post 2 in Madisonville, one of five newly assigned troopers at the western Kentucky post.

A 2022 graduate of Crittenden County High School, Yates told The Press when he applied to the police academy that since his freshman year of high school he had been interested in being involved in law enforcement. He studied at Kentucky Wesleyan for two years where he played collegiate football.

Yates, 21, joins fellow Post 2 graduates Zane Baker of Cerulean, Noah Phillips of Greenville, Cainan Trautman of Madisonville, and Travis VanDrew of Russellville. He will be the fourth active state



Dylan Yates  
2022 CCHS grad

policeman hailing from Crittenden County. The others are Trooper First Class Darin Holliman, who also serves Post 2, and brothers Sgt. Cory Hamby and Trooper Chris Hamby, who serve in Post 1 out of Mayfield. Crittenden County is located in the Post 2 area.

The five new Post 2 troopers were part of Cadet Class 105, which began its 24-week training on Nov. 10, 2024. The program included more than 1,000 hours of classroom instruction and field exercises covering a

See **YATES**/page 4A

# Property assessment inspection period open

STAFF REPORT

Property owners in Crittenden County will have an opportunity to review and challenge their 2025 real estate assessments during a state-mandated inspection period that begins Monday, May 12.

The annual opening of the real property tax roll allows individuals to examine how their land and structures have been valued for taxation. These assessments, established by Property Valuation Administrator Todd Perryman, form the basis for county, state and school taxes due later this year, typically around Sept. 15.

The tax roll will be available for public viewing at the PVA office in the Crittenden County Office Complex from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday. Special Saturday hours will be offered May 17 and May 24 from 10 a.m. to noon. The inspection period concludes Tuesday, May 27.

PVA Todd Perryman is en-

couraging all taxpayers to review their assessments and contact his office if they believe the assessed value of their property is inaccurate.

Anyone wishing to contest an assessment must first schedule a conference with the PVA or a deputy. Those meetings may take place anytime before or during the inspection window. Taxpayers are required to present written evidence, such as recent appraisals, photos or comparable sales data, to support their claims. Instructions for submitting documentation will be provided after initial contact with the PVA office.

If an agreement cannot be reached during that conference, taxpayers may file a formal appeal with the Crittenden County Board of



Perryman

See **PROPERTY**/page 3A