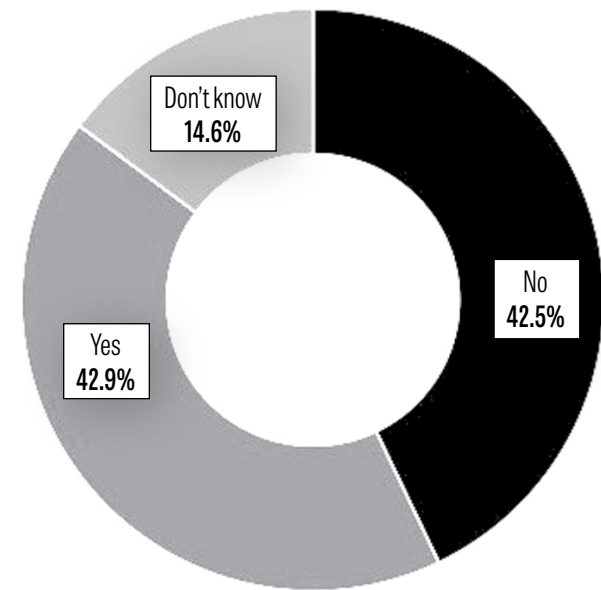


**ONLINE POLL:**  
The Downtown Frankfort Summer Concert Series starts May 30. Do you plan to attend any of the concerts?



This poll reflects the opinions of 287 respondents.  
Visit [www.state-journal.com](http://www.state-journal.com) to take part in today's poll.

EDITORIAL

# Downtown Frankfort concert series a summer staple

Like hot dogs and fireworks on the Fourth of July, the Downtown Frankfort Summer Concert Series on the Old Capitol lawn has become a local rite of summer and the 2025 season gets underway at 6:30 p.m. Friday, May 30 with performances by Jeri Katherine Howell and Ben Sollee.

Though the series, which is presented by WesBanco, will feature six concerts throughout the summer, this year's season opener also has the unique distinction of kicking off the America 250 Kentucky commemoration in the lead up to the 250th anniversary of the United States.

"We are so proud to launch this year's concert series with a nod to our heritage and a celebration of who we are today," said Suzy Hosley, executive director of Downtown Frankfort Inc. "Frankfort's sense of place, community pride and cultural richness make our downtown concerts a truly special experience. This summer, we invite everyone far and wide to come out, connect and celebrate with us."

Through a partnership with the Kentucky Historical Society, families with little ones can enjoy the Kid Zone, a family space featuring games, hands-on activities and child-friendly entertainment at each concert. DFI will also be selling Split the Pot raffle tickets throughout the series with the grand prize winner to be drawn at the season finale on Aug. 8.

This year's lineup includes:  
▶ Jackson and the Janks, a New Orleans-based rock 'n' roll and rhythm 'n' blues garage gospel band, on June 13.

▶ Zoe Howard, an Appalachian rock artist from Eastern Kentucky, and Bek and the Starlight Revue, a female-led, genre-blending ensemble that fuses rock 'n' roll and Appalachian soul on June 27.

▶ Curated by Frankfort singer/songwriter Nate Jones, July 11 is Local Night with a lineup of artists from the community music scene.

▶ Yapa!, a Louisville band performing South/Central American fusion music, and Producing a Kind Generation, a powerful art rock trio, take the stage July 25.

▶ Willy Tea Taylor, a folk singer/songwriter from a small California town known as the "Cowboy Capital of the World," will close out the season Aug. 8.

While we may come for the music, shopping and food and drink, we stay for the hours of friendly comraderie and community togetherness that makes the downtown summer concert series so special.

# Kentucky Humanities keeps the lights on

In high school civics we learned that our country was founded on democratic principles growing out of the 18th century Enlightenment, the so-called Age of Reason. Freedom of speech, equality, freedom of the press, and religious tolerance were key principles in the formation of government. Enlightenment ideals of natural rights, popular elections, and the free exchange of ideas were at the core of this novel enterprise.

Following the American Revolution, the founding fathers, doubtless influenced by unsung founding mothers, crafted a constitution embodying these ideas, a government ensuring a free exchange of ideas that became part of college curricula and more generally the public consciousness as part of our national identity. Thomas Jefferson, the father of one of our great universities, recognizing that our democracy depended on an informed citizenry, saw the humanities as essential, subjects like history, literature, philosophy that too often today are overshadowed by a workday curriculum of technological training stressing the fundamentals of commerce to ensure our children with a living. What is the bread of our lives without toppings of homemade butter jelly?

Kentucky Humanities, formerly the Kentucky Humanities Council, was created to bring ideas and knowledge to those left minimally exposed to the humanities in their upbringing or schooling, especially in under-served areas and rural communities outside our big cities. If not everyone had opportunities for higher education, Kentucky Humanities was conceived as a means of bringing the humani-

ties to under-served communities, often through libraries, to ordinary citizens. If the people could not come to the humanities, the humanities could come to the people.



**Richard Taylor**  
Guest columnist

Programs such as Chautauqua, which brings fact-based bios of Kentuckians to the stage — from Henry Clay to Jean Ritchie — have been one of its most successful programs. So has sponsorship of the Kentucky Book Fair that permits readers, young and old, to interact with writers and their books. Another program that promotes outreach of the humanities is a Speakers Bureau that enables small communities and large to offer speakers on a variety of subjects relating to Kentucky's past. Kentucky Humanities also sponsors Kentucky Reads, entailing selection of a book each year by a Kentucky writer and facilitating book discussions in libraries and churches with book discussions throughout the commonwealth. This year's selection is "Savory Memories," published by the University Press of Kentucky and featuring Kentucky writers' memories of the centrality of food in our culture.

When I learned that our federal government proposes to cut funding to Kentucky Humanities that pursues the ideals at the core of who we are as a nation, I was shocked and deeply saddened. Having served on the board of the Kentucky Humanities decades ago, I knew that its programs with a small budget and hard-working staff got a maximal bang for the buck. I knew that these programs

were instrumental in enlightening and, yes, sometimes entertaining, all of us. Now it was to be severely impaired, and there was some question whether its programs could continue.

Over the past four years Kentucky Humanities has sponsored nearly 2,500 events reaching more than three million Kentuckians as well as awarding \$1.6 million in grant funds to cultural organizations across the state. Today, federal funding has been cut to zero. Added to the other assaults on the arts and humanities such as proposed cuts at the National Endowment for the Humanities and National Endowment for the Arts, Kentuckians will be deprived of much of the cultural enrichment that makes life worth living. These cuts will be less visible in our larger cities, but they will have a disproportionate impact on the smaller towns and rural communities in which these programs are too often the only game in town.

What can we do to sustain the worthwhile programs that Kentucky Humanities fosters? The most effective remedy is to contact our representatives and voice our support for Kentucky Humanities. We must not let our democracy, built on idealism and the marketplace of competing ideas of the Enlightenment, starve in an era that one cynic has described as the Endarkenment. Let's help Kentucky Humanities keep the lights on.

*Richard Taylor of Frankfort is a former Kentucky poet laureate who teaches English at Transylvania University. He formerly worked at Kentucky State University. He can be emailed at [richard.taylor.ky@gmail.com](mailto:richard.taylor.ky@gmail.com)*

## LETTERS

### A SPY STORY

Dear editor,

"Here are your goals," said Vladimir Putin to the American businessman.

"We have provided significant support to get you to a position of power where you may be able to effectuate these goals.

"Don't forget the information we have about you. If you are reasonably successful with any of them we will destroy that information.

**Goal #1:** Do everything you can to disrupt or destroy the North Atlantic treaty organization (NATO).

**Goal #2:** Do everything you can to damage or destroy the country's relationships with its current allies.

**Goal #3:** As much as possible disrupt the operations of the U.S. government. Downsize every agency you can, remove or discredit their leaders, and as much as possible stop all activities of these agencies.

**Goal #4:** Disrupt and damage the normal workings of the federal government by ignoring the judicial system.

**Goal #5:** Disrupt the military by removing as many of its top management as possible, and replace its leadership with someone who has little or no knowledge of the military and is a weak leader.

**Goal #6:** Discredit the U.S. dollar by creating havoc in the stock market.

**Goal #7:** Destroy the American people's trust in their government.

**Goal #8:** Disrupt American businesses as much as

possible by disrupting the international flow of goods and increasing their costs.

"Well done," said Vladimir Putin to the American businessman.

Reference: "House of Trump, House of Putin," by Craig Unger.

*Dustin Cole  
Frankfort*

### HOW CAN TRUMP ACCEPT LUXURY JET FOR PERSONAL USE?

Dear editor,

Twenty-five years ago I was working for the USDA Food Safety Inspection Service. As part of my training, I was instructed not to accept anything from entities that I inspected (e.g. Tyson, and others), as this could result in immediate termination of my employment. I was further instructed that this could include accepting things as mundane as coffee or donuts or anything else that could be seen as a potential conflict of interest.

Given that U.S. Supreme Court justices have been accepting luxury vacations from billionaires and President Donald Trump is apparently in the process of receiving from a foreign nation-state, a luxury jet airplane that he will reportedly have for his personal use ... I can only conclude that I must have been a fool and a "loser" for adhering to the principles that I held to as part of my job.

*Dallas Meek  
Frankfort*

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