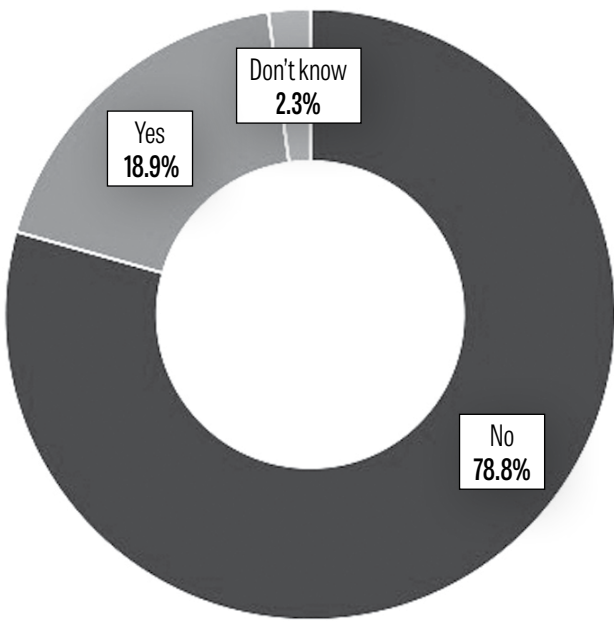


ONLINE POLL:
Do you agree with the Frankfort/Franklin County Planning Commission's decision to recommend the rezoning of land on U.S. 127 South for the proposed industrial park?



This poll reflects the opinions of 1,670 respondents.
Visit www.state-journal.com to take part in today's poll.

EDITORIAL

Quire served community with honor, compassion

Not willing to be a person who stays in a profession too long, former Franklin County Sheriff Chris Quire — who readily admits he is 1,000% healthy and happy — opted to hang it up last week after 28 years in law enforcement serving the local community. And while we, like many others, are sad to see him retire — especially with just 16 months left in his second term, we are also grateful for his many years of committed service to both the capital city and Franklin County.

Quire, a 1998 Western Hills High School graduate who was born and raised in Frankfort, worked at the sheriff's office as a court security officer and deputy sheriff for three years. After graduating from Department of Justice Criminal Training, he worked his way through the ranks from parking citation officer to patrolman to captain and public information officer during his 22-year career at the Frankfort Police Department.

In 2014, he made an unsuccessful bid for Franklin County judge-executive before being elected sheriff four years later when he claimed 64% of the vote to beat then-sheriff Pat Melton in the Democratic primary. With no Republican challengers, Quire was sworn in as sheriff in January 2019. He cruised to an easy victory over Republican Steve Sutton in the 2022 general election — collecting 14,476 votes (72%).

During his tenure, the FCSO placed a school resource officer in every county school; added body cameras; “modernized” policing with the addition of non-lethal pepperball guns; made improvements to the vehicle fleet; and built a 110-foot garage where the department’s 60-plus vehicles can be maintained that features a bay for washing cruisers and a state-of-the-art gym. In 2024, he was awarded Kentucky Sheriff of the Year.

When he initially ran for sheriff nearly eight years ago, Quire reiterated that it was not a split-second decision, telling The State Journal, “I have chosen this path because I am ready to lead and serve my community with compassion, accountability, a strong and fair hand and, I believe, improving the safety and quality of life for our children, families and community is simply doing the right thing.”

It is safe to say he accomplished everything he set out to do and then some. Thank you, sheriff for serving with honor, dignity and, most importantly, compassion.

Ky. Democratic Party changed, not Fancy Farm

The Courier Journal recently asked whether Fancy Farm is still relevant. The real question is which party has the courage to show up. One does. One doesn't.

The Kentucky Democratic Party (KDP) doesn't.

In an article, Courier Journal staff wrote that “some Democrats argue [Fancy Farm's] relevancy has ebbed and flowed over the years.” That excuse rings hollow from a party holding sparsely attended “rural listening tours” while skipping Kentucky's most iconic rural political event.

If Democrats were serious about rebuilding ties, Fancy Farm would be a priority. Bridges aren't rebuilt from a bunker.

The KDP's executive director said, “Digital media has taken over a lot of work.”

Digital outreach matters. Republicans understand that. But Democrats aren't avoiding Fancy Farm because it's outdated, but because they're irrelevant among rural voters.

The numbers prove it. Republicans hold supermajorities in both chambers of the state legislature, five out of six constitutional offices, and every congressional seat except one (Louisville). This is what democracy looks like.

According to the Kentucky State Board of Elections, as of June, Republicans make up 50.25 % of voters, Democrats 44.11%, and third-party or independent voters 5.63%. Republicans don't

just outnumber Democrats. They now hold a clear majority of registered voters.

In January 2017, after Republicans took majority control of the state House for the first time in nearly a century (under Democratic-drawn maps), Democrats still held a registration advantage of 52.4% to 41.9%. Three years ago, Republican registration edged out Democratic registration: 1,612,060 to 1,609,569.

Since then, the shift has accelerated. Democrats lost nearly 260,000 voters, while Republicans gained about 75,000. The share of voters registered as “Other,” including independents and third parties, only went from 5.6% in January 2017 to 5.63% in June 2025.

There's no independent wave. The only wave is voters waving goodbye to KDP. In Kentucky, it's not the two-party system that has left voters behind — it's KDP.

When pressed on their absence from Fancy Farm, the executive director admitted, “It's a one-horse show.”

Correct, but for the wrong reason. It's because they quit. The stage didn't change. Their willingness to participate did.

Even Andy Beshear, despite his roots, wouldn't take the stage.



Dustin Isaacs
Guest columnist

The silence is louder than any speech. KDP's eggs are all in Beshear's basket of presidential aspirations. A one-bunny show.

The party's rural detachment was evident when Sen. Robin Webb, the last rural Senate Democrat, switched to the Republican Party, stating that the Democratic Party no longer reflected rural values.

The party's absence from Fancy Farm is just the latest symptom of retreat. Blaming the event itself for their irrelevance is like blaming a mirror for a reflection.

If KDP leaders want to understand what changed, they should forgo embarrassing excuses, study election results, and take a look in the mirror. Relevance isn't lost. It's forfeited. No show, no say.

If KDP can't take the heat at Fancy Farm, they don't deserve the spotlight. Not that they have.

Dustin Isaacs is from Sand Gap and works as a communications professional. He has over a decade of experience, including in the executive and legislative branches of state government, as well as in political consulting, campaigns, and elections. A graduate of Jackson County High School and Eastern Kentucky University, he lives in Frankfort with his wife, Tamara, and their three children, Gabriel, Sawyer and Liberty. He can be emailed at dustinisaacsky@gmail.com.



LETTER

U.S. 127 INDUSTRIAL PARK PROJECT ‘SHROUDED IN SECRECY AND A RUSH JOB’

Dear editor,

Facts don't count on the industrial park on U.S. 127. Facts that the farmland will be destroyed, there's a possibility of sinkholes, underground springs, soil not suitable for this kind of build. Facts that traffic will be impossible. Facts that this is incompatible with the community. Facts that are ignored. A fact that traffic expert was ready to testify by zoom about negative effect on 127 traffic and was denied the opportunity by the planning commission lawyer. Planning and zoning meetings were fiascos. Only three members listened to facts.

Next came fiscal court meeting. Fact: We were told by Judge-Executive Michael Mueller we

couldn't speak but anyone could speak on any other subject but this one. First amendment rights violation?

This whole project has been shrouded in secrecy and a rush job. What happened to “to the people, for the people, by the people?” Are there political powers at play here? Since 6th District Magistrate Eric Whisman and two others were the only ones who voted to allow us to speak, I think I know how this vote is going — just like P&Z board vote.

Do citizens have a voice anymore or is a fix in? Just look at the facts. This is \$8 million of your tax dollars for at best a few hundred jobs. Speak up before fiscal court votes. We're not allowed to.

Bonnie Richardson
Frankfort

THE State Journal

Joe Imel, Publisher
270-783-3273
joe.emel@bgdailynews.com

Chanda Veno, Editor
502-209-6340
chanda.veno@state-journal.com

Hannah Brown, Design Editor
502-209-6339
hannah.brown@state-journal.com

NEWS

Linda Younkin
502-209-6336
linda.younkin@state-journal.com

Linda Boileau, Editorial Cartoonist
linda.boileau@me.com

ADVERTISING SALES

Meri Latek, Director of Advertising
502-395-3434
meri.latek@state-journal.com

CLASSIFIEDS/LEGAL NOTICES
classifieds@state-journal.com
public.notices@state-journal.com
502-871-4559

MAIN OFFICE

Sheri Bunker, Director of Customer Service
502-209-6305
sheri.bunker@state-journal.com

Jim Wainscott, Bookkeeper
502-209-6301
jim.wainscott@state-journal.com

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