



5th District Newsletter

*News and announcements from
around our community*



One Hundred Twenty-eighth Edition
Details for the District

January 31, 2014

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Bullet Points of Interest:

- If you have any gently-used books, the Kenwick Community Center's library would certainly like to shelve them for you. Donations can be dropped off at the center, 313 Owsley Avenue, during normal operating hours. Don't forget that the center offers a variety of fitness programs and you can view a list of those by clicking [here](#).
- Free tax preparation provided by CKEEP and its volunteer tax preparers offers immediate savings to Central Kentuckians who qualify. This year, CKEEP is hosting 19 tax sites across the Central Kentucky region. Appointments are required, which can be scheduled by going to www.uwbg.org/ckeeep or dialing 2-1-1.

Feedback, Preparedness and Gas—All In One Week

This e-newsletter is an effective tool not only to keep you informed but to hear back from you. This past week offers a fine example of good feedback. I received an e-mail from David Adkisson, a 5th District resident and President of the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce, and duly noted the former Mayor of Owensboro, Kentucky. In that city and under his guidance in the 90s, leaf collection was addressed by several entities. In his words, "It was handled like a professional military operation." The Council recently placed the leaf collection issue in the Planning and Public Works Committee, which I chair. Since we will be taking a holistic approach to how best to efficiently pick up this harvest, Adkisson's suggestions based on past successes are not only appreciated but implementable. My thanks to all of our loyal readers who think of and suggest solutions.

On Tuesday night, [Shelley Bendall](#), the Preparedness Coordinator for the Division of Emergency Management, spoke at the Kenwick Neighborhood Association meeting about being prepared for emergencies of many sorts, some of which I had not considered. After hearing her speak, I would recommend her or others from the division for any neighborhood association meeting you might have. The two things I can tell you for sure is that we all need a weather radio for our home or office. It may be an older tool but newer applications make it only more valuable. Secondly, as you assemble your emergency preparedness kit make sure that along with the suggested flashlights, batteries, water and food, be sure to include a can opener! Deceptively simple. As I said a pertinent topic for any meeting and with an invite to Bendall, you'll learn why. Click Bendall's name above to e-mail her and schedule her

to speak with your group.

At last night's Council meeting, the final right-of-way agreement was passed allowing our local government to construct a Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) fueling station. This will be the first of its kind for the government and for the city too. I have championed this effort because of the environmental- and cost-saving measures this fuel will bring. Natural gas is local—so to speak—and less expensive than other fuels we use now. The emissions and wear on engines are both greatly decreased. Lastly, and quite quality-of-life oriented, they are quiet. As we begin to transition our Division of Waste Management vehicles over to CNG, our neighborhoods will be quieter. When LexTran builds its new headquarters and maintenance facility, they too will change over, making a difference we will all appreciate. I've long been a diesel driver but when CNG vehicles arrive I will be sorely tempted not to change!

I am honored and humbled to serve on your behalf. Our district is a collection of neighborhoods and people that make Lexington special, wonderful and better. To serve as your Council Member is both task and duty but in some respects a unique calling. It is one that I am glad to take up for issues that are sometimes big, and for needs that are sometimes small but most immediate. Together we are working every day to make sure that this city and the natural beauty that surrounds it is even better tomorrow. Thank you for having me as your representative in this great endeavor we call Lexington!

My best,
Bill

5th District Resident Sheds Blood for Good Reason

This past Monday, 5th District resident and Council Office Research Analyst Paul Schoningher made the debut of his lifetime on the floor of Rupp Arena. Shoningher was offered this opportunity after donating 16 gallons of blood over the course of 126 visits to the Kentucky Blood Center. No worse for wear, he made two out of three free throws and we on the Council floor are proud.



Paul Schoningher scores big for the Kentucky Blood Center.

One pint of blood can help save the lives of up to three patients. To donate blood, you must be at least 16 years of age, weigh 110 pounds and be in good general health. You can donate whole blood every 56 days and it's a good health check. Before donating, KBC staff performs a mini-physical that includes checks for pulse (we're glad Paul has one!), temperature and blood pressure. KBC will also check to see if your iron level is high enough to safely donate. For more information, click [here](#).

PDR Gets a 5th District Facelift

In October of 2013, Billy Van Pelt left the position of Manager of Purchase of Development Rights (PDR). After a thorough search and interview process, we are pleased to announce that 5th District resident and Acting PDR Manager Beth Overman was offered and accepted the job last week. Beth brings with her a combination of great interpersonal skills and an attention to detail that will help to keep the PDR program moving in positive direction. Beth has been doing an excellent job as the interim PDR Manager and we look forward to her continued good stewardship of the program.

Homelessness Office Seeking Coordinator

Lexington will soon hire its first coordinator of the newly created Office of Homelessness Prevention and Intervention. The office will help coordinate the implementation of recommendations within the Mayor's Commission on Homelessness Report and related initiatives, improve collaboration among LFUCG, community partners and service providers, and help develop innovative strategies to improve the effectiveness of Lexington's efforts to address homelessness.

The city is currently accepting applications for the coordinator position. For more information, go to jobs.lexingtonky.gov/careers. During the extreme cold weather we've been experiencing lately, many people have been concerned about our homeless population. As we all know, Lexington is a very caring community and a number of agencies, churches and individuals have worked hard to make sure any person in need and willing to accept help has had a place to stay warm.

Ashland, The Henry Clay Estate Seeks Volunteers

If you have three hours a month to volunteer and would love to meet people from across the globe who come to Lexington to tour and learn more about Ashland, The Henry Clay Estate, your time is requested. The Estate needs tour guides for the historic Clay family antebellum mansion and assistants in the Museum Store. Training sessions are Saturday, February 22nd and March 8th from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm. Volunteer hours are flexible to fit your schedule each month. Ashland, The Henry Clay Estate is a non-profit National Historic Landmark, Museum and Educational Center, receives no city, state or federal funding and relies on a 75-person volunteer corp. Perks of being an Ashland volunteer include free educational and fun events, discounts in the Museum Store and working with a great group of people. Training will be at the Estate in the Keeper's Cottage, 120 Sycamore Road. For more information and to sign up, contact Kate Heil at kheil@henryclay.org or call (859) 266-8581.

A vertical advertisement for an event. At the top is a decorative masquerade mask. Below it, the text reads "BOURBON and the Bayou" in a mix of serif and script fonts, with "To benefit CASA of Lexington" in smaller text. A red oval contains the date and time: "7 to 11 PM Friday, February 28, 2014 Red Mile Clubhouse". Below this, it lists "Music and Dancing", "BOURBON TASTING", "Silent and Live Auctions", and "MARDI GRAS DINING". At the bottom, it says "For tickets and information: 859.246.4313 www.lexingtoncasa.com". A red circular button in the top right corner says "Click Me!".

Gem Gives a Voice to Animals in Need

This week's Gem of the District actually resides in the 10th, but her reach can be felt across Lexington-Fayette County. With respect that has gone viral, Debbie Wimsatt has become an advocate for animals who have either lost their way and/or belong to owners that have as well. This week, we sat down with Debbie and asked her how she manages to balance four-legged lives on her own two feet. This is what she had to say.

Q. First of all, tell us who you are and what you do.

A. I'm Debbie Wimsatt. I was born and raised in Lexington and currently reside in Beaumont. I have two amazing daughters and have been married for twenty years to my wonderful husband Ralph, who has given me the opportunity to be a stay home mom. I have rescued animals for almost twenty years locally and through social media for three years. I'm currently the creator of Lost and Found Pets of Lexington.

Q. Your Facebook page, [Lost and Found Pets of Lexington, KY](#), has become the go-to source of information for pets "on the lamb" in Lexington and surrounding areas. How did you come to create such a vehicle?

A. During a low point in rescue, I asked God to show me how I could realize the efforts of my labor in a more personal way through the community. I came to understand having an impact locally at the core that success could allow me to work forward at a state level. I personally lost a cat and shared that loss via social media for 52 days. Through that experience I knew the heartache and frustration could help me personally relate to others. On December 31st, 2012, I created the page.

I made it my sole mission and groomed the page to what it is today with the help of Nicci Turner. Since its inception, not only have we reunited many pets with their families, we have also educated pet owners to the importance of spaying, neutering and micro-chipping. While the main focus is animals, I do utilize it for humanitarian needs. My most humbling experience with this page is the over 100 new friends I have gained personally on Facebook; those who have become very active in their communities doing what they can to be a voice and to educate others to the plight of our four-legged friends. Realizing that one person's actions can



truly change a community is priceless.

Q. With the record-cold weather we've had this month, growing concern has been voiced about owners who leave their pets out in the cold. What would you like to see

happen with legislation to protect these animals?

A. I would like to see our COMMUNITY rally to implement some type of anti-tethering ordinance, a breeder's permit, a required license to sell pets on public property and when weather becomes extreme, and see that measures are in place to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all animals who are housed outdoors.

At the state level, I would like to move to amend the statute regarding animal welfare to mandate required shelter and bedding for dogs, especially during extreme cold weather. I believe a breeder's permit implemented to reduce the number of disposable animals that are killed in our state each year has the potential to decrease the supply which in turn can decrease the demand. It would be an incentive to our counties for revenue. I personally see the need for more preventative measures in place that discourage irresponsible pet ownership.

Q. The 5th District Office often receives complaints about cats on the loose and feral cats. What advice do you have to those who wish to help "herd" cats?

A. First, do not take on or in ferals that you don't plan to provide completely for (i.e. shelter, vetting and basic care). They can become very dependent on you quickly. You also do not want to take them to animal control as that organization doesn't have the ability to take in ferals that cannot be adopted due to sickness or behavioral issues.

Until we mandate spay and neuter programs and prevent everyone from breeding indiscriminately, it won't stop. There are managed colonies in Lexington and groups to turn to who can provide assistance—but they need funding. We need to be working with neighborhoods who have associations and educate them to the TNR program. It literally takes a village. Contact [Spay Our Strays](#) for more information.

Q. Do you have any questions or concerns for Lexington as a whole?

A. I care passionately about the homeless and used to do more to assist in that capacity but stepped away to focus on the animals and rescue. For me, there are many parallels between the two issues; they are the voiceless, the throwaways, the overlooked. If we can offer hope to those that need it most we just may in turn open people's eyes to educating others about the hope that animals need too.



Debbie's pup Ava lucked out when she was rescued by the Wimsatt family.

FROM THE OFFICE
OF 5TH DISTRICT
COUNCILMEMBER
BILL FARMER, JR.

5th District Council Member
Lexington-Fayette Urban
County Council
200 East Main Street
Lexington, KY 40507

Phone: (859) 258-3213
Fax: (859) 258-3838

E-mail: bfarmer@lexingtonky.gov

Details for the District

Homestead Tax Exemptions Hit \$36,000

Many 5th District residents may not be taking advantage of a simple opportunity to lower their property taxes. The Homestead Exemption is a constitutional provision to reduce taxes for homeowners at least 65 years of age or who are disabled and receive disability payments. The exemption lowers the taxable value of your home; for 2014, the exemption would make the first \$36,000 of your home's value not taxable.

Exemptions are available only on properties which, as of January 1st each year, are owned by and the primary residence of the applicant. Only one exemption is available per property and recipients cannot have exemptions on other properties here or in other counties or states.

Any homeowner turning 65 in 2014 can apply now for the exemption and would receive the full benefit of it on the 2014 tax bill. Disabled homeowners must receive benefits for total disability from a retirement system, including Social Security, for all of 2014 in order to qualify. Applicants must provide an award letter or other proof from the retirement system to prove they are receiving disability payments. Applications and further information can be found at www.fayette-pva.com/exemptions or by contacting Lori Kidwell at (859) 246-2722, ext. 238 or at Lori.Kidwell@ky.gov.



ARTFUL SUNDAY: Portrait Mobiles

Sunday, February 2

2 - 3:30 pm

Bring the family to see the new exhibition

WIDE ANGLE: American Photographs

and make a portrait mobile



The 5th District Newsletter is distributed via e-mail to any Lexington resident. I encourage leaders of the 31 active neighborhood associations in the 5th District to provide input for the newsletter and to distribute the newsletter to their members. Anyone wishing to receive the newsletter may contact the 5th District Council office via e-mail at bfarmer@lexingtonky.gov. If you wish to unsubscribe to the newsletter, e-mail jgies@lexingtonky.gov.



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