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College Heights Herald

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WEEK OF 9.22.20

VOTING IN COLLEGE

What college students need to know about absentee voting

By Debra Murray

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The 2020 presidential election is less than 50 days away, which means voter registration and absentee ballot application deadlines are nearing.

People voting in Kentucky's general election in November will not only be voting for the next president. Voters will also be electing officials to the U.S. Senate, U.S. House of Representatives, Kentucky state representatives and various members of courts, such as district judges, circuit court judges, circuit judges for Family Court and judges of the Court of Appeals.

How does a voter request an absentee ballot?

Students have mentioned a variety of concerns about voting with an absentee ballot, from not understanding the process of requesting a ballot to COVID-19 sending students home before voting.

"My biggest concern with voting this year is there may not be as big of a turnout as there should be because of the pandemic," said Halee Oliver, a freshman from Louisville. "Most students don't know how to access an absentee ballot or simply just don't feel like doing it."

If the voter is from a different county than Warren, they can submit a request for an absentee ballot to be mailed to their campus address by completing an absentee application via Kentucky's Absentee Request Portal.

If the voter is from another state, they will have to register to vote in Kentucky through the Online Voter Registration Portal, then request an absentee ballot. They can also request a ballot from their home state in order to have an absentee ballot mailed to their dorm.

For Warren County residents, normally absentee ballots may not be available, but due to COVID-19, voters are able to request an absentee ballot via the Absentee Request Portal.

The voter registration deadline for the 2020 presidential election is Oct. 5. The deadline to request an absentee ballot is Oct. 9.

Warren County Clerk Lynette Yates explained the importance of requesting your absentee ballot early, especially for busy college students.

"That way, when those first ballots go out, you're in there and then get that ballot back to the county clerk that needs that, you know, mail it back out," Yates said. "Don't procrastinate. There's the problem. That's why the state's cutting off this portal so early is so people will make sure they have ample time to get that ballot and get it back before the election."

The most important factor of voting using an absentee ballot is to be timely and make sure to have the process done as quickly as possible.

"The key is that you need to just tell everyone that is requesting those ballots, don't let them sit on your desk in your dorm room for you know, a week or so, you know, do it, make your selections and send it right back out," said Yates.

What is the difference between mail-in ballots and absentee ballots?

While the terms are used interchangeably, absentee ballots refer to ballots that are requested and mailed to a person who cannot vote in person. Mail-in ballots refer to ballots that are mailed to all registered voters so they can vote by mail.

Only nine states are having universal mail-in voting for the 2020 presidential election. Kentucky is not one of those states, which is why individuals must request a ballot.

How long does it take to get my ballot?

Absentee ballots will be sent out to voters typically 45 days before the election after their absentee ballot application has been verified.

"When all the courts know, we actually haven't received our ballots from the state yet, so we haven't started mailing them out," Yates said. "We're supposed to get them. We were supposed to have them by this week. We don't have them all yet, but we are hoping that we'll be able to start sending everything out next week, so Jefferson County may be in a very similar situation."

Warren County is still waiting to re-

ceive ballots, but once received it will only take two or three days for ballots to be making their way to voters.

"Over the next week, we will be mailing out," Yates said. "I think we've got roughly 8,500 applications setting out there for the ballot. So we will get those out within two to three days of when we receive the ballot."

What if dorms close earlier than anticipated due to COVID-19?

The possibility of dorm shutdown is the reason many students are concerned about getting absentee ballots mailed to campus. If the residence halls were to close later this semester due to COVID-19, but the desks remain open, staff will forward any mail delivered if they have a forwarding address on file. If the desks close, then the mail is not delivered to the campus.

"One concern I have about the absentee ballots being sent to campus is that we might not be on campus because of 'corona' and even if we are the ballots have to pass through multiple hands before they are actually delivered," said Brianna Barley, a freshman from Louisville.

When asked about this concern, Yates mentioned that the State Board of Elections may let the county clerk cancel ballots if this issue were to occur.

"They allowed us for things like [a dorm shutdown], they allowed us to cancel that ballot," Yates said. "Because we do have a way of tracking once you request that ballot, you got to vote that way because we can track it. This is purely speculation because the State Board of Elections makes these decisions. I'm sure the State Board of Election has a plan in place that they will make those allowances for things like that."

What about possible mail delays?

If voters are concerned about possible mail delays, there will be drop boxes available to put ballots after filling them out. The location of the drop box has been decided by the county clerk. There will be a drop box located at the side en-

trance of the old Bowling Green courthouse during normal business hours on Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. until 4:30 p.m.

"There will probably be one here at the courthouse because they have to be monitored, and I don't want them to be left out at night under security cameras; I would rather someone be monitoring so there will be one here," said Yates. "There will be one down at SKYPAC. Those will be there out all the time, then we may do some drop off locations scheduled throughout the county, on the weekends, something like that."

The dropbox, when decided, will be found on the Warren County clerk website. For voters who do not want to drop their ballot off at the drop box selected by the county clerk, voters can still drop their ballot off at the post office.

Yates also stressed the responsibility of the voter to receive their ballot, fill it out and drop the ballot off, which must be done in a reasonable amount of time.

"The voter needs to take some responsibility," Yates said. "Yeah, can't wait till two days before the election and decide, oh, I want to vote. I'm gonna vote that ballot they sent me and then expect it to get to where it needs to go, because it's not going to happen. So the voter has to take that responsibility."

Yates pointed out while discussing mail delays that national issues with the postal system could make them take longer than normal like handling the pandemic and also a major general election.

"Kentucky's mail, vote by mail, is very secure," said Yates. "Right now with everything in our postal system. I know they are doing the best they can, but I'm sure they're overwhelmed with this — with COVID, packaging and everything else — and now elections on top of that. There's a lot to get mailed out. So some people feel better that they would rather know to drop it off in hand. That's your own personal choice."

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WKU and Barnes & Noble partner in 10-year deal

By Easton Reynolds

easton.reynolds653@topper.wku.edu

The WKU Bookstore is partnering with Barnes & Noble in a 10-year deal that is set to privatize the previously independently-run bookstore.

According to Jennifer Tougas, interim Assistant Vice President of Business Services, the deal includes an annual \$15,000 scholarship, a one-time gift of \$350,000 and \$1 million in guaranteed revenue for the first year.

In March, WKU made the recommendation to the Board of Regents that Barnes & Noble take over the operation of the bookstore. The Board of Regents approved the takeover of the bookstore on July 1 in its May meeting.

The \$15,000 scholarship was made available to Spirit Masters this year because of the quick turn-around, but Vice President for Enrollment and Student Experience Ethan Logan said future scholarships would "potentially [be] a partnered direction with SGA participation and input."

The one-time gift of \$350,000 is unrestricted said Executive Vice President for Strategy, Operations and Finance Susan Howarth.

"Knowing how our president is wired around student success, I think he will certainly use it to that end," Howarth said.

Tougas said the partnership will focus on delivering students lower-cost options for textbooks, wider electronic book access and more streamlined textbook integration with professors.

"One thing Barnes & Noble brings to the table is purchasing power," Tougas said.

Their access to markets and the volume

of textbooks Barnes & Noble process will allow students to receive lower textbook prices, said Tougas.

The popular Day One Access program that many professors currently use will be expanded with an adoption portal rolling out later this month, Tougas said. Professors will be able to opt into this e-book program if they choose.

"Getting the textbooks adopted early in the process is really critical to help with the control of textbook prices," Tougas said.

The partnership will require some adjustments for students.

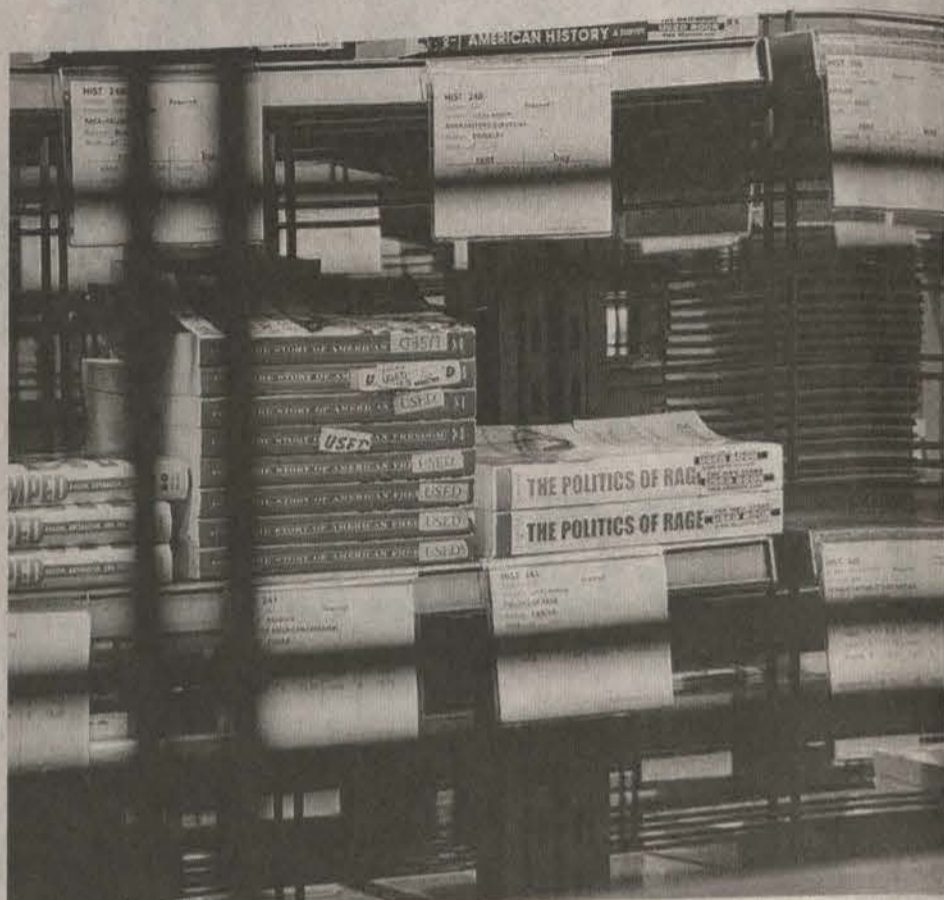
David Hall, a worker for the Bookstore, explained how the upgraded computer system does not cross-reference classes and textbooks. When at the bookstore, students will now have to know what textbooks they need, when previously students would simply have to show their ID card and the computer would generate a list of all the textbooks they needed.

Books will now be organized by subject instead of author's last name, which will group all similar content books together, Hall said.

"It's kind of a tradeoff," Hall said. "I think it's easier for people to find textbooks once they understand."

"We have a store refresh and will begin the planning process for that within the next month or two," Tougas said.

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RILEY GREIF

Mostly empty shelves line the WKU Store on Friday, Sept. 11, 2020. The university's store faces many changes as they switched suppliers to Barnes and Noble, most noticeably lower access to specific supplies and a significant change in payment options.

Online and hybrid courses pose challenge to professors

By Jacob Latimer

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PRESTON ROMANOV

At the beginning of the semester, WKU professors were able to choose the modality of their courses — online, hybrid or face-to-face. Now, five weeks into class, professors are beginning to come to terms with the struggles of teaching during a pandemic.

Of the 3,575 courses offered at WKU this semester, 40.1% are online, 22.4% are hybrid and 37.4% are in-person.

While English professor Daniel Lid-

dle prefers teaching fully in-person, he decided to teach hybrid this semester.

"I think it's possible to run a very effective online discussion that allows students to engage and connect with the materials just as well, but I haven't spent the past 10 years honing these skills for a remote context," Liddle stated in an email.

Liddle, who prefers the interpersonal connection of in-person teaching, said one of the major challenges of teaching

during a pandemic is a rippling effect stemming from the pandemic itself.

"It is hard to create meaningful in-person class days if a chunk of students are going to be absent because of the virus," Liddle stated in an email. "Meanwhile, I don't want to penalize students for staying safe and sane during these difficult times."

Geography professor Patricia Kambesis also decided to teach hybrid this semester but has chosen this modality as her overall preference.

"I like the idea of there being multiple modes for teaching a class — more than we had before the pandemic," Kambesis said.

Kambesis also stated that since she has taught online classes prior to the pandemic, the transition wasn't a huge challenge for her.

A common challenge among professors with online teaching is establishing a connection with students and getting students to interact with one another.

English professor Wes Berry, who primarily teaches Introduction to Literature, decided to teach fully online this semester in order to ensure the safety of those with underlying health issues. While Berry also experiences challenges connecting with students in an online format, he believes that it's possible to achieve online connections.

"Sometimes learning 'magic' happens in a traditional classroom in a seminar format when we're talking about literature — like times when students get into a debate on a topic — but

I'm seeing potential for that happening in online video conferences also," Berry stated in an email.

When choosing the modality of their courses for this semester, professors not only had to account for the health and safety of their students, but their own well being.

For English professor Sandra Hughes, choosing to teach online was more of a personal decision.

"I have chosen this method because I am immunocompromised based on two different factors, so I didn't feel like hybrid instruction would be very safe for me," Hughes stated in an email.

While Hughes stated that she generally prefers teaching face-to-face, she did not feel that it was a realistic possibility for this semester given her health concerns. She stated her biggest challenges were assignment and exam design, grading and communication with students.

"I appreciate, though, that the university has accommodated my need for medical safety, and I am sure that I will get better at online instruction over time," Hughes stated. "My students have been very patient, and I am quite grateful for that."

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CORRECTION

A story that ran on last week's second page incorrectly stated that Harrison Hill graduated from WKU in 2013. He actually graduated in 2017. The College Heights Herald regrets the error, and it has been corrected.



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LAST RIDE:

The end of a roller coaster summer for Bowling Green's Beech Bend Park

Copyblock written by Jack Dobbs and Anna Leachman

Three children look at each other while riding "Scat II" at Beech Bend Park on Sept. 19, 2020.

ANNA LEACHMAN



JACK DOBBS

Guests at Beech Bend Park ride the Kentucky Humber roller coaster on Saturday, Sept. 19, 2020. This was the last day of the 2020 season for the amusement park.



ANNA LEACHMAN

A child attempts to scheme free fries from a food service worker at Beech Bend Park on Sept. 19, 2020. His attempts were sadly unsuccessful.



JACK DOBBS

A masked visitor to Beech Bend sits waiting to ride the Flying Bobs attraction. In accordance with COVID-19 guidelines, park workers are required to wear facial coverings and rides were disinfected after each use.

After a year full of uncertainty surrounding the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, Beech Bend's amusement park wrapped up the season last weekend, closing for the year on Saturday, Sept. 19. Despite restrictions on large gatherings, maskless crowds covered the park, with friends and families gathering to enjoy the rides and atmosphere, along with the mild mid-September weather. In addition to the standard amusement park attractions, Beech Bend's Raceway also hosted Holley's MoParty, a weekend-long gathering of Dodge, Plymouth and Chrysler car enthusiasts. Although the amusement park portion of Beech Bend is now closed, the raceway will remain open until Thanksgiving, ending its season with the Thanksgiving Bracket Nationals for drag racing.

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A CALL TO MITCH MCCONNELL

By Julianna Lowe

julianna.lowe253@topper.wku.edu.

Don't let RBG's death be in vain

Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg died Friday in Washington, D.C., her family by her side. Ginsburg was known for her fight for gender equality, workers' rights and the separation of church and state.

Ginsburg passed away from complications attributed to her battle with pancreatic cancer. She was 87, and she had served on the court for 27 years.

"My most fervent wish is that I will not be replaced until a new president is installed," Ginsburg said days before her death.

After Ginsburg's death, the Supreme Court now leans 5-3 Republican. Chief Justice John Roberts and Justices Clarence Thomas, Brett Kavanaugh, Neil Gorsuch and Samuel Alito tend to lean conservatively in court decisions. Justices Sonia Sotomayor, Elena Kagan and Stephen Breyer lean more liberally.

If President Donald Trump were to nominate a new justice and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell were to move to confirm the nominee before the election in November, it would be the first time in 88 years that the Senate confirms a justice in an election year. The justice would also undoubtedly lean Republican, giving the court a 6-3 Republican majority.

With the current political tensions in the nation right now between conservatives and liberals, Ginsburg's dying wish does not come as a surprise. It would be no shock for Trump to move to appoint his third Supreme Court justice, and Ginsburg presumably didn't want her replacement to come with an unfair advantage to the current administration.

Much has shifted since Trump's election in 2016, including the political sphere in the United States. Allowing the

president to confirm a judge without letting the American people respond to the past four years would be undemocratic.

McConnell is willing to be undemocratic.

On the night of Ginsburg's death, McConnell was quick to confirm that he would move to vote for Trump's nominee for the Court. The Senate currently leans 53-45 Republican, with two independents that caucus with the Democrats.

"Americans reelected our [Republican Senate] majority in 2016 and expanded it in 2018 because we pledged to work with President Trump and support his agenda, particularly his outstanding appointments to the federal judiciary," McConnell said on Friday night. "President Trump's nominee will receive a vote on the floor of the United States Senate."

Immediately after Ginsburg's death, McConnell confirmed to the American people that he would bring a vote to the Senate floor sometime in the 44 days before Election Day.

In 2016, McConnell did the opposite.

In 2016, Former President Barack Obama's last year before passing the torch to Trump, Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia died, leaving a seat on the court open for nomination. There were eight months before the presidential election.

"The American people should have a voice in the selection of their next Supreme Court justice," McConnell said of Merrick Garland, Obama's nominee for justice. "Therefore, this vacancy should not be filled until we have a new president."

McConnell became senate majority leader in 2015, and he was sure to restrain Obama, a Democrat, from nominating a Supreme Court justice during

that election year. Now that Trump is of the same party as McConnell, he is pushing hard for the confirmation of the president's nominee.

"Rarely does a Supreme Court vacancy occur in the final year of a presidential term," McConnell also said in 2016. "Given that we are in the midst of the presidential election process, we believe that the American people should seize the opportunity to weigh in."

In 2016, McConnell seemed to fervently believe that justices should not be appointed during election years, as the political sphere is so tense and unstable. Now, McConnell is pushing for his party to take an even stronger majority on the

court.

McConnell is making the court partisan in order to advance his personal and party agenda, but this is unfair to the American people.

If Democrats did not get an appointment in 2016, eight months before election day, then republicans should not get an appointment in 2018, six weeks before election day.

The Supreme Court reconvenes on Monday, Oct. 5.

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ILLUSTRATION BY MADALYN STACK

OP-ED

Bowling Green City Commissioner candidate shares statement on the importance of voting in local elections

By Carlos Bailey

Bowling Green City Commissioner candidate

This is an election, not a lottery.

Imagine hitting a district's campaign trail hard for months - raising money in order to chase a victory on a platform of the issues that matter to you and your local supporters. You spend your days garnering support at civic lunches, and your evenings fill up with cocktail parties and hundreds of phone calls to return.

You do not mind, though, because you imagine "things that never were, and ask why not."

Then you win the election, but there is a recount...and another recount. Eventually, officials determine the election was a dead tie between you and the other guy.

To break that tie, they write your names on scraps of paper and place them into film canisters. They roll them around in something that looks like your mother's favorite mixing bowl before selecting a winner. The other guy's name is drawn. You just lost a tossup, and you did not even have a chance to call heads or tails.

While this seems more like the type of absurdity the year 2020 would dream up, it happened to Shelly Simonds in the Virginia House race of 2017.

Election officials enacted a 1700s tie-breaker law that resembles a senior night bingo draw to select a victor. To raise the stakes, Shelly's loss to David Yancey also allowed Republicans to retain control of the House by a 51-49 margin. The 2017 Virginia House race may be the most extreme example, but it is hardly in a class by itself.

Every. Vote. Counts.

On Nov. 6, 2018, Rep. Jim Glenn, D-Owensboro beat Former Rep. D.J. Johnson, R-Owensboro, by only one vote.

After the election, former Rep. D.J. Johnson, R-Owensboro, filed an election contest to get a recount. The election contest was then taken to the Kentucky House of Representatives, and nine names were pulled from a film canister to determine who will serve on the election contest board. The election contest board voted 6-3 for a full recount.

After recounting the paper ballots and counting five unopened absentee ballots, it was determined the election might have ended in a tie, and Rep. Jim Glenn, who was initially declared the winner, was officially declared the winner for Kentucky's 13th House District.

This is a clear example of why every vote counts.

While the spotlight remains on the ever-important U.S. Presidential election, this year continues to show us the gravity of local elections through the power that state, county and city governments have executed.

During a year of civil unrest, a pandemic and natural disasters, local leadership has been crucial to the vitality of our communities. With each mandate, curfew, budget allocation and evacuation, local officials have helped shape the success or failure of their jurisdictions.

Even if you're displeased with the slate of presidential candidates, there are plenty of reasons to vote in your local elections.

It's personal.

While national leaders focus on what moves us forward as an entire country, it's the local governments who directly tailor their laws to fit the needs of the community around them. What works for a large city is not always going to work for a community with 71,623 residents.

The environmental and economic needs of a municipality in Bowling Green, are vastly different from the busy streets of Nashville, Tennessee. However, local elections in each city have a direct impact on the people living in that community. This is why it's important to vote in every election, especially local elections.

Everybody has an issue.

Local elections can have severe consequences, so it's important to vote in the primary.

Moreover, it is cool to be "woke" to the challenges facing your life, but it is cooler to educate yourself on the challenges facing you and the other people living in your community.

We all have a political stance on eco-



PROVIDED BY CARLOS BAILEY F

nomie development, affordable housing, public safety, infrastructure, civil rights, health care or any human rights issue can be seen as a "political" issue. However, we must ensure that our elected leaders write or vote on laws that could impact your life.

The marathon continues: We must pay it forward for those who paid for our liberties.

This year has been challenging. We recently lost U. S. Representative and civil rights legend John Lewis, who spent his life fighting for civil justice, including the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg (the Notorious RBG), who used her talent to ensure women, including my four daughters, have a greater chance to be in "the room where it happens." We also just cel-

ebrated the centennial of women's voting rights that Susan B. Anthony and so many others fought to secure.

Of course, we have a right to stay home, but we have the privilege to go vote and walk the path that these heroes cleared for us.

2020 certainly hasn't been the year of perfect vision that we hoped for, but let us not make it the year we are all donning blindfolds and aimlessly tossing our hands into a bowl of scrap paper to determine our local elections because we were too complacent to stand in line or lick an envelope.

Vote by absentee ballot, vote early (beginning Oct. 13) or vote on Nov. 3. Embrace the privilege to vote, educate yourself on the issues and don't let our ancestors' sacrifices be for nothing.

Vote to create change, vote to right wrongs and vote to improve the world around you. Make your voice heard this year and VOTE!

Football fans use new ticketing app at home opener

By Nick Kieser
nick.kieser036@topper.wku.edu

No added noise from the loudspeakers was needed as the Hilltoppers (0-2) took the field for the first home game of the season against Liberty University (1-0) on Sept. 19. There were 4,276 fans that attended Saturday's game, although entering the stadium didn't look the same as normal in previous seasons.

Fans and students had to enter the game with a new protocol that the ticketing sales team created. Separate apps were used for the general public and students who attended Saturday's game.

Students were to download the Red Wave student app and sign in with their Topper email account and RSVP to attend a game. Students can RSVP for a home game as early as Monday on a game week.

"We wanted students to reserve on the app," Associate Athletic Director of Marketing and Ticket Sales Matt Morrison said. "If any of the one thousand students do not show up, the students who were put on a waiting list then can come into the game."

As for having any additional student seating for the opening game, the Berm was closed to students to gather in for week one.

"Hopefully after the first game, some of these protocols and mandates can loosen up a little bit and get more people into the stadium," Morrison said. "The capacity could go up and it could, unfortunately, go down."

The next game where students could perhaps be allowed in the Berm is homecoming on Oct. 10 against Marshall University with a 6:30 p.m. kickoff.

Ticketing for the general public is done through the WKU Hilltoppers App. Purchasing a ticket is done through Ticketmaster.

"The general public will have a seat block," Morrison said. "They go where that seat block is. Ticketmaster doesn't speak to our student accounts, so using

an 800 number to Ticketmaster doesn't really matter."

Morrison added that sections 128, 133, 134 and 135 are reserved for WKU students and that the overflow would go up into section 335 if necessary.

"You don't know how they will show up," Morrison said. "If they show up with three buddies we still want those three buddies to be close to them, and that's why we've done it based on how they enter the game. That way they can still sit closer to their friends."

Operations in Houchens-Smith Stadium is something that has changed for the 2020 season due to COVID-19.

"Normal concession stands will operate just like a normal game," Associate Athletic Director of Facilities and Administration Craig Biggs said. "We have switched a few vendors. Some we've lost due to COVID-19 reasons, and others we've changed because of corporate deals."

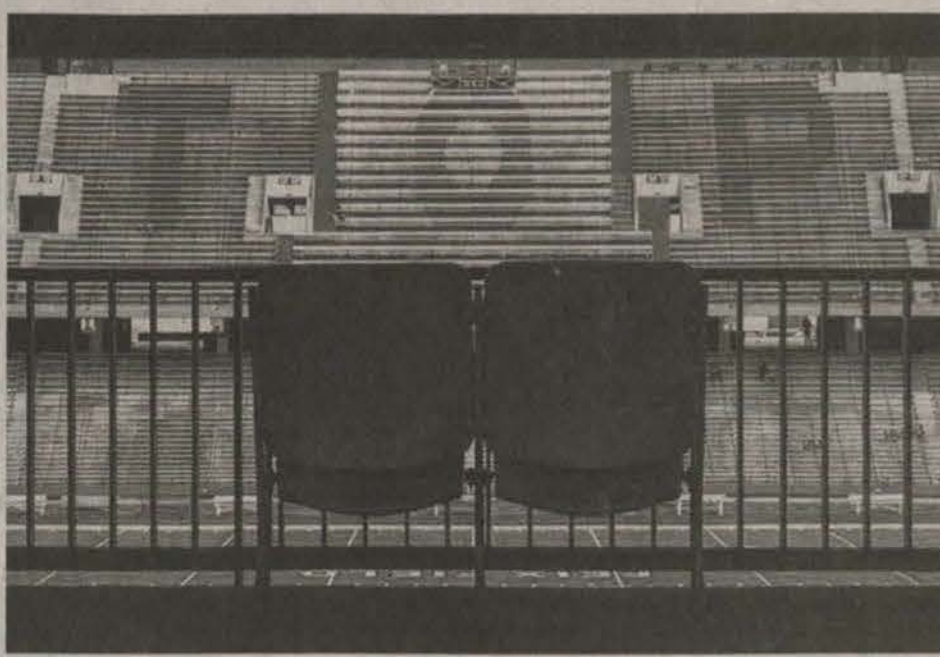
Biggs added that this year the stadium will have a new sponsor Local Taco for home games. The tacos can be bought on the west side of the stadium.

As it pertains to what has changed, Biggs said that Chaney's Dairy Barn is indeed back this season. Pizza Hut is not and there is currently no vendor for pizza. However, Chick-fil-A will be open on the east side of the stadium.

"A lot of things will be pre-packaged," Biggs said. "There's a couple of things coming off the menu because it's hard for them to be served safely."

Aside from getting to a designated seat and what there is to eat at a WKU football game, the cleanliness of the venue is high in regard. Gov. Andy Beshear and his office had to work in conjunction with WKU to settle on a capacity limit and the protocols in place.

"We have a 1-to-1 ratio of custodians for every restroom; those will be fully sanitized every 30 minutes," Assistant



ALLIE HENDRICKS

Athletic Director of Facilities Les Forsythe said. "We also have staff dedicated to wiping down the high touchpoints like door handles, railings, those type of things every 30 minutes."

According to Biggs, WKU worked in conjunction with counterparts such as the University of Louisville and the University of Kentucky. The respective schools have larger stadiums, but in comparison the plans are mirrored across the board with all three schools.

Altogether WKU and the ticketing staff had to have about 1,500 to 2,000 season ticket holders sit out and transition their credit to next season.

"Being a less than 5,000 facility now, it was going to be extremely hard to get any amount of students and all 7,700 season ticket holders that we had last season," Morrison stated.

With the reduced crowd, there are also new updates regarding the pre-game activities.

According to Morrison, the parking

lots and tailgating lots remain the same and so do the spots for vehicles. Tailgating activities are discouraged throughout the state of Kentucky. WKU will not have tents available for rent, and grills are prohibited as well.

"Folks by all means if they want to have some catered food or bring in food and hang out in the parking lot, by all means, that is ok," Morrison added. "We are just trying to limit those people to 10 or less."

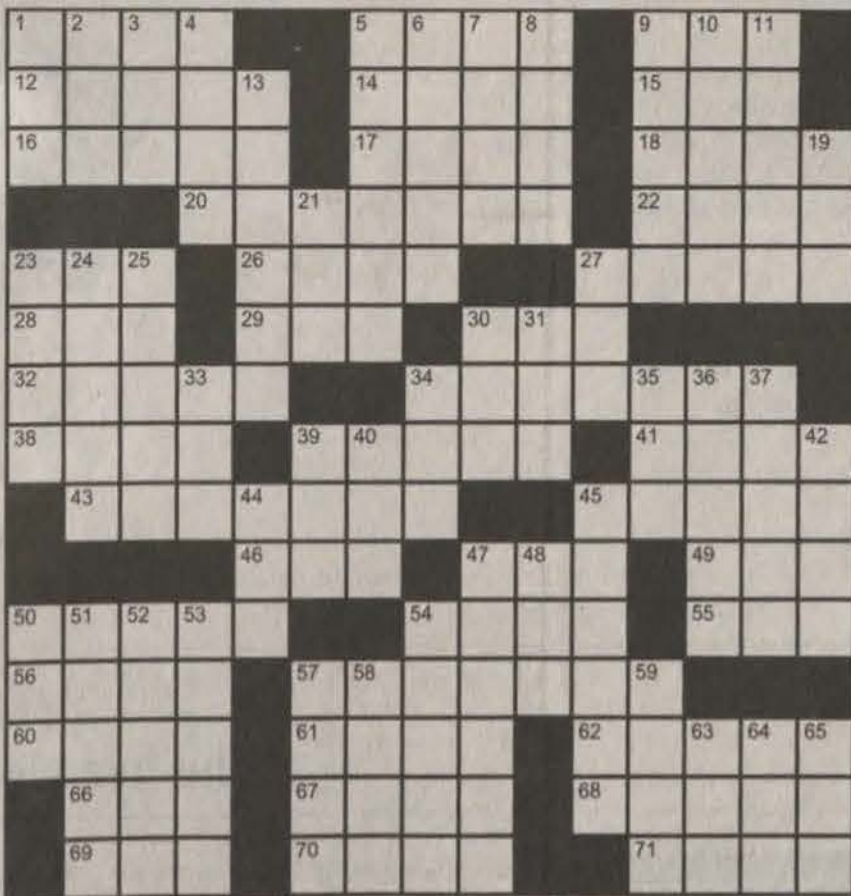
"We spent a lot of time this summer working together that we felt like the Governor's office would support," Biggs said. "We just hope that our fans and students understand that we don't really want to do the restrictions any more than they want to have to do them themselves, but we hope they understand that when they come in the facility."

Sports Editor Nick Kieser can be reached at nick.kieser036@topper.wku.edu. Follow Nick on Twitter at @KieserNick.

FUN

Across

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- 16 Trunk
- 17 Yen
- 18 Field of work
- 20 Cop
- 22 Piqued state
- 23 Faint
- 26 Dash gauge
- 27 It's waiting to get out
- 28 Laudatory lines
- 29 Artist's asset
- 30 Milk supplier
- 32 Parachute material
- 34 Safe at the motel
- 38 Murdered
- 39 It may be perfect
- 41 Impecuniosity
- 43 Permissive
- 45 Large edible ray
- 46 Young fellow
- 47 Energy
- 49 Kind of tax
- 50 Baffled
- 54 Hamster's home
- 55 Guinness Book suffix
- 56 Night prowler
- 57 Cell phone accessory
- 60 Priests' vestments
- 62 Take it easy
- 66 Loser at Antietam
- 67 Hawaiian strings
- 68 Busy places



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- 69 Trauma ctrs.
- 70 Go well together
- 71 Spring
- 19 Airport posting, in brief
- 21 Wray of "King Kong"
- 23 Gets into
- 24 Tennyson poem
- 25 Free-for-all
- 27 Game pieces
- 30 Germany's Dortmund- Canal
- 31 Lilliputian
- 33 Possess
- 34 Aardvark's tidbit
- 35 Squid's squirt
- 36 Needle
- 37 Legendary creatures of the Himalayas
- 39 Darjeeling, e.g.
- 40 Football lineman
- 42 Bad impression?
- 44 Variety
- 45 Lecture
- 47 Louisiana "county"
- 48 Bird-to-be
- 50 Jacuzzi
- 51 Gown fabric
- 52 Crayola color
- 53 Beer buys
- 54 Eating places
- 57 Fish bait
- 58 Scouting outing
- 59 Agitate
- 63 Bygone greeting
- 64 Yellow, for one
- 65 Sugar amt.

Down

- 1 Make a scene?
- 2 Journalist's question
- 3 Corn serving
- 4 Nothing special
- 5 Floodgate
- 6 Dry out
- 7 Head start
- 8 Big game
- 9 Model material
- 10 Cupcake topper
- 11 Casual attire
- 13 Mellow

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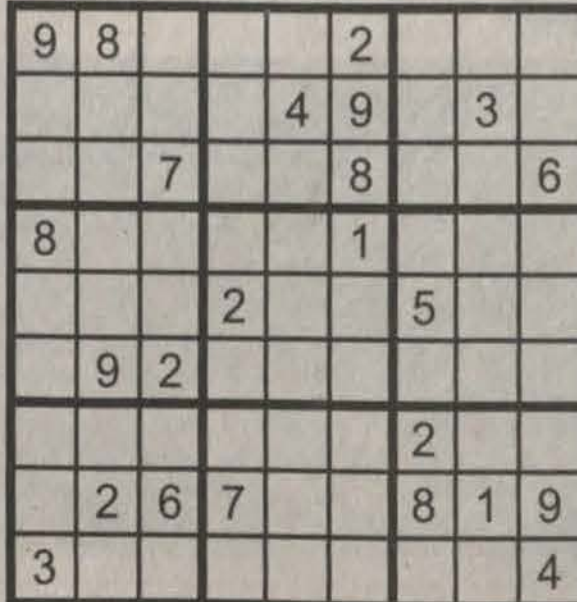
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To solve the Sudoku puzzle, each row, column and box must contain the numbers 1 to 9.



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Last week's crossword solution:



DOUBLE DOWN

Hilltoppers suffer back-to-back defeats in season opening

By Matthew Hargrove
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Opening day for the Hilltoppers (0-2) in Houchens-Smith Stadium did not go according to plan, as Liberty University (1-0) held on to defeat WKU by a final score of 30-24.

WKU will have a bye week before its next game at Middle Tennessee State University (0-2) on Oct. 3 with kickoff at 4 p.m. The 100 miles of hate rivalry is renewed amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Blue Raiders will have a road matchup at the University of Texas-San Antonio Sept. 25 at 7 p.m. while WKU recuperates. The cross state matchup is MTSU's homecoming game as well.

WKU has a 33-36 record all time against MTSU and has a 12-18 record in Murfreesboro, Tennessee. Last season the Hilltoppers pulled away with a 31-26 win over the Blue Raiders. MTSU led 13-10 at the half in 2019, but red-shirt senior Gaej Walker scored the final touchdown sealing the win.

The all-time record against the Flames is now three consecutive losses in a row dating back to Nov. 18, 1995. Head Coach Hugh Freeze in his second year at the helm of the Flames won the first game of the season and ninth overall with the program.

WKU graduate quarterback Tyrrell Pigrome did everything he could to give the Hilltoppers a chance, throwing for 193 yards and three touchdowns. The University of Maryland transfer also added a total of 62 rushing yards to his credit.

"I thought he did a good job of taking care of the ball again," said Head Coach Tyson Helton when talking about his quarterback. "He did a nice job of running the football."

Though the Hilltoppers had solid play from Pigrome, he was out-worked by Liberty's quarterback, redshirt junior Malik Willis. The Auburn University transfer had a career day that saw the dual-threat signal caller collect three rushing touchdowns with 168 rushing yards and 133 passing yards.

Right out of the gate Liberty took control having a 17-3 lead at the halfway point of the second quarter.

This woke up the WKU offense, as the program responded with a 6-yard touchdown pass from Pigrome to junior wide receiver Mitchell Tinsley to bring it back to a one possession game.

Tinsley would go on to lead the Hill-

toppers in receptions (6) and receiving yards (64) for the game.

That momentum swing just before the half helped WKU rise to the occasion again in the third quarter, when Pigrome found redshirt freshman tight end Dalvin Smith for his first collegiate touchdown.

Just when everything looked to be back on track for the Hilltoppers, the dual threat instincts in Willis sparked a quick touchdown late in the third quarter.

A 51-yard run by Willis and a 29-yard run to the end zone by sophomore running back Shedro Louis put the Flames in front 24-17.

"I feel like we could have fit up the run a little bit better obviously, so that's something we'll correct during this bye week and heading into the [MTSU] game," senior safety Devon Key said.

It looked like all hope was lost for WKU in the fourth after Malik Willis scored again with his legs to increase the deficit to 13, but Pigrome wasn't finished yet.

On a nine play drive, the Hilltoppers drove 87-yards down the field that ended in another Pigrome touchdown pass to junior wide receiver Craig Burt Jr. for 26-yards with 3:41 remaining in the game.

The WKU defense couldn't give the ball back to Pigrome and company though, resulting in back-to-back losses for the Hilltoppers.

WKU now enters the bye week, and Smith has an idea of what needs to be addressed the most during this off time.

"I feel like we can make the most improvement in probably like the passing game," Smith said. "Just trying to just get the ball out quick. Just get athletes in open space."

Football beat reporter Matthew Hargrove can be reached at matthew.hargrove426@topper.wku.edu. Follow him on Twitter @MatthewHargrov1



JAMIE RHODES

Sep 12, 2020: Louisville, Kentucky, USA: Western Kentucky quarterback Tyrrell Pigrome (1) scrambles outside the pocket at Cardinal Stadium.

COLUMN



By Kaden Gaylord
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BRITTNEY FISHER

Western Kentucky University Wide Receiver Jahcour Pearson (7) avoids a tackle during WKU's home opener against Liberty on September 19, 2020. WKU lost to Liberty 30-24.

After losing their first two games of the season, this bye week couldn't come at a better time for the Hilltoppers.

In their first two matchups of the season, the WKU defense has gone up against two mobile quarterbacks in Micale Cunningham from the University of Louisville and Malik Willis out of Liberty University.

WKU has put up poor performances in each outing. The Hilltoppers defense has given up 498 rushing yards, an average of 249 per game, with most of it coming from

Liberty who had 354 yards on the ground.

It makes it look even worse when WKU only has 217 rushing yards total on the season. That is half of their opponents average per game.

Let's not forget about the secondary who has been the question mark of the defense for the past few seasons. They weren't as bad against Liberty like they were against Louisville, but for half of the game, the Flames' receivers were getting whatever they wanted and were being more physical.

Views from the bottom of The Hill The bye week is a blessing

The secondary gave up 343 yards in the air against the Cardinals while improving in the next game, holding Liberty to 133 passing yards but have only forced one turnover on the year against Louisville.

This defense, especially the front seven, is supposed to be the strong point of the team, coming off the successful year they had last year.

The two opponents have been able to get first downs on third down plays 47% of the time and have given up first downs on fourth down plays four out of the seven attempts.

None of that can excuse how the offense has been underperforming thus far. Coming into the season the WKU offensive line was ranked No. 20 in the nation by Pro Football Focus, and they haven't played up to par.

Defenses are getting into the backfield with ease, which is partly why WKU's run game hasn't developed. We've seen what senior running back Gaej Walker can do with the ball, but with no push up front, he hasn't been able to generate the offense that has become expected of him.

Whenever Tyrrell Pigrome has time in the pocket, he looks comfortable and is able to make most of the throws he's being asked to make. Sometimes he is inaccurate, but that's just what comes with being a quarterback.

We saw what he can do when he has time. He threw for three touchdowns against Liberty. They were all balls that only the receiver could catch, giving the defensive back no chance. But until the running game opens up the field more, it's going to be difficult for the offense to flow.

Now I know it's only week two, and with everything that is going on in the world all this analysis might be a little too much.

WKU started last year going (1-2) before the bye week. It's not full on panic mode or anything close to it, but there needs to be major improvements on both sides of the ball if they hope to have a successful season for the second year in a row.

After the bye, WKU goes straight into a head banger against rival Middle Tennessee State University. It finished (4-8), (3-5, C-USA) last year and is off to a (0-2) start, but rivalry games are always competitive.

How the Hilltoppers come out of the break is how the tone for the rest of the season will be set, and depending on how it goes, we could be having one of two conversations that are on opposite ends of the spectrum.

Men's basketball beat reporter and sports columnist Kaden Gaylord can be reached at kaden.gaylord559@topper.wku.edu. Fol-