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This Other is brought to you for free and open access by TopSCHOLAR®. It has been accepted for inclusion in WKU Archives Records by an authorized administrator of TopSCHOLAR®. For more information, please contact topscholar@wku.edu.
STAND UP AND CHEER and cheer and cheer. Eck Branham has been cheering Western athletics since he graduated in 1938. While he was a student here he lettered in baseball, football and basketball. Find out what keeps this longtime fan cheering.

SUPERHEROES aren't afraid of death — and neither was Ron Estes, who draws "Shadow Wolf" for Asylum Komix. Open-heart surgery, not kryptonite, threatened his life, but Estes met the challenge and returned to Western.

EVERYONE LIKES TO LAUGH—at silly yearbook pictures of flat-topped students from Western's past. But those students didn't think they were silly then. Find out what was what in each of Western's eight decades in the Herald Magazine time line.

AFTER WORKING with fast cars for about 10 years, you'd think Terry Lindsey would go farther than a quarter-mile at a time. A mechanic during the week and racer on the weekend, he puts more than time and money into his 1967 Chevrolet.

JUST HOW TALL is Pearce-Ford Tower? What's Big Red's birthday? There's a lot of trivia in Western's 80 years — pursue some interesting tidbits in the Herald Magazine's quiz on Hilltop arcana.

ON THE COVER:

1 — Dr. Henry Hardin Cherry, Western's first president. 2 — Big Red mascot. 3 — Terry Lindsey, drag racer. 4 — Eck Branham, the Hilltoppers' biggest fan. 5 — Ron Estes, an open-heart surgery patient. 6 — Dr. Kern Alexander, Western's seventh president.

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Cooperative Education Center Potter Hall, Rm 214 (502) 745-3095
Red-topped fence posts lead up the drive to a Western-red Cadillac and pickup behind a red garage door. A white-haired man wearing a red shirt and cap sits on the porch framed with red geraniums.

This is no ordinary Western fan.

Stepping through the door of Eck Branham's home just outside Bowling Green, visitors are welcomed by a Big Red mat. The 72-year-old cattle farmer even claims to raise red cows, polled Herefords.

"I don't care what color it is," Eck says, "as long as it's red."

A 1958 graduate of Western, Eck lettered in baseball, basketball and football. Demonstrating his love of Western and sports, the retired coach has become one of the Hilltoppers' biggest fans.

The vibrant 5-foot-10 man doesn't just follow the football team. He goes to practices. He goes to games. He knows players' names, years, hometowns and even some of their parents.

"Those football players — they think a lot of me. They all know me, and I know them."

Eck Branham

"Those football players — they think a lot of me," Eck says. "They all know me, and I know them.

The evening before Western played its biggest rival — Eastern Kentucky University — Eck went to speak to the team at a meeting in the locker room.

"They'll know tonight how much I love them," he said before the pep talk.

The clanging of the lockers had settled, and the football players had gathered for the Friday-night meeting. The usually soft-spoken Eck took on a coach's stance — feet planted firmly apart and hands on hips. His voice was strained and rough.

"They may look the same, but they sure as hell ain't the same," he said of the Eastern Colonels. "You've got something they can't have. You've got the spirit of Western."

The players sat still. Eyes were glued to the man in front of them.

"Tomorrow's the time for us to play beyond our potential... Dammit, it's fun when you're really playing your best."

"I feel that we're going to win it."

Eck's enthusiasm rubs off on the players.

"We can tell how bad he wants it," free safety Billy Haynes said. "It's like he wants to go out and play."

Wide receiver Keith Paskett agreed. "He gets more excited than some of the players do."

Continued on Page 4
Game master

Continued from Page 3

sometimes.

Eck is always there. Haynes said, whether the team wins or loses. "There’s a lot of people that flow you when you’re a winner," Haynes said, but when a team loses, fans disappear.

"He’s always in good spirits and really supports us."

Eck arrives for home games at about 10 a.m. to hand out complimentary tickets to special Western guests. His wife, Hazel, 82, waits in the car or the stands. By kick-off time, both are usually in their reserved seats up from the 50-yard line and near the president’s box.

Surrounded by the Eastern game by coaches’ families and players of the past, the couple seems right at home.

"That’s a way to go Pat (McKenzie)!

"Penny, you’re not hollering loud enough," Eck says to Coach Dave Roberts’ wife. Later when the Hilltoppers hold Eastern from getting a fourth down on Western’s 14-yard line, Mrs. Roberts makes her way down the row to give Eck a kiss.

After the 24-10 victory, Eck goes to the locker room to congratulate the players. As they file out, he has them shake Hazel’s hand.

"We need to keep you around for a while," one of the players tells him. "You just keep hanging around."

After graduating from Western with a degree in physical education, Eck coached football, basketball and baseball at high schools across the state. He moved back to Bowling Green in 1957 and coached freshman football and baseball in the 60s.

Since moving back to Bowling Green, Eck has hardly missed a Western game — home or away.

He and his wife have followed Hilltopper teams to such places as New Orleans, Miami and Orlando, Fla. "We’ve traveled more miles than anyone else, I’m sure, to see Western play over that many years," Eck says.

A member of the Hilltopper Athletic Foundation and the Alumni W Club, Eck said he’s had enough of the responsibility that goes along with coaching. He can discipline the bulls on his cattle farm any way he wants, he says, and he doesn’t have to worry about any parents calling.

"I’m a fan because I love the game." Eck says.

When I was going to school, Homecoming was the greatest thing that happened... It meant something to us. Not just the athletes, the students, too. I don’t believe it means as much to them (today’s students) as it did then.

"Eck Branham"
Running back Don Smith celebrates with Eck in the locker room after the 24-10 victory over Hilltopper rival Eastern Kentucky University.

"Sports have been my life since I was in grade school."

Football wasn't as fast a game when Eck played for Western Kentucky State Teachers College. The players are faster and bigger now, Eck said. They work at the sport year round.

The equipment is different. "You didn't have to play with a helmet on," he said. "We had just a piece of leather over our heads with ear flaps."

But some things have stayed the same. "It's still black and tackle."

The spirit has also changed. "When I was going to school, Homecoming was the greatest thing that happened. . . . It meant something to us. Not just the athletes — the students too." Eck said. "I don't believe it means as much to them (today's students) as it did then."

Inside his home, Eck displays the hundreds of mementos he's gathered from decades of playing, coaching and following sports.

Pictures of games and moments in Eck's sports history decorate the den walls. "I got a picture of just about every team I coached," Eck says.

Red towels rest on the back of the couch. More pictures, Western yearbooks and glasses and a megaphone line the shelves. On a table sits a photo of a handsome couple at Homecoming, the woman dressed in Western red and the man dressed in a dark suit with a red tie. The same couple lounges in two chairs facing a television.

Eck's wife is often by his side. They talk sports and watch sports. "Is there anything else?" Eck says.

Hazel grew up near Cincinnati and became a Reds fan. The short, white-haired woman laughs often with her husband and shares his enthusiasm for sports. "That's conversation" in the Brantham house, she says.

"We're the No. 1 and No. 2 fans," Eck says. "She's one and I'm two."

Where did they meet? Where else but at a football game.

"She says there's only three seasons of the year — football, basketball and baseball."

Continued on Page 6
Eck is the first to stand and the last to sit down when he cheers at games.

**Game master**

Eck is a unique fan because he supports so many Western sports, said Athletic Director Jimmy Feix. While the university has many good fans, Feix said, no other fan supports so many teams. Eck goes to men's basketball football and baseball games.

"He just sort of adopted the players in the school," Feix said.

Besides attending games, Eck welcomes recruits and is ready to help out in any way he can, Feix said. "He leaves the impression that he just loves the school" and what it did for him.

Eck shows the players that he is interested in them as people, Feix said. "He's just a friend of theirs in good times and bad."

The players appreciate Eck's support, Roberts said. Eck comes to practice almost every day, he said, and encourages players and echoes community support.

"They know where his heart's at," Roberts said. "He wants Western and all sports to do really good."

And the coaches seem to appreciate Eck, too. "Eck Branham represents everything that Western Kentucky (University) is," said Ron Reardon, defensive line coach.

"They say the spirit is the finest," he said. "Eck Branham is the master because he represents the spirit of Western Kentucky."

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After congratulating the team, the Branhams are among the last to leave.
Both Ron Estes and his cartoon creation, Shadow Wolf, have faced death and won. Estes survived open heart surgery when he was 18 years old.

Ron Estes says he's not "Shadow Wolf" - the superhero he created two years ago and draws for Asylum Comics.

"My mom is dead, mine isn't," the Greensboro junior said. "His dad is and mine isn't. He wears tight; I don't. His sister's trying to seduce him, mine's not. And I don't want her to.

But like a superhero, Estes has faced death and felt no fear, though he says his lack of fear was because of stupid, not bravery. And he wasn't battling an evil being that threatened the world - it was a failing heart valve that endangered his life.

"I never feared I was going to die, even when they told me I might. Maybe I figured it couldn't happen to me. Of course, I didn't think I would have surgery either."

"It just didn't even bother me," he said. "I was only worried about the Dolphins football game."

When he was 3 years old, Estes was diagnosed as having a heart murmur. But no one told him he might have a stroke while he was growing up.

"I guess everyone just hoped it would go away," he said, shrugging.

Periodic tests and treatments sometimes hurt his dignity more than his body.

Estes was 10 years old when he had his first catheterization, a painful procedure in which a tube is inserted through a vein to take photos of the heart.

"That was before they did them in your arm. Then they did it right here," he said pointing to his inner thigh, "which is really close to home. When you're 10, that's not so bad, but when you're 18, it's pretty embarrassing."

He enrolled at Western in fall 1981 as an art major, but dropped out after two semesters to work for a year at a fast food restaurant in Oxfordshire. It was then that he experienced the first of three strokes, though he didn't know what they were.

"They were really, really slight strokes," he said. "They were like little, continual things, like they'd shut my speech off and I couldn't work my left hand without a lot of concentration. Then they'd go away."

But after the third one, Estes said his mother decided to take him to the Davie County Hospital.

"Mrs. Estes tells me that I'm still in love with the memory of her son," he said. "I guess that would be better."

"He was just a whole different person," she said. "His eyes were dilated and his personality changed. The doctors even asked him if he was on drugs."

He stayed in the hospital 53 days and was diagnosed as having a bacterial infection in his heart.

"Your aorta valve has three pieces of flesh, but I only have two and they're deteriorating," he said, matter-of-factly. "They told me that it was a good thing I came in when I did because I probably would have died otherwise."

But Estes thought that was the least of his problems.

"I had two tickets to see Van Halen and the doctor told me I couldn't go, so I had to sell them at a very small profit."

"I luckily, the 1984 Summer Olympics were on, so I was pretty much content just watching TV."

"I didn't draw as much as I thought I would," he said. "Besides watching TV and eating, I spent the time learning to tile."

"I never worried about his left side becoming permanently paralyzed," Estes said. "I draw with my right hand, so I really wasn't worried about it," he said. "If that went, too, I thought I could draw like that dumb girl, with my teeth. Just as long as I could make money, have a big screen TV, a VCR..."

"I guess that would have been enough.""

His mother said she faced her son's illness more emotionally.

"If you look at me, I'm dizzy," she said. "If you talk to me, I thought you were picking on me."

"He went through all these hard times real gracefully," she said.

After a short break from the Davie County Hospital, Estes was transferred to Humana.

Story by Jayne Cravens Photos by Scott Bryant

Continued on Page 10
In downtown Bowling Green in 1906, Henry Hardin Cherry was rendering his own unique contributions to the Western Normal School to benefit Normal. About 50 miles south of the road in Franklin, state legislature was pre-
paring to pass a bill that would turn it into a state teachers’ school. 

The Cherry was elected president of the West-
ern Kentucky State Normal School, and, along with about 25 teachers, began striving to attract students with a new way to pursue teaching—
challenging, scholarship, and instruction and instruction and

About 1,000 students were enrolled, and the state and the 1910 Legislature for those of them.

- The Those were the days.

Western grew quickly, and a few years later added more music, drama, and other courses.

Bowling Green for the suitable home and the house where the school

In 1906, Western moved after the devastating fire, a student
told the School of Regents. "To build a better school, we have to

Students had to go to the campus across the nation. Western built up its reputation as a
dable place, a place that tried

And only a few months into its current

In 1955, the U.S. Supreme Court recog-

informed the 18th century as it was organized
government was the first to adopt the
top the hill should be memorialized in honor of Cherry. The building was almost

The Board of Regents had "an immediate and

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The Board of Regents had "an immediate and

The Board of Regents had "an immediate and

On Oct. 3, 1906, Cherry’s
d and was present in the

And at another announcement that

A second death also marked the period. In

western students were exposed to the most

"Well, we had our share of those
times when they placed the Grandpa’s

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It's kind of like when you were a kid and you wanted to be able to do all the things Superman could do, and you tied bath towels around your neck and ran around.

Ron Estes
I never feared I was going to die, even when they told me I might. Maybe I figured it couldn't happen to me. Of course, I didn't think I would have surgery, either.

Ron Estes
Eight years ago, Terry Lindsey spent $100 on a car that was "ready for the junkyard." Today, the 1967 Chevrolet Camaro is worth about $17,000.

But Lindsey doesn’t drive the sleek, maroon machine to impress his friends or to pick up a loaf of bread at Kroger. He drives to win.

Lindsey is a drag racer, and this year his Camaro carried him to the super-pro division championship at Beech Bend Raceway Park.

"It’s at the stage now I envisioned it in 1978," Lindsey said, waiting near the scorer’s tower at Beech Bend before the day’s first race. "It’s come a long way.

The Camaro’s simple paint job makes the car stand out among flashily painted super-pro cars that display auto-part stickers on every side.

The only reason Lindsey had the scarlet and gray design painted on each door was to cover damage to the paint job.

That’s typical of the 28-year-old graduate of Bowling Green High School. He’s handsome and intelligent, but not flashy. He’s friendly, but not talkative.

Lindsey owns and operates Lindsey Automotive on Indiana Street. He worked at the Force-Wallace Ford service department for 10 years and at Gary Force Toyota as a service manager for a year before opening his garage in April 1985.

Drag racing is a sport for mechanics — men and women who have to tinker with the car before it runs perfectly — and for lovers of competition and speed.

"Most of the people in town," Lindsey said, "they think it’s a bunch of rednecks out here." Dallas Jones, owner and manager of the drag strip, said most of the pedal-stompers are “spending their money on something they want to do in their spare time.”

For many of the Beech Bend regulars, that may mean driving their mom’s red Mercury Cougar with the “Baby On Board” sign in the street class. Others, like Lindsey, put hours of work and thousands of dollars into almost totally rebuilt...
Lindsey is all smiles after winning the super pro season championship earlier this month at Beech Bend Raceway Park.

cars that might win them $10,000 some day.

"It gives me something to put my money into instead of just blowing it on something," he said. "All I really do like it. I'll keep doing it as long as I can afford it.

"It keeps me from getting into trouble, really."

Drag racing isn't as simple as most people think, the drivers say. Just crossing the finish line first doesn't make you the winner.

Elapsed-time racing is a combination of strategy and consistency from car and driver. "Most races are won at the starting line," Lindsey said.

"You just about gotta cut a 5.20 or a 5.30 light—or be awful lucky," he said, smiling under his bushy moustache.

"Cutting a good light" means taking off as soon as the green light flashes on the Christmas tree...500, or half a second, is the quickest possible time for a legal start between the last yellow light and the green.

Just after the last of three yellow glow, Lindsey lets his left foot, popping the clutch and

Most of the people in town, they think it's a bunch of rednecks out here.

TERRY LINDSEY

floorboarding the 355-cubic-inch engine to dart across the starting line just as the green lights up.

His $6,500 Lenco transmission lets him go through four gears without using the clutch — he just pulls the metal levers back each time the tachometer reads 7,500 rotations per minute.

Elapsed-time racing handicaps the cars so the automobiles are on equal terms — and driving experience and skill become much more important than a fast car."

"My only strategy is with myself," Lindsey explained before racing Sunday.

But, Jones said, luck can never be underestimated in drag racing either.

"Drag racing has a lot of luck in it," he said. "I'd rather have the luck on my side than the skill.

"There's other racers as good as Terry Lindsey (at Beech Bend). He just happens to be this season's points champion. One day it's yours, another day it's the other guy."

Lindsey agrees. "I think there's a race god up there that determines how many rounds you're gonna win no matter who you're against."

And then, he said, "there are days when you're on, when you can't be beat."

Lindsey stoops to check the air pressure in the rear slick, or tire, on the driver's side. This becomes his prerace ritual.

He moves to the other side of the Camaro to be sure the gauge reads 7.5 pounds per square inch on the 14-inch wide, 32-inch high tire. The tires cost $650 a pair.

"Super-pro drivers, saddle up — super-pro drivers, saddle up," calls a vibrant female voice over the public-address system.

Lindsey puts the pressure gauge behind the driver's seat. He puts a red-striped racing jacket over his white T-shirt before climbing over the roll cage that is cushioned with tape-covered foam rubber.

He gets comfortable in the black leather seat and straps on heavy-duty seat belts.

He hooks a safety net in the driver's window and eases the helmet over his head. He has never wrecked his car, but the safety belt and helmet are required safety equipment for the super-pro division.

The $5,000 engine rumbles boisterously at idle as the car primes for speeds more than 100 mph. Around the track, the roar makes talking at ear level a necessity.

A track worker waves Lindsey up to the burnout area, where drivers spin their rear wheels, heating them and cleaning off dirt and rocks so the tires will get the best traction.

The roar of Lindsey's engine continues for five or six seconds. Then he pulls to the start line, practicing his start by roaring the engine and quickly releasing the clutch.

After the staging lights signal that both cars are ready, the drama for the two drivers begins.

Yellow — Yellow.

Green. The thunder of two engines and screeching of four slicks greet the green light.

The red light — the lowest on the tree — stays dark, signaling a fair start by both drivers.

Lindsey's Camaro lurches forward, the front wheels reaching a foot off the asphalt for a moment as smoke rises. The car tips down the dragstrip in just over 10 seconds for the quarter-mile.

He loses this battle, but he is philosophical after

Continued on Page 14

Deemer's Greenhouses and Florist has Western Ky. University MUMS for the Homecoming game! Saturday, Nov. 1

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Bowling Green, KY

Please present coupon at time of purchase

Western's Football Homecoming is November 1, 1986

20% OFF
THE MAIN DRAG

Continued from Page 13

"That's why they call it a drag."

Frames of high-octane fuels and charred rubber hang over the park on summer weekends.

Engines firing and backfiring blend with the screaming of the huge, racing slicks. The once-

while concorde at the beginning of the two-mile

strip is stuck with rubber.

Not many cars come just to watch the races at

Beech Bend. Most help their favorite driver, often

a relative or close friend.

Everybody brings the whole family and everybody's a part of it.

TERRY LINDSEY

Everybody brings the whole family," Lindsey said, "and everybody's a part of it.

Wives of racers can be seen doing needlepoint in the pit area, children horse around the pits on

three wheelers, but all help out when Dad gets back from his run down the strip.

Bruce Fowler, Lindsey's longtime friend, and his brother Scott Fowler help Lindsey on race
days. Bruce makes sure the water tanks are full after each victory, to cool down the car's engine to

100 degrees.

Lindsey's girlfriend of eight years, Cara-Leta

Alan, provides moral support at the track. She

doesn't mind that Lindsey spends so much time

racing.

But, "as for the danger. I don't like that," she

said. "I don't think about it."

She can even deal with the dirty fingernails.
"As long as I don't touch her with 'em," Lindsey

said, joking.

Lindsey said he gets tired of working on cars

"all the time."

"But that's what I know how to do best," he

reasoned. "If you've got a good trade, you can't

really give it up.

If he's ever near retiring from racing, a win

seems to come up that keeps him hungry. Ten

years of racing, from working on his neighbor's

race car as a teen-ager until now, would be hard

to turn his back on, he said.

"I won the first time I ever raced out here. I guess

that got me hooked."

TERRY LINDSEY

The neighbor, Joe L. Rigdon, got Lindsey

interested in the drag racing at Beech Bend. And

Lindsey's own first racing weekend settled his

plans for racing.

"I won the first time I ever raced out here," he

said. "I guess that got me hooked."

Now, he doubts he could ever quit, unless he

never saw a car again.

I'd have to walk away and never go back to a

drag strip," he said. "It's a disease, I guess. No

money—that's the only cure for drag racing.

Welcome Back Alumni to Homecoming '86

Get your WKU souvenirs at the College Heights Bookstore.

Choose from:

T-shirts Sweatshirts Jackets

(adult and children's sizes)

and many other WKU souvenirs, even your class ring.

Come by and pick up your souvenir mail order form.

Open 9:00 a.m.
Until 4:30 p.m. on Saturday

College Heights Bookstore
Lindsey's car leaps off the starting line on his way to a top speed of more than 100 mph on the ½-mile strip. The wheelie bars in the rear of the car keep it steady.

After Saturday's Homecoming Game

Bring your guest(s) and attend the opening of

The Ivan Wilson Exhibit
"The Ways of A Watercolorist"

at The Kentucky Museum
in The Kentucky Building
(a short walk from the Stadium)

Reception, Gallery L  3:30-5:30 p.m.

Present this ad at The Museum Store for a 10% discount on Ivan Wilson prints
Are you well-Red?

For the past eight decades, students have come to Western to learn. At least that's what they tell us. There's no doubt that Western graduates have stored away bits of information on everything from Aristotle to zeniths in their quests for knowledge — and diplomas. But what do they remember about their alma mater? We're about to find out. Listed below are 15 trivia questions on Western people, places and things. Some of the answers are easy, others are downright tough. If nothing else, they'll be good conversation starters at Homecoming parties.

Good luck. May the spirit be with you.

1. The Red Towel is a symbol of Western spirit. Who spawned its association with the university and when?

2. Western has had seven presidents since it began. Name them in chronological order.

3. Bowling Green Towers now serves as housing for the elderly. But when it was built in 1967, the owners had another use in mind. What was it?

4. What was Western's first basketball arena and what did it look like?

5. The colonnade is almost all that remains from the old football stadium. When it was built, the field boasted a national collegiate first. What was it?

6. In 1970, graduate student Kenneth Ray Lee was arrested at the university center. What was he arrested for?

7. How tall is Pearce-Ford Tower, Western's largest dorm?

8. "Stand Up and Cheer" is the Western fight song heard at most Topper games. But the official school song was written by a student in 1930. Name the song and the student.

9. President Kern Alexander is a Kentucky native born in 1939. Where was he born?

10. Western's biggest football victory was a 73-0 stomping of Bethel in 1924. Nine years before that, the team suffered one of its biggest defeats at the hands of a Kentucky high school. Name the school.

11. For more than 40 years, a hilltop structure towered over Western. What was it?

12. Last year Western lost to the University of Kentucky in the NCAA basketball tournament. How many times have the schools met on the hardwood?

13. Western, in some form or another, has had seven different names. Can you name them all?

14. Big Red, Western's furry and lovable mascot, frolics along the sidelines at Western football and basketball games. But he hasn't always. When was Big Red born?

15. Quick, no peeking — what are the mottos on Western's seal?