Bevin signs legislation to restore felons’ voting rights

BY DUSTIN SKIPWORTH
HERALDNEWS@WKU.EDU

Gov. Matt Bevin signed a bill into law on April 13 that will make it easier for felons in Kentucky to have their records expunged and restore their full rights as citizens.

Kentucky House Bill 40 will allow felons the opportunity to submit for expungement five years after probation for the end of their sentence, whichever is the longest.

“Do an honor and privilege to be able to sign House Bill 40 into law,” Bevin said at the signing. “It is critical that there is an opportunity for redemption and second chances because America is a land that was founded on these principles. The greatness, uniqueness, beauty and extraordinary nature of America is based on the fact that we do give people an opportunity for redemption.”

The law allows those with non-violent felony convictions to apply to have their records cleared completely and to meet guidelines for a set period to have their voting rights restored for redemption.”

That executive order differs from the one signed last year. That executive order to allow released felons to vote shortly before he left office was overturned by the Kentucky Supreme Court.

Gov. Beshear, a Democrat, struck down an executive order to make it easier for felons to have their records expunged and have their voting rights restored.

The requirements include the five year gap between the felon’s sentence and application, and the records cleared completely and to meet the requirement for expungement.

Legislators pass state budget at last moment

THE ‘HERALD’ — WKU professor studies songbirds and sleep patterns

BY EMMA COLLINS
HERALDNEWS@WKU.EDU

An assistant professor in WKU’s biology department has received a grant to study the sleep patterns of songbirds and investigate whether his findings can be used for human medical treatments.

Noah Ashley has been awarded a National Science Foundation research grant to study the sleep patterns of Arctic songbirds in Barrow, Alaska.

The research will consist of studying two species of Arctic breeding songbirds, snow buntings and Lapland longspurs.

Legislators pass state budget at last moment

A fast-moving budget bill that passed the House and Senate late Friday will help the University of Kentucky avoid projected budget cuts.

Gov. Matt Bevin and the Republican Senate believed sharp budget cuts were necessary to cover the shortfall while the Democratic House remained adamantly that the recommended budget cuts were too drastic.

Speaker of the House Greg Stumbo said during a press conference that he believed both parties would be happy with the outcome.

“It is an adequate and effective blend; I believe, of the priorities contained in both the governor’s recommendation, the House budget and the Senate budget,” Stumbo said.

Under the new budget, $3.28 billion will be placed in the pension fund. In addition to adding money to the pension system, the budget will place $375 million in reserve fund, and $125 million will be placed in a permanent fund.

Senate President Robert Stivers said he approved of how the budget turned out.

“We have a strong contribution to the pension systems, a healthy budget for the university, and overall funding that meets the needs of Kentucky,” he said.

One ticket. Ten kiosks.

Find the newspaper with the red envelope in one of the ten kiosks around campus and win a $25 gift card to STAKZ.
University Senate officers reappointed, committees read reports

by MONICA KAST

The University Senate met on Thursday to elect senate officers for 2016-2017 and hear reports from the senate committees.

Barbara Burch and Provost David Lee gave a report on the latest Board of Regents committee meetings, where a number of the pathways program and faculty contracts were discussed.

"There’s value in having a program," Burch said during her report.

The University Senate officers for 2016-2017 were dismissed, and the 2016-2017 senate: Kate Hudecek, FELONY RECORDS

"We want to understand the mechanics of how the birds are able to see, and if the findings can be applied to humans for therapy and drug development that we’ve never thought of."

For more information, please visit the Health Services website at www.graves.gwku.com/healthservices

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We need to be the best Western Kentucky University we can be, and we will only do that if we have the buy-in of the people who make it happen every day.

Associate professor Pati Minter

"We're here today primarily to listen and to recognize that the faculty and the students, and the administration, are an important stakeholder and group that we have to work with," said Chuck Stinnett. "We want to find out what you think our goals should be. We have some challenges — strength, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats."

The search committee then opened the floor to feedback from faculty members. Associate professor of philosophy and religion, said she had loved since high school," Donna Stinnett said.

Other faculty members, including associate sociology professor Jerry Daddy, said they would like the next president to have an academic background. Several other faculty members echoed her concerns throughout the forum.

Professor of history, said she thought they rank among the journalists we have loved since high school," Donna Stinnett said.

The Presidential Search Committee held a second faculty forum on April 27 at 4 p.m. in Snell Hall to gather additional feedback.
Meditation could help your stress

BY MOLLIE MOORE HERALD.OPINION@WKU.EDU

This might make me sound like a crazy hippy, but I think my all-time favorite self-care tool is meditation through meditation. Practicing mindfulness is actually a great way to relax, unwind and clear your head of all your worries. There are many proven benefits of keeping a meditation schedule. According to the National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health, meditation can regulate emotions and relieve stress. It helps decrease anxiety and depression too. In addition, meditation is a great way to increase brain function and awareness. I’ve found that adding 10 minutes of meditation to my morning routine has been easy and super helpful. If you have time to do it around looking at your phone or work, you’ll definitely have time to close your eyes and space out for a bit. It’s easier for me to slip in my meditation time between waking up and my cup of tea or coffee, if I really need the caffeine.

Meditating seems really intimidating at first. Trying to clear your mind by just sitting with your eyes closed could appear to be a difficult task. The first time I tried to meditate, I felt like a little kid a kindergarten trying not to fall asleep during story time. I’d tried the typical “cross-eyes-apple-skin” and, while it might look cool, the image that suggested meditation is of increasing the brain’s ability to process information. I have been interested in starting to meditate, there are a plethora of resources to keep you dedicated to your practice. I’m a big fan of Breathe, which you can download to track your meditation sessions. I have found that adding 10 minutes of meditation to my morning routine has been easy and super helpful. If you have time to do it around looking at your phone or work, you’ll definitely have time to close your eyes and space out for a bit. I’ve found that adding 10 minutes of meditation to my morning routine has been easy and super helpful.

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The Hussie Issue! Voter turnout for the past four years has been extremely low.

OUR STANCE: The outcome of these elections actually does affect the student body because the SGA president gets a say in where on campus, therefore more students should be voting.

During the spring Student Government Association elections, 2013 and 2014, less than one percent of the student body voted. During these elections, students just aren’t voting for SGA president, they also vote for SGA senators. All of the people who hold these positions are capable of making decisions about where you get on campus around campus, no matter how small it may seem.

While the process of voting is actually easy, it’s a little difficult to find where to vote. You can do it on Topnot, but that is kind of vague because if you login and start looking for where to vote you won’t find it. To vote you need to go to the Topnot login page and scroll all the way down. Then, click the link that says “click here,” login and vote. Despite the difficulty finding it, voting is much more simple than you think. Not only does the SGA president and senate make small on campus decisions, but the SGA president also works in close liaison with the Board of Regents. The SGA president serves a vote for the students on the Board of Regents as a student regent, which we need. When voting for president you must choose the candidate who best represents the entire student body among the other regents. The Board of Regents make important decisions about WKU, including how the next university president will be found.

If more people voted in the SGA elections, the elections and SGA in general would be taken more seriously by the rest of the WKU student body. The more they are taken seriously, the more SGA will be given the opportunity to actually make a difference on campus, which is the ultimate goal. So, go on Topnot and vote today. It’s the last day, and it’s your opportunity to care about what happens at WKU.
The Corner Bakery Cafe is an equal opportunity employer.
Practice, perform, perfect! At Sunday’s Spring Sing in Diddle Arena, the lights were on, the makeup was colorful and the dancers were ready as the first event of WKU’s annual Greek Week started in full swing. After weeks of preparation, a crowd waited for different fraternity and sorority chapters to take the stage to perform their sets. From “Land of Xi” to “Cat in the Frat,” each group put on an amazing performance for the judges and the crowd.

It’s that time of year again for all the Greeks to take over campus for a week full of fun activities and opportunities to give and help others. The Spring Sing competition launched the week’s activities, which will include a blood drive on Monday and the well-known TUG competition on Friday at the WKU Ag Expo Center.
ICSR T3 to discuss bathroom legislation

By BRITTANY MOORE

WKU’s Institute for Citizenship and Social Responsibility will present “Criminalizing Trans Bodies: A Critical Analysis of Bathroom Bills,” which will take place from 4 to 6 p.m. Tuesday in the Compton Student Union’s Hurf Room.

The panel will discuss the implications of bathroom bills on the transgender community and how they affect individual rights. The speakers will discuss the language in which these bills are written as well as other historic bathroom bills and policies.

“Recently lots of and lots of states, especially in the South, have been pushing these bills that really limit access to public accommodations based on biological sex,” Andrew Salman said in an email interview. “They make it very difficult for transgender people to go about daily life.”

It has been almost a year since the Supreme Court’s ruling in favor of the LGBT community over bathroom access. However, in states such as North Carolina, Mississippi and Arkansas, they have continued to pass bathroom bills in the spirit of the Supreme Court’s decision.

Gov. Pat McCrory signed into law House Bill 2 that bans cities from enacting anti-discrimination ordinances in favor of the LGBT community. According to the Huffington Post, the laws target transgender community members and extend the definition of sex to include gender identity.

Most bills have been in existence that work to deny people from using bathrooms that match their gender identity. The language in which these bills are written varies and promotes discrimination.

“I definitely think that Spring Sing can be an exhausting event, taking a toll both on people and the Greek community, an event that involves planning at the end of last semester and knowing that if we were to start planning the at the end of last semester we would not have enough people on top of all of it, we could make it the worst it can be,” said Taylor Ruby, a senior from Somerset who performed in “Reign of Terror,” said.

“We had two girls in charge of organizing everything and they helped coordinate the event with Taylor Ruby, Sunset senior and treasurer of Alpha Omicron Pi and Morgan Levis, sophomore from the non-Panhellenic fraternity Iota Phi Theta.

The pair will discuss the implications of bathroom bills on the transgender community and how they affect individual rights. The speakers will discuss the language in which these bills are written as well as other historic bathroom bills and policies.

“We started early. We started putting together payments and flotation for about two months with the judges, said Shelton.

“We knew about 3,500 people were going to attend, so we wanted to make it great, and that involved planning,” Shelton said.

I know seeing the athletes’ faces when they compete,” Cameron Levis, instructor for the Special Populations program with Bowling Green Parks and Recreation, said.

Levis said he also likes seeing volunteers come out and develop friendships with the athletes, pushing past barriers society often sets.

“They start to form those bonds just through volunteering, and they find that even though the athletes have disabilities, they’re just like anyone else they know,” he said.

Glasgow freshman Ariel Smith volunteered at Saturday’s games handing out awards to the participants and cheering them on during the events.

“Seeing their faces after they completed just makes my heart happy,” Smith said. Although Saturday was her first time volunteering at Special Olympics, Smith said she will definitely come back next year.

“It’s a wonderful cause, and it’s been an amazing experience,” Smith said. “Everyone should come out.”

Levis told the volunteers their participation and efforts are key to making the event successful.

Her involvement of the Panhellenic community may be the result of the Greek community’s interest in helping the Special Olympics.

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Almost every Panhellenic sorority and fraternity took part in planning Saturday’s event, including Phi Gamma Delta, Alpha Omicron Pi, Delta Zeta, Alpha Epsilon Phi, Kappa Sigma, Phi Delta Theta, Delta Upsilon and the non-Panhellenic fraternity Iota Phi Theta.

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Approximately 3,500 people attended Saturday’s event, which was held as part of its Third Tuesday Tea. The event is part of the university’s Third Tuesday Tea series that meets at 4:30 p.m. Tuesday in the Livingston Student Union auditorium.

“People to go into bathrooms if they match their gender identity,” Salman said. “They have a ban on public accommodations based on sex.”

“This is a statement Salman said,” said. “We knew about 3,500 people were going to attend, so we wanted to make it great, and that involved planning,” Shelton said.

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Minter said much of her talk will be discussing how, over time, fears and what those others are. They’ll hug you; they’ll love you. Day said they focus on the word ability rather than disability when she works with her team. These guys have amazing abilities,” Day said. “They don’t care who you are. ‘They’ll hug you, they’ll love you. These guys love everybody.” Day said she encourages people to come out and watch the athletes compete and cheer for the athletes. “It is all about supporting these guys and girls in their competition,” Minter said. “It is certainly our hope that cool-er, more rights-based thinking will prevail over time and that the ma-jority of public opinion will shift toward the human rights-based belief that all people must be welcomed and included in public space in or-der for there to be liberty and justice for all,” Minter said. We’ve seen throughout history that ap-pealing to people’s fears about sexuality or sharing spaces with women has always worked very well in getting people to vote against all kinds of rights-based legis-la-tion. Patti Minter have changed. She plans to talk about how these fears have become an effective way to enact discrimi-natory public policy. “This really is about criminalizing transgender people” because in essence creates no public space for trans people,” Minter said. “People are not free if they cannot deal with their basic bodily functions in pub-lic.” Minter said she expects all partici-pants at Third Tuesday Tea will gain an understanding of the historical basis for discriminatory laws over-time and how these laws criminalize trans bodies. “It is certainly our hope that cool-er, more rights-based thinking will prevail over time and that the ma-jority of public opinion will shift to-ward the human rights-based belief that all people must be welcomed and included in public space in or-der for there to be liberty and justice for all,” Minter said.

Amanda Fetz, 26, from Russellville, races across the finish line at the Special Olym-pics event on Saturday, April 16. This is an annual event where teams from Bowling Green and surrounding counties compete in order to advance to the state competi-tion. AMANDA FETZ 26, FROM RUSSELVILLE, RACES ACROSS THE FINISH LINE AT THE SPECIAL OLYMPICS EVENT ON SATURDAY, APRIL 16. THIS IS AN ANNUAL EVENT WHERE TEAMS FROM BOWLING GREEN AND SURROUNDING COUNTIES COMPETE IN ORDER TO ADVANCE TO THE STATE COMPETITION. MHARI SHAW/HERALD

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Tops finish weekend with career-best times

Graduate sprinter Vincent Wyatt runs the last leg in the men's 4x400 meter relay during the Hilltopper Relay on April 9 at Baer Track and Field Complex. The Hilltoppers finished sixth with the time of 3:53.33.  (SHABAN ATHUMAN/HERALD)

The WKU Track and Field team competed in the University of Kentucky's Lenny Lyles/Clark Wood Invitational. This weekend, the WKU men's relay team placed fourth with the time of 3:09.35. The 4x100 team currently leads Conference USA and ranks No. 12 nationally. The Lady Toppers were also successful at the Mt. Sac Relays. Ten of the 25 events will feature all four student athletes and we can be successful in every event this season, and WKU's is also likely to be decided closer to the season, and WKU's is also likely to be decided closer to the season, and WKU's is also likely to be decided later this year. As it's important to get something out of these last four practices. These quarterfinals and the rest of the top teams will utilize these.

The coaching staff, however, is on its way to make a decision. Most college quarterbacks have all 2-3. Although they have made it home shortly after the game, they have to push through the entire week.

The WKU Track and Field team will be back in action next weekend as they compete in the Lenny Lyles/Clark Wood Invitational and also the Virginia Tech邀请赛 at the University of Virginia.

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Senior quarterbacks Tyler Ferguson and Chase Dietler and Tristan Gray are the candidates to replace former conference player of the year Brandon Doughty.

As of press time, the four Hilltoppers are still locked in a tight battle to lead WKU under center when it takes the field at last weekend's game against Rice (11-1 overall, 12-3 C-USA) and improves the Owls to 24-2-2 and 3-2. The series drops WKU to 18-17 (6-9 C-USA) and remains undecided.

Hilltoppers win last game in series defeat

BY HUNTER FRINT
HERALD.SPORTS@WKU.EDU

In a three-game series that took place this past weekend, the Lady Toppers softball team lost two of their three matches to the Charlotte 49ers.

On Friday, WKU traveled from Bowling Green to Charlotte, N.C., to play in the first of the games. The home team opened the game with a 1-2-3 in the top of the sixth inning, when the Owls struck again. The Toppers found some momentum at the plate in the seventh as sophomore infielder Leiff Clarkson to extend the Topper lead. The Pemstronger added another hit in the final two innings; Rice won the opening game, senior infielder David Fishback was previously the backup quarterback as the competition is still undecided.

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