

Will Burkhart graduates Rogers Scholars Page 15



Eight Lady Engineers Academic All-State Page 15



Tammy Terry's Front Porch Ponderings Page 7

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Feds issue ratings on 3,662 hospitals, 82 in Kentucky Marcum & Wallace Hospital Is Among Highest Ranked Kentucky Hospitals

**By Danielle Ray
Kentucky Health News**

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services on Wednesday released its Overall Hospital Star Ratings, just two days after two U.S. House members introduced a bill that would delay the release for a year.

The ratings aim to give consumers a simple measure of hospital quality. Critics say they are too simple.

They rate 3,662 U.S. hospitals from one to five stars, with the latter representing the highest quality of care. Each hospital's rating is based on 64 measures

of safety and performance in seven categories: mortality, safety of care, readmission within 30 days, patient experience, effectiveness of care, timeliness of care and efficient use of medical imaging.

"These easy-to-understand star ratings are avail-

able online and empower people to compare and choose across various types of facilities from nursing homes to home health agencies," Dr. Kate Goodrich, director of Medicare's Center for Clinical Standards and Quality, said Wednesday on CMS's official blog.

Many hospital performance experts have opposed the rankings, calling them skewed and unreliable.

"Hospitals that reported on the majority of metrics tended to get one, two or three stars," Dr. Janis Orłowski, chief healthcare

officer of the Association of American Medical Colleges, told Steve Sternberg of U.S. News & World Report. "Hospitals that reported on less than 40 percent of the metrics accounted for almost half of those that got five stars."

Continued on Page 2



Thays Flores began her new job as Extension Agent for Family and Consumer Sciences on Monday.

Extension service hires new FCS Agent

"I love seeing new places and meeting new people," said Thays Flores, the new agent for Family and Consumer Sciences at the Estill County Extension Service.

As the daughter of a career United States Army soldier, Flores has gotten her share of seeing new places and meeting new people.

After her father was transferred from his station in their native Panama, the family has lived in New York, Kentucky, and Italy. Her father was also deployed several times.

"Everybody is different, but families as a whole, are the same," she stated.

Flores graduated from the University of Kentucky in 2015 with a BS degree in Family and Consumer Sciences. She minored in Spanish.

After graduation, she interned for two to three months in 4-H at Christian County Extension in Western Kentucky.

"I could see the positive impact the kids had (with 4-

H)," she stated.

During the internship, Flores decided that she wanted to work for an extension service.

She was hired for 18 months as an at-large Family and Consumer Service Agent in Crittenden County. When the position became open in Estill County, she applied. It wasn't far from Lexington where she had gone to school for four years and still had many friends in the area.

Flores spent Monday, her first day on the job, meeting with the homemaker clubs.

She said the county has three clubs, but her goal is to get more homemakers in those clubs and maybe start up new clubs.

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Continued on Page 2



Roscoe and Mary Rucker, Winchester Road, worked hard picking green beans on Monday before rains came in the afternoon.

IPD charges 20 year old with trafficking, numerous other charges

An Irvine man faces numerous charges following an incidence of domestic violence on Friday evening.

Irvine Officer John Sturniolo was called to the residence at 118 Autumn Court around 7:02 where he arrested Christopher Epperson Jr., 20, on two different citations.

First, Officer Sturniolo charged Epperson with trafficking in a controlled substance second degree (suboxone).

The citation states that Epperson agreed on July 24 to sell a confidential informant working for the Irvine Police Department a suboxone strip for \$25.

The officer states the transaction was taped on both audio and video.

The domestic violence situation allegedly began around 6:54 p.m. when Epperson's wife asked for a cigarette. The citation states he began to scream, choke and punch his wife. It adds that he put his hands around his wife's neck which caused swelling. Epperson is also accused of punching his wife in the leg area.

The citation states he then put a loaded 9 mm pistol to her head and told her he was going to kill her. Epperson allegedly said, "Death do us part."

Sturniolo said the pistol had six live rounds in it. The hammer was pulled back with the safety off.

The citation further states the accused would not let his wife, Tiffany, leave the residence. However, he left and returned when his wife called him and asked him to return.

Sturniolo said he located Epperson in front of his residence and ordered him to get on the ground. He stated that Epperson began yelling and resisted being handcuffed. IPD tasered Epperson.

The citation states that Epperson had marijuana in his possession, a marijuana pipe, digital scale, 1.5 2mg alprazolam (schedule 4 controlled substance), three bags of marijuana packaged to sell and \$60.

Continued on Page 2

Estill County 7th Grader Plays For Nat'l Runner-Up

It's only a few weeks until Estill County Middle School girls basketball teams begin action, but one player has been busy already this summer.

Mia Hale, now a 7th grader at ECMS, played on the tournament runner-up team of the 6th grade basketball Division I AAU Nationals. Division I is the top/best competition in the country.

Hale's team, Kentucky Premier 2022, beat state champions from Indiana, Tennessee, Virginia, Oklahoma, California, and Texas before taking a loss to 2015 National Champs, Alabama Southern Stars 2022, in the final.

The tournament was played July 13-18 at Austin Peay University in Clarksville, Tennessee.

Hale's 7th grade team at ECMS will be playing for the first time this year as the "Lady Engineers."

Last year, as 6th graders, Estill's last team to be known as the "Lady Patriots," won both the regular season title and the conference title for the first time ever in Estill history.

The 2015 Estill Lady Patriots, coached by Mike Long, won over the Lady Rockets, a tough team from Rockcastle County, by 10, 25-15. Mia and teammate Mariah Riddell combined for 17 points.

Mia is the daughter of Shaun and Kim Hale of Irvine.



Estill Middle School 7th grader Mia Hale played on the National Championship runner-up team.

(The Ky. Premier 2022 team photo is on Page 16)

Obituaries

Louise Babb, 88
Cynthia Childers, 51
Sandra Cox, 66
Violet Fowler, 89
Herman Riddell, 82
Rosalee Tipton, 82
See Page 6