

FEB
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1999

Carlisle youth to participate in Miss American Preteen Pageant



Miss Christian Coker, daughter of Chuck and Christie Coker, has been accepted as a State Finalist in the Miss Kentucky American Preteen Pageant to be held July 2-3, 1999 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Lexington, Kentucky.

The winner of the Miss Kentucky American Preteen Pageant in each division will receive a cash award of \$500, an official crown, banner, and \$300 in travel expenses to compete in the National Miss American Coed Pageant in Orlando, Florida, where thousands of dollars in cash awards, scholarships, and prizes will be awarded.

Each state winner will also receive admission and transportation for two to Disneyworld in Orlando, Florida.

The Miss Kentucky American Preteen Pageant is for Tomorrow's Leaders. It is open to girls between the ages of 3-20 years, with goals and dreams based on inner beauty, poise, appearance, scholastic achievement, an all-American spirit for school, and her performance on stage.

The pageant seeks to recognize the accomplishments of each girl who enters and helps her set goals for the future.

Last year over \$1 million in scholarships, cash, and awards were presented to deserving young women nationwide.

Cash awards and trophies will also be presented in several separate optional contests such as Talent, Speech, and Photogenic.

Her hobbies include: horseball, cheerleading and softball.

Miss Coker is from Carlisle.

Electronic tax filing nets faster refund for individuals

Frankfort, Ky. (February 9, 1999). Taxpayers interested in reducing the turnaround time for their 1998 Kentucky individual income tax refunds should consider filing electronically.

"I encourage Kentucky taxpayers to try electronic filing. Electronic filing is just part of the Revenue Cabinet's commitment to provide better service to taxpayers through improved technology. It's a win-win situation for the taxpayer and the commonwealth: the very foundation of all Empower Kentucky initiatives."

Taxpayers get their refunds faster and we reduce the amount of time it takes to process returns manually, according to KRC Secretary Sarah Jane Schaaf. "If you're interested in getting your income tax refund faster this year, try electronic filing. It's quick, convenient, and easy."

Taxpayers may verify receipt of their returns by calling KRC's Automated Refund and Tax Information System at (502) 564-1600.

KRC also offers direct deposit of refunds into taxpayer's accounts at banks or other financial institutions.

Even if taxpayers use individual income tax, they can file now, put the paperwork behind them, and pay later.

Most electronically filed returns are processed in about two weeks, which is much faster than if the return is mailed.

Contact a paid tax preparer for more information on electronic filing.

Medicare benefits meeting

About 15 senior citizens, turned out for an informational meeting at the library Tuesday on changing Medicare benefits. Donna Morton, Medicare educator for Administrator, spoke to the "Healthy Seniors" program. The program is sponsored by Johnson Mathers Health Care and will be offered again Thursday, Feb. 18, at 7:30 p.m., in the basement of the Nicholas County Public Library. Admission is free. Call Josh Shepherd or Cassinda Hochman at 256-7181 for more information.

Many employers still using wrong hire forms, addresses

Frankfort, Ky. (Feb. 12, 1999). Seven months after the implementation of a new Kentucky law designed in part to improve collection of child support, many employers are still sending their new-hire information to the wrong address and using the wrong forms.

Employers must report all newly hired employees within 20 days of their hire to the Kentucky New-Hire Reporting Center, which offers convenient, easy reporting methods, such as submitting via the Internet or using pre-formatted diskettes.

They are no longer required to report new-hire information on the forms labeled UI-414 or UI-414A to the Division of Unemployment Insurance or to provide information directly to the Division of Child Support.

Employers may mail or fax their new-hire information to the Kentucky New-Hire Reporting Center, Post Office Box 1130, Richmond, VA 23218-1130; toll-free fax line: 1-800-817-0099.

To answer employers' questions, the center provides a toll-free customer service help desk at 1-800-817-2262 or a website at www.kynewhire.com.

Employers who fail to comply with Kentucky's new-hire reporting law can be fined up to \$250 per calendar month per employee.

More than 74,000 information packets have been mailed to employers, explaining the services provided by Kentucky's New-Hire Reporting Center.

New-hire reporting is an effective way to increase child support collections, lower public-assistance costs, and reduce fraudulent unemployment and worker's compensation payments.

It also provides a critical link in locating non-custodial parents and withholding child-support payments from their wages.

Last year, 406,142 newly hired employees reported in Kentucky were matched with 41,482 child-support cases.

Child-support collections through wage withholdings, the most effective collection method, totaled more than \$82.8 million of the \$198 million collected by the Kentucky Division of Child Support in fiscal year 1998.

Improvements in Kentucky's new-hire reporting law enacted in July, and the establishment of the Kentucky's New-Hire Reporting Center, will make more difficult for delinquent parents to avoid making child-support payments.

Kentucky's new-hire information is entered in the National Directory of New Hires, which has located more than one million delinquent parents nationwide since its Oct. 1, 1997, launch.

About one-third of all child-support cases involve parents living in different states.

Six students named to Dean's List

Dr. Jack T. Lundy, Maysville Community College Dean of Academic Affairs, has released the MCC Dean's List for the fall 1998 semester.

To be included on the list, students must attend the College full-time (12 credit hours or more) and maintain a 3.5 grade point average or above on a 4.0 scale.

Students that were honored from Carlisle, Ky., for the fall 1998 semester, were: Natasha F. Bowen, Rebecca A. Brewer, Melinda F. Jolly, Melissa F. Jolly, Jennifer J. Lavinille and Deborah S. Minton.

Where's the beef? Agriculture reports say cattle numbers declining

The Kentucky cattle inventory on January 1, 1999 totaled 2.42 million head, 2 percent below the revised January 1998 level of 2.46 million, and 10 percent below the January 1996 peak level for this cattle cycle.

Cattle inventory is the smallest, since January 1, 1990, when the all cattle inventory was also 2.42 million head.

Steers and heifers over 500 pounds for slaughter were above the January 1998 level.

Milk replacement heifers and bulls over 500 pounds were unchanged from the previous year.

All other classes of cattle showed declines compared with January 1998.

All cow inventory, at 1.24 million head, was 5 percent below 1998 and the smallest cow herd in a decade.

Beef cows slipped 5 percent to 1,106 million head.

Milk cow inventory totaled a record low set on January 1, 1998.

Heifers over 500 pounds, unchanged from a year ago.

Beef heifer inventory, at 150,000 head, was 6 percent below 1998.

There were 55,000 heifers for milk replacement on hand January 1, 1999, unchanged from last January, while heifers for other uses totaled 105,000 head, up 11 percent from the previous year.

Steers over 500 pounds on hand January 1, were estimated at 225,000 head, 15 percent higher than a year ago.

Bulls over 500 pounds were set at 90,000 head, the same as last January.

Calves under 500 pounds on hand totaled 570,000 head, a decline of 3 percent from January 1998.

The 1998 calf crop was estimated at 1.16 million head, 3 percent below 1997 and the smallest calf crop since 1990.

Cattle on full feed slaughter totaled 15,000 head, compared with 20,000 head on January 1998.

All cattle inventory for the United States on January 1, 1998, totaled 98.5 million head, 1 percent below the 99.7 million on January 1, 1998 and 3 percent below the 101.7 million two years ago.

Schools enjoy better funding, but test scores lag, experts say

Feb. 11, 1999. (Lexington, Ky.). Kentucky's nine-year-old school-reform law has not shown convincing results in national test scores, but it may be too soon to gauge KERA's real impact, a University of Kentucky economist says.

So far, Kentucky's elementary, middle and high school students have not shown any marked improvement on their scores in achievement tests when compared to students nationally, notes William H. Hoyt, who teaches at UK's Gatton College of Business and Economics.

"While the lack of any measurable increase in achievement or performance since KERA might appear discouraging, it should not be surprising," cautions Hoyt.

"Even if the reforms and spending from KERA will lead to better schooling and performance by students, these changes may take a considerable amount of time," he says.

Hoyt studied KERA's 1990 Kentucky Education Reform Act and a variety of factors to ascertain the effects the law is having on Kentucky's schoolchildren.

He provided the results of his study to state policymakers last month.

His assessment of the reform law found improved funding at public schools statewide.

KERA has essentially eliminated all previous disparities in school financing among poor and wealthy school districts that was typical prior to 1989.

State spending on public schools in general also showed a dramatic increase—the highest (percentage increase) among the 50 states—in the period from 1989 to 1996, Hoyt reports.

But the elimination of those disparities has not translated into smaller class sizes, according to the study.

The state showed only a 4.5 percent reduction in the student-teacher ratio.

Other studies on successful schools indicate that students learn more when teachers can devote more individual attention—something not available in large classes.

Hoyt also found that the percentage of current expenditures that school districts spend on teacher salaries actually declined between 1989 and 1996.

The size of teacher salaries can impact the quality of teachers who accept jobs in Kentucky's public schools.

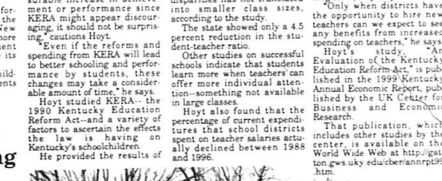
In fact, Hoyt says teacher salaries may have the biggest impact on national test scores, especially by the power that higher salaries will have, permit Kentucky's school administrators to attract new, talented teachers.

The hiring of new teachers, trained in proven techniques that show better results and in the use of new technology, may have the greatest effect on how KERA's reforms work in the long term, Hoyt says.

Only when districts have the opportunity to hire new teachers can we expect to see any benefits from increased spending on teachers," he says.

Hoyt's study, "An Evaluation of the Kentucky Education Reform Act," is published in the 1999 Kentucky Annual Economic Report, published by the UK Center for Business and Economic Research.

That publication, which includes other studies by the center, is available on the World Wide Web at <http://gcatom.ecw.uky.edu/kenannr99.htm>.



Construction on an extra wing at the Nicholas County High School has begun. The area of the high school being expanded in the first phase of the project is alongside the administration office.

Positions still available with census bureau

The U.S. Department of Commerce Bureau of Economic Analysis has temporary short-term positions available locally to assist in preparing for, and conducting, the 2000 census.

There are a wide variety of positions available, but the largest number of applicants are needed as census takers.

Census jobs will pay a competitive wage in your area.

Also, Census workers are reimbursed for mileage.

Applicants must be 18 years or older and have a high school diploma or equivalent.

All applicants will be tested to determine their individual skills for the available job openings.

All interested individuals should call, toll-free, 1-888-335-7763, for further information.

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