

# SCHOOL NEWS

## Band season marches along

The Nicholas County Marching Band's competition season ended at the Upper John's Stadium on October 20, 2007, but the rigorous schedule continues. The band is hard at work putting together a parade, Christmas concert and competing for ball games, and getting the winter guard show in place. In their spare time, some of them have been concentrating on individual endeavors.

On Monday, November 5, eight band students traveled to Rowan County High School to audition for KMEA (Kentucky Music Educators' Association) District 8 All-District Band. Robynn Bartlett, Ryder Bray, Zach Francis, Jacob Fryman, J.T. Fryman, Logan Fryman, Wade Jones and Holden Markland were delighted to

rise to this challenge. Four of these students earned the honor of being named All-District Band members. Robynn Bartlett, 10th grade, clarinet; Jacob Fryman, sixth grade, trumpet; J.T. Fryman, sixth grade, also saxophone; and Holden Markland, fourth chair, trumpet. The audition included a prepared piece, scales and a sight reading piece. Over 200 students auditioned.

These District band representatives will be attending a clinic on January 17-20 where they will spend their time rehearsing with other members of the District Band. The clinic will come to a close on Saturday, January 20, with a concert in the Paramount Theatre located in Ashland.



Members of the district band are, left to right, Holden Markland, Jacob Fryman, Robyn Bartlett, and J.T. Fryman.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

I want to address a recent opinion article by Dale Greer. We'll just call mine talkin' from the hills. It is a fact that there have been several mistakes in the Iraq War at the highest level of our government.

Mister Greer has called Geoff Davis one of the biggest war supporters in Congress.

I don't know Davis, but one would have to look at his voting record, including all attachments to bills, and what he and others have said to determine this.

Let's not forget that war supporter doesn't equate to warmonger. John Kerry and Hillary Clinton both voted to move in the direction of war. To this day, Bill Clinton still tell you that he was convinced that Iraq possessed WMD's where the Iraq War began.

At this point in history, fighting the Al Qaida terrorists who have made their way into Iraq has some benefits. It seems reasonable for a Congressman to state that his decisions and actions are based on assuring our troops have what they need to do the job they were asked to do.

Unfortunately, relating in and out of the war zone and staying longer than expected comes with the territory when we are at war. Troops are aware of this when they sign up. It is unfortunate that any troop has to spend

peace. Drafttees have been missed, but progress is being made. Repurts are offering training and jobs, and Qaida tries to block them in every large group they can target.

Progress is now being made and for Mister Greer to say that the Iraq Army may never be able to take over the security of its own country seems overly pessimistic.

It is realistic to think that they will indeed one day take over, they are also receiving the best training available in the world.

So the military has low-est standards for recruits?

A host of companies across the country has as well as the pool of qualified employees has shrunk in the last few years.

So a 42-year-old grandmother called?

To this very young grandmother, I would say thanks for your service. Many of us appreciate you more than you will ever know. So convicted felons are being accepted into the army?

Maybe the army should have had this policy decades ago. I see it try it and see if it works, if it doesn't work then change the policy. I'm not sure if Mister Greer believes the military is a group of "brown skinned Mexican and Latino is no different than the social unrest over kids in the 50s. Racism has just spiraled around again and taken on a new shape.

An example of what most Americans are not seeing as they ride in the comfort

of their SUV, I ride public transportation and many of the passengers are Mexican. They don't wear signs saying I am a legal or illegal immigrant.

They are hard working and courteous fellow passengers. But, there are others who ride the same buses who have an agenda; white, rude, belligerent, and obvious anti-immigrationists.

Ron Lowe, Santa Monica, CA

After completing both my undergraduate and graduate degrees at Morehead State University and currently owning a business in Morehead, I am disappointed in Mister Greer's recent presentation of "The Facts."

Mike Williams, Mt. Sterling, Editor.

The anti-immigration movement is a shrill chorus of self-righteous white xenophobes (people afraid of foreigners) who have been sucked into a divisive nationalist agenda.

The immigration debate between brown skinned Mexican and Latino is no different than the social unrest over kids in the 50s. Racism has just spiraled around again and taken on a new shape.

An example of what most Americans are not seeing as they ride in the comfort

# GENERAL NEWS

## Citizens pause to honor veterans

Nicholas County veterans were honored at the Nicholas County High School Friday and later at the Neal Welcome Center following a parade through Carlisle Saturday morning.

Charles Davis also helped honor Nicholas County veterans through a special project at Susan's Flowers and Gifts house, Saturday.

Davis collected approximately 300 photographs of area veterans that were displayed inside the Main Street flower shop, which is located almost directly across Main Street from the Neal Welcome Center.

Hundreds toured both facilities Saturday.

These people, men and women, our veterans, they made our country a great country and made it what it is today," Davis said as he beheld the magnitude of photographs carefully placed along the walls of one entire room and part of another. "I'm related to a few of these soldiers," Davis said and pointed out other family photographs of fathers and sons in uniforms, brothers in uniforms and other grouped family members who served and continue to serve our nation's military.

"Most people never knew

as Carlisle's "Bee Man" or "Honey Man." He enjoyed long career with the USDA Soil Conservation Service, and was active in our community through the Rotary Club, the Masons, and the Shrine. He was also appointed as a Kentucky Colonel. Yet, until they read his obituary last July, most people in Nicholas County were unaware that Mr. Halcomb had served in the Second World War. Like many veterans of that conflict, he spoke very little of his military service.

"During World War II, Wilmer Halcomb served in the Army's 94th Infantry Division, I Company, 370th Infantry Regiment. He received four Battle Stars for his participation in the campaigns of Northern France, the Ardennes, Central Europe, and the Rhineland. His unit fought on the "southern shoulder" of the Battle of the Bulge, in the Ardennes Forest. During that action, he was shot in the jaw, and received the Purple Heart for his wound. Mr. Halcomb held the Combat Infantry Badge, and also received the Bronze Star for courage in combat."

"Because of the sense of duty, selflessness, and concern for his community

that he displayed" not only through his military service, but also during his life and work in our community, we respectfully dedicate this year's Veterans Day program to the memory of Wilmer Halcomb."

Everett Planstiel wore the uniform he wore in 1957 while serving in Korea. Planstiel had a large collection of his father's military memorabilia.

Everett Earl Planstiel Sr., who served in the military during the first and second World Wars. As an officer who led men throughout combat he was in constant danger and was wounded during the Battle of Palsam. As he lay dying in the hospital he overheard the doctors remark that he wouldn't be alive in the morning.

"But the next morning he walked out of there," his son said with a smile. Planstiel returned home after World War I and served as the Superintendent of Nicholas County from approximately 1923-1944, according to his son.

The long history of patriotic service of Nicholas Countians was discussed during a special Veterans Day program at Nicholas County High School Friday.

During the program it was



PHOTOS AND STORY By Charles Maxine, News Editor charles@thecarlislemercury.com

Veterans were identified and individually honored, as well.

Iraq War veteran and Nicholas County High School Principal, Joe Orzen, captivated the audience when he joined Dean Vaughn on the stage. While both played acoustic guitar, Orzen sang a song he wrote about his experiences as a soldier away from home during the Iraq War as a member of the 463rd Engineer.

He also included his thoughts regarding veterans as part of the school's program.

"It is with deep regard for those men and women who have selflessly served in the defense of the country," Orzen wrote in the school's handout of the Veterans Day program under a section entitled Message from the Principal. "I, like many of you, have the special opportunity to be both a citizen and a soldier. Despite our country's differences on political views and philosophies, we honor our nation's Veterans-not only for the wars they fought, but for the sacrifices that many have made. As we honor our Veterans today, please remember the men and women of our community, the Nicholas County National Guard Unit, that are currently deployed in Iraq, including SSG Delmar White and Pfc. Sammie Phillips, who made the ultimate sacrifice while serving in Iraq."

"A Soldier's Song," written by Orzen and performed by

like a guy named Steve? Nothing against Steve, but every time I hear it I start humming the Rubber Ducky song.

Deciding who should be the next governor should probably have been decided on the basis of Mamaw's apple pie vs. Sesame Street.

They do the best they can. When the Binghamms owned the Courier-Journal, it was considered by almost every poll in America to be one of the top five newspapers in the nation.

Cannot now recall the Courier-Journal. It is no longer considered a great newspaper.

More and more space has been given up advertising in the American people are becoming more and more informed or misinformed in the name of media greed and bias.

What happened in Louisville has happened all over America.

Our democracy is being deeply damaged because the American people are becoming more and more informed or misinformed in the name of media greed and bias.

It took me thirty to find the one. But six months later that was done to serve a brand new life and a piece of land. But Uncle Sam had another plan.

We said goodbye. With tears in our eyes and long embraces. Thoughts and plans for a better place.

I missed a year of marriage and a baby's birth. And that can make a strong man question the worth.

Now I'm not afraid to trade my life. For a cause I think is worth the fight. I'm just afraid that they won't know.

All the love I feel and the thanks I owe. The crowd responded at the song's conclusion with thunderous applause.

Now I don't complain and I don't protest. But there's part of me that can't find my way home. Until I get back on that rural road.

With the girl I can't live without. And I can spend some time with my best friend. I'll tell him about all the places I've been.

And I'll hold his daughter that whole day. Let her know her Uncle Joe is here to stay.

We said goodbye, we said goodbye. With tears in our eyes and long embraces. Thoughts and plans of a better place.

I missed a year of marriage and a baby's birth. And that can make a strong man question the worth.

Now our country's lost a lot of good people. And I give my thanks to all of them.

But I think God that I came home. To show the love I feel and the thanks I owe.

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**STEVE**  
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have a natural tendency to believe "facts" that support what we want to believe and to ignore the ones that don't.

At I read the issues discussed by the gubernatorial candidates in the October 24

edition of The Carlisle Mercury, I found myself wrestling with my own biases. Governor Fletcher probably gave the better answer for some of the questions, but I couldn't stop thinking about some of the scandals associated with his administration.

At the same time, I have to admit to a natural favoritism for Steve Beshear that has nothing to do with his views or his political affiliation. It's his name. My Mamaw is a Beshear, and since her family came from Kentucky, I can't help wondering if we might be related. And then there's his first name. I mean, come on! How could anyone NOT

like a guy named Steve? Nothing against Steve, but every time I hear it I start humming the Rubber Ducky song.

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Dale Greer is a member of the faculty at Morehead State University. He has an expansive background in media including advertising, reporting and stints as a major television anchor. He can be reached via email at, dgreer@road.