OPINION

Bluegrass Beacon

Comical education standards prompt movie memories

Bluegrass Beacon
By Jim Waters

Near the end of the movie "Animal House," Kevin Bacon as the character Chip Diller tries to calm a panicking homecoming parade crowd.

Diller, an ROTC officer, stands in the middle of Main Street offering reassurance to the crowd fleeing the chaos caused by fraternity brothers from the Delta house.

The members of the Delta house turn a 1964 Lincoln Continental into a machine of mayhem to get even with the Faber College president for suspending the fraternity because of low grades and moral bedlam.

Diller, facing a rushing mob, yells, "Remain calm. All is well."

Seconds later, the screaming swarm of parade-goers flattens him.

The scene mirrors Kentucky's public-education system as an important federal deadline for improving student performance approaches. While bureaucrats and politicians parade sanitized feel-good tales before unsuspecting parents and taxpayers, a new report by the Center for Education Policy suggests all is not well with Kentucky's education system.

The report includes Kentucky among states taking a "back-loaded" approach toward making the annual progress demanded by the federal No Child Left Behind Act, which was signed into law in 2002.

NCLB requires states to establish "Annual Measurable Objectives" in order to determine whether schools make adequate progress each year toward fulfilling the act's requirement that all students become 100-percent proficient in core subjects by 2014.

At the halfway point of the 2014 deadline — thanks to lowball standards — Kentucky has fallen further behind. For example, in 2000, as debate on No Child Left Behind started, our fourth graders' math-proficiency rate lagged behind the national average by 5 percent on federal academic tests. By 2007, the gap increased to 8 percent.

The report shows that Washington, D.C., and 25 states, including neighboring Tennessee, Virginia, Illinois and Missouri, set much higher annual goals in order to meet the 2014 deadline without trying to cram too-little-too-late reforms into their systems on the eve of the deadline.

Meanwhile, Kentucky seems bent on replicating the angst I felt during my college days when procrastination forced me to stay up all night cramming for tests. I usually passed the tests, but at a cost.

By dragging its feet at the outset of NCLB, Kentucky put off the inevitable – or hoped it wouldn't happen.

Education analyst Richard Innes says Kentucky set very low goals for the first several years following 2002, hoping NCLB would get significantly watered down or done away with before the bureaucracy would finally be held accountable.

"When the Kentucky Board of Education was debating how to comply with the law, it was evident that they expected it to go away in a couple of years," Innes said. "In fact, Kentucky lowered its standards the year before the act passed, so it wasn't as apparent what was going on."

Not much has changed. The release of the 2007 state test scores confirmed that Kentucky's standards continue to plunge. But rather than confront the problems, the state's "educrats" hunt for a "get-out-of-jail-free" card or a government bailout for slackers. They continue to use every available loophole to avoid meaningful reform, including providing the public with the most inflated test results possible.

The upsetting irony here is that states which established higher standards at NCLB's outset to improve the education of their kids on the way to 2014 may end up getting the short end of the stick. While these states come to grips with their education shortcomings, Kentucky continues to resist raising its standards while using every available loophole to doggedly avoid meaningful reform.

When it comes to loopholes, Kentucky could borrow another line from Chip Diller in "Animal House."

"Thank you, sir! May I have another?" Diller utters, during a fraternity initiation spanking.

— Jim Waters is the director of policy and communications for the Bluegrass Institute, Kentucky's free-market think tank. You can reach him at jwaters@bipps.org. You can read previously published columns at www.bipps.org.

Conservative Columnist

Conservative Columnist
By Leland Conway

I hate the phrase "thinking outside the box." For one thing, it begs the question – how did we get ourselves into a box to begin with? Kentucky has put itself in a terrible economic box and getting out of it is going to require radical new ideas.

Politicians in Frankfort have been making a lot of noise about the economy lately, but when the smoke has cleared, all they have shown is a breathtaking lack of creativity in dealing with the financial mess and future economic growth.

At a time when Kentucky is facing a devastating financial crisis we should not be shrinking from the problem, rather we should become more radical in our economic thinking.

The Democrats greatest proposals so far have been to raise the cigarette tax and expand gambling. The Republican's brilliant response has been to simply say no. Congratulations on the stalemate, but who will lead forward?

Expanded gambling is nothing more than a paid holiday for government. It cannot be done fairly because in addition to being taxed outrageously, it will have to be regulated so tightly. It will not be able to operate according to true free market principles. Only certain companies will get licenses and will have to pay exorbitant tax rates. Government will pick the winners and losers and then laugh all the way to the bank.

The idea of levying heavier cigarette taxes is riddled with hypocrisy and prejudice. Government will pick winners and losers among the taxpayers. Singling out a minority of people and punishing them monetarily is contrary to the very core principles of America's economic foundation. Behavioral taxes single out and harm a select group of taxpayers while encouraging government to continue reckless spending habits.

Rather than playing roulette with our economy or raising taxes on behavior, we should go in the opposite direction. We should eliminate the state income tax. Blow it up, destroy it, snuff it out, poof, gone, finito. Is that radical enough for you?

Before you start thinking that I'm off my rocker you should know that this is not as far out an idea as it sounds. In fact, it's not even original.

As a conservative, in a fairly conservative state, the number of states that are already ahead of us on the tax code thinking curve, is embarrassing.

Ohio, for example, no longer has a box to think inside of on this issue. Led by Democrat governor Ted Stricklin, they've destroyed theirs. In just a couple of years, there will be no corporate income tax in the buckeye state. Governor Stricklin introduced a structured phase out of the tax which reduces it by 20 percent per year over a five year period. The final re-

See CONSERVATIVE Page 17

BROADCAST

Continued from Page 2

quickly found that there were far more there than I had thought and we were out of chairs and table space.

But it was no problem, whatso-ever, people can stand and eat as I quickly found out. Just ask Bubba and Kristi Sidles, Ashley Sidles and Ernie Cobb who stood leaning against the cars knocking down plates of food.

When the day was over we had been visited and fed almost 60 people. That's a lot of folks and a lot of people. It was a great day.

Jason Carpintero's daughter Sarah Margaret's birthday is July 14, and Beth made her a personal cake and we all sang happy birthday again.

It was simply delightful.

Sunday evening Jasmine and Tyra Flowers, plus Macey Randolph took Evan swimming with the Christian Church youth group. Jasmine, Tyra and Evan went to feed the horses at Owlhead's house and then came back to the house with the blue shutters.

The trio was joined by Spence and Wes Neace and held a Wii tournament well into the early morning hours before the mean old Papaw had to break it all up.

You can't explain to a group of five, 10 and under, that there are several people in the house asleep and the party is spiraling out of control.

As I was writing this column I came on home to finish on the laptop I use. As some may remember I am a big Cheetos advocate and for a brief moment all four, count em. Four grandbabies were double-fisted Cheetos eaters.

It's been a magical few days – especially for a Papaw whose only wish ever is to have all his children and grandchildren all in one place.

And so, for another week, thanks and thirty.

$ 4 - U
(Money for you)

Cash — Stocks — Dividends
Jewelry — Silver — Rare Coins
Much, Much More!!!

The Kentucky State Treasury's UNCLAIMED PROPERTY program has more than $200 Million in property that needs to be returned to its rightful owners. Some of it might be yours...

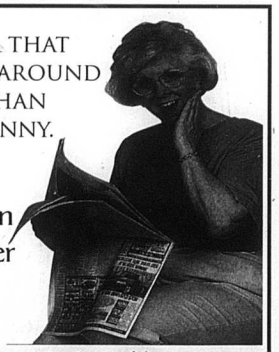
Visit our Web site to see if your name or your company's name is one of more than 300,000 in our database.

www.kytreasury.com

Or call 1-800-465-4722

TODD HOLLENBACH
Kentucky State Treasurer

THE PAPER THAT HAS BEEN AROUND LONGER THAN YOUR GRANNY.



Your Hometown Newspaper since 1867

The Carlisle Mercury
Serving Nicholas County

Got a NEWS tip call 859-289-6425

Want to get your paper at home or give it to your friend as a gift.

Subscribe Today!!!

Name _____
Mailing Address _____
_____
Phone _____
Check One: _____ New or _____ Renew
☐ $25.00 In Nicholas County
☐ $30.00 Elsewhere
☐ $35.00 Out of State
Is this a gift? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Giver's name _____
Giver's address _____

We accept the following credit cards
Give us a call with your information and we can take care of it for you today!
859-289-6425

OBITUARIES

Virginia DuJardine Bomers
1921-2008

Virginia DuJardine Bomers, 87, died Tuesday, July 8, 2008 at Johnson Mathers Health Care.

She was born January 7, 1921 in Casanova Michigan to Esther Carey DuJardine and Francis DuJardine, she resided in Michigan until the passing of her husband in 1991 where she relocated to Las Vegas and then to St. George Utah.

She has been residing at Johnson Mathers Health Care since February of this year.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Joseph Jr.; her son, Joseph II ; her parents; a sister, Marlene Hoyer; and a brother, Ron DuJardine.

Survivors include her three daughters, Lanette (Bill) Hickman Bourbon Co., Suzette Somers of Montana, Carol Bomers of Utah; two sisters, Irene Baily of Michigan, Dawn Ayers of Wisconsin; grandchildren in Kentucky, Heather (Bo) Hutchison, and Ben T. Hickman; four other grandchildren, and seven great-grandchildren.

Virginia will be taken to Michigan for burial.

Clark Funeral Home in charge of arrangements.

Clyde C. Smith
1934-2008

Clyde C. Smith, 74, died Saturday, July 12, 2008 at his residence.

He was born in Nicholas County, April 4, 1934, to the late Joseph Preston and Lucy Earlywine Smith, he was a farmer, a retired Ladish Company employee, and Army veteran and a member of the Mt. Pleasant United Methodist Church.

Besides his parents, he was preceded in death by a brother, Roy Smith and two sisters, Rosie Mynear and Mary Hamilton.

He is survived by his wife, Leona Guy Smith; four sons, William (Melinda) Smith, Ricky Smith, Jesse (Mary) Smith and Mike (Barbara) Smith; two daughters, Vickie (Paul) Barker and Jo Anne (Steve) Hamilton; a sister, Grace Guy, all of Nicholas County and several grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Funeral services were Tuesday July 15, 2008 at Ware Funeral Home by Bro. Jerry Watkins. Visitation was held Monday, July 14, 2008. Burial was in Battle Grove Cemetery. Memorial contributions may be made to Hospice of the Bluegrass or www.Warefuneralhome.com

Jonathan Ronald Amburgey
1996-2008

Jonathan Ronald Amburgey, 12, died Sunday July 13, 2008.

He played for the Wildcats Little League Baseball, Jr. Jackets football team, Nuggets little league basketball team.

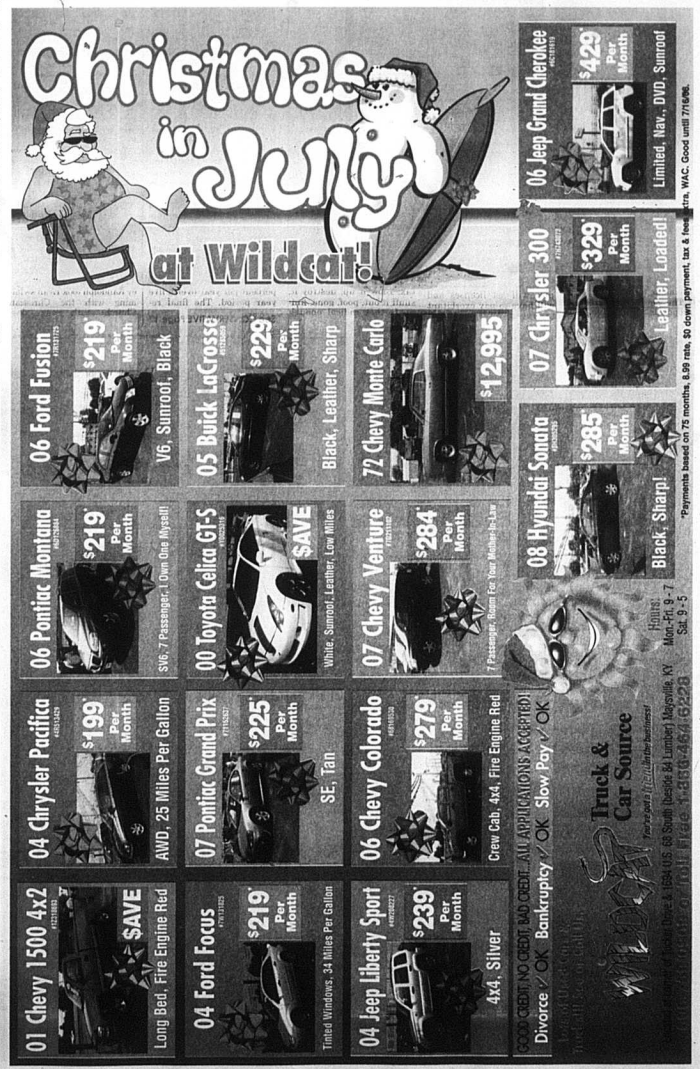
He is survived by his parents, Ronald and Faye Hartman Amburgey; brother, B.J. Amburgey; grandparents, Ronnie Amburgey, Pat Amburgey, Brenda Amburgey, Larry and Alyce Hartman; great-grandparents, Lillian Amburgey, Alice Chase and Wanda Hartman; aunts and uncles, James Amburgey, Glen Stone, Lisa, Ricky McDowell, Laura Carpenter, Chris and Nancy Cotter and Linda and Mark Artigue; great aunt and uncle, Jim and Marjie Hartman; cousins, Michael Hays, Terri Adair, Tiffany Fox, Benjamin Artigue, Brandon Artigue, Rachael Hayes and Jennifer Carpenter; and many adopted grandparents and aunts and uncles in Texas.

Pallbearers will be James Amburgey,. Sean Bretz, Chris Cotter, Larry Allison, Robert Jolly and Thomas Jolly.

Honorary pallbearers B.J. Amburgey, Brandon Bretz and Neil Moore.

His visitation will be held Wednesday, July 16, 2008 after 6 p.m. Funeral services will be held Thursday, July 17, 2008 at 2 p.m. at Clark Funeral Home. Burial will be in Pleasant Valley Community Graveyard

The Nicholas County FARM BUREAU
Annual Meeting and Fish Fry will be held Thursday, July 24 at 6:30 PM at the Vice Community Center at Moorefield. Cost for the meal will be $4.00 per person. Children under 6 are free.

A Service To Meet Your Needs
Clark Funeral Home
289-5500
Compassionate and Caring

TENTH FRAME CINEMA
930 Camargo Road
Mt. Sterling, KY
http://www.tenthframe.com
859-497-2518
EVENING SHOWS 6 P.M. AND AFTER
Under Age 12 & Seniors - $5.50
Adults $7.00
MATINEE BEFORE 6 P.M.
Under 12 & Seniors - $3.50, Adults $4.50
AS ALWAYS:
Children 2 and under FREE
Wed., July 30th @ 10 a.m. E.T.
Free Summer Movie
JULY 18TH - JULY 24TH
Let's Go to the Movies
THE DARK KNIGHT PG-13 1:45, 5:30, 6:10, 8:40, 9:20
HANCOCK PG-13 1:05, 3:15, 5:25, 7:35, 9:45
WALL-E G 1:40, 4:15, 7:15, 9:35
WANTED R 4:40, 9:50
HELLBOY II: THE GOLDEN ARMY PG-13 1:20, 4:25, 7:05, 9:50
MEET DAVE PG 1:15, 7:40
JOURNEY TO THE CENTER OF THE EARTH PG-13 1:00, 3:10
SPACE CHIMPS PG 1:10, 3:10, 5:10, 7:10, 9:10
MAMA MIA PG-13 1:25, 4:05, 7:00, 9:40
STERLING LANES
COSMIC BOWLING
FRI. & SAT. MIDNIGHT - 3 AM
BOOK YOUR BIRTHDAY PARTY OR GROUP
CALL FOR RESERVATIONS
859-498-7755