

# 30 Years Ago

In February 1984 issues of the '30 Years Ago' - Feb. Doris Shanklin, daughter and Mrs. R. L. Shanklin of Main St., Elkton, is on the Honorably Mention List at Woodward College in St. Charles, for the fall semester. Also, Mr. A. R. Campbell Jr. once the arrival of a son, t Clay. Also, Miss Ruthelle and Roy Young were quietly d on February 14 at the 9th ristian Church in nsville; and Miss Corrine became the bride of Marlon hries on February 7 at Baptist Church.

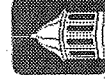
Following Todd Central's Award Winners at the Annual Star Events held in on are pictured: Jennifer Teresa Morris, Beth Tribble, Roberts, Patsy Thornhill, Kim and Dora Nelson.

and Mrs. Markie Campbell of ville announce the arrival of a Benjamin Wick. CHS News: Kim Glenn, White, and Kent Blake nt home awards from WKU ing top actors in the Region, their performance of tin's skit, 'Where the alk Ends' came within one of qualifying for state. The so involved Paula Martin and Hancock with a series of s and children's fantasies.

ron Grove News: Chris n, a student at Murray State rsity, spent the weekend with ents, Mr. and Mrs. Harvey n. Also, Pamela and lle Tabb spent Saturday with grandmother, Mrs. Gladys

Sponsored as a public service

— by —



USB UNITED SOUTHERN BANK

Clifty • 277-6223  
 Hopkinsville • 885-0056  
 Trenton • 466-5695  
 Elkton • 265-3096

# Todd County Standard

(USPS 632-580)  
 ESTABLISHED 1893  
 270-265-2439  
 or 265-2571 (fax)

The Todd County Standard won National Excellence for 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 in the Kentucky Press Association's editorial contest; and 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2013 in the KPA's advertising contest.

The Todd County Standard (USPS 632-580) is published each Tuesday at 411 Public Square, Box 308, Elkton, Kentucky.



RYAN CRAIG

Home Cookin'

The news has been unkind to Kentuckians lately. While in the political sphere, our state is praised for our health initiatives by the national media, somehow it feels empty if you should talk to a fellow on the street from Pikeville to Paducah and especially from somewhere like Elkton or Guthrie.

According to a survey that made national news this past week, Kentucky ranked second in the annual listing of most miserable states to live in.

Normally we rely on the old joke, "Well, thank God for Mississippi!" But, we can't even say that in this case — we can thank God for No. 1 worst ranked West Virginia — but according to the annual Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index, we aren't even as happy as people in Mississippi, who are tops (or bottom, depends on how you look at it) in the nation in several categories that no one wants to claim — lowest life expectancy, percent of obese and median household income.

Why are we so unhappy? Here is what the survey said in its findings:

- Kentuckians had some of the unhealthiest behaviors last year. Less than 60 percent of those surveyed said they ate well all day, the worst among all states, while the smoking rate was the highest in the nation.

- Unhealthy habits in the state likely contributed to poor physical health. Respondents from Kentucky were among the most likely to complain about a lack of energy and sleep, and nearly 30 percent said health issues prevented them from going about their normal lives.

- The state's population was the nation's most reliant on prescription drugs, with 19.3 prescriptions filled per capita in 2011, tied with West Virginia.

So why are we so miserable? One should look at the criteria and then determine for themselves who just is miserable. The gist of the report is that one's well being is a mixture of health, employment, education and perceptions about the local work environment. And the better the well being, the better the chance of improving on each one of the criteria.

Basically, at this point, the topic of "well-being" is something that is so foreign to the area we live in that about the only time you hear a positive, pep talk about well being is a spiritual well-being and that is if you attend a religious service regularly. Which, according to most surveys, the majority of Todd County does not ...

In yet another effort to try to battle Kentucky's obvious problem with health issues and its seemingly traumatic effect on its citizens, Gov. Steve Beshear announced last week that he was laying out a plan for a better health initiative.

Beshear announced goals for the



A view from Pilot Rock.

state such as improvement in health insurance, smoking, obesity, cancer, cardiovascular disease, dental decay and drug addiction.

Beshear has become somewhat of a media darling for his health initiatives and Kentucky's handling of the Affordable Care Act (unaffectionately known as Obama Care).

Todd County, it seems, is among the bottom of counties who signed up for the Affordable Care Act so far. But, we will talk more about that later.

Beshear, in an interview with USA Today, said the effort to make Kentucky healthier has been tough. He even told a story about why the name of the Affordable Care Act in Kentucky was changed:

*There was a reason we called it Lynect. The summer before Oct. 1, when we were leading up to the opening of our exchange, we had a booth at our state fair. ... One fellow came up, and we went through it with him, and he said, "This is great, this is a lot better than that Obamacare." The lady that was working with him told me later, she said, "I paused, and I thought, should I tell them? No." And she didn't. And the guy went away happy.*

*This isn't politics, this is human beings. These folks are not some group of aliens from a distant planet. They're our friends and neighbors. They're folks that we go to church with, we shop in the grocery with, we sit in the bleachers on Friday nights and watch our kids play football or baseball or basketball. These are hardworking folks who get up every day and go to work just hoping and praying that they don't get sick, because they know they're one bad diagnosis away from bankruptcy. And nobody deserves to live that way.*

Still, even with the name change there will still be thousands diagnosed with diabetes this week. There will be thousands diagnosed with cancer. There will be people so addicted to cigarettes that they will put down their oxygen mask to light up.

The phrase most used is that historically "Kentucky is its own worst enemy." And, sadly — because it is

The prevailing answer people tell me is that they would rather pay the tax penalty and not have the insurance. What would happen if that person or someone in their family was very sick or in a car wreck? They readily admit that they are taking a big chance but don't see how they can afford the insurance even when it is considerably cheaper now, especially for those who are very sick and couldn't even get insurance before.

As one man, who has two jobs and does handwork on the side told me a few weeks ago, "I guess I will have to declare bankruptcy if something bad happens."

The deadline to apply for health insurance through the exchange is March 31. If you don't have insurance, at least consider the process.

Now don't get me wrong, I grew up in Todd County and lived here for most of my life, and I get why people want to live here — Miserable Test or not.

I have been to the top of the Jefferson Davis Monument and looked at Todd's beauty while the wind hit my face. I have marveled at the expansive wheat fields in south Todd, I've enjoyed the quiet of the forest in Allegre as I sat on a rock and felt a few beams of the sun on my face.

I get it. People who do not live here won't get it, and that's OK. But, for heaven's sake, we need to ask why we are called "miserable." Remember this is a comparison with places that have Detroit and its economic demise, Chicago and its incredibly high murder rate, and border-states that have been run over with violence and drugs. Yet, we still are perceived statistically to have a worse life!

That breaks my heart. I, for one, think there is a difference between perception of a place and reality, but when year after year, you are told you are near the bottom then perhaps it is time to seek more, in-depth answers.

I hold on to the day when there is a balance to Todd County. When we all can be healthy, happy and live lives free of bad health, a lack of economic security and can see a better well being.

Then we can all enjoy our time in the sun.