

# What's Happening

All times are Central

## Tomorrow

### GCPL goes to paint

Meet at Paint and Party in Campbellsville on Thursday, Jan. 24, at 1 for a program sponsored by the Green County Public Library painting a snow scene. Space is limited to 12 adults. You can register by calling 270-932-7081.

## Weekend

### Karaoke at GCPL

The Green County Public Library will be holding an after school karaoke program on Friday, Jan. 25 at 2 p.m. Participation prizes will be given out.

## Happening Soon

### GCPL children programs

Every Tuesday morning at 10 a.m., the Green County Public Library has Terrific Tuesday Story Hour for 2 to 5 year-olds and Thursdays at 10 a.m. a LapSit Lullaby program for babies and toddlers, birth up to 2 years. For more information, contact the library at 270-932-7081.

### Color Me Calm

Color Me Calm, an adult coloring program, takes place at the Green County Public Library every Thursday at 10 a.m.

### Chair exercise event

Join the Green County Public Library every Tuesday, from 1 to 2 p.m., for Chair Exercises.

### Book Clubs to meet

Between the Lines Bookclub will meet at the Library on Monday, Jan. 28 at 10 a.m. The Who Dun It? Bookclub will meet at 11 a.m.

### Chocolate Olympics

The Chocolate Olympics, a program for teenagers will take place at the Green County Public Library on Monday, Jan. 28, at 5 p.m.



## What is the most important issue facing our country?

By Roving photographer Clevis Jeffries



**“Resolving the government shutdown is the most important issue.”**  
—Patty Vanarsdall



**“People, in general, not trusting in God when making important decisions.”**  
—Angela Bryant



**“Congress not working together to resolve issues that are important to our country.”**  
—Brian Estes



**“The impact that the government shutdown has on so many people.”**  
—Nancy Loyall



**“People not working together for the betterment of the country.”**  
—Karen Warren



**“The most important issue I think is immigration.”**  
—Nina Dziepak

## Letter to the Editor

### Successful fundraiser

**To the Editor:**  
On behalf of the GCHS Alumni Scholarship Committee, I would like to thank several people who made our January 15 fundraiser at Los Agaves a success. Thank you to the

Los Agaves owners, managers, and employees for allowing us to have the fundraiser at your restaurant. Also, thanks to all the volunteers that helped work that day. Lastly, thank you to all who ordered and/or

ate at Los Agaves and donated to our scholarship. It is such a blessing to live in a caring, supportive community.  
**Sincerely,**  
**Melissa Bright,**  
**GCHS Alumni Scholarship Chairperson**

## Education facelift incomplete without school choice

Photos of the state Capitol being tweeted by Gov. Matt Bevin offer an unmistakably dramatic before-and-after contrast showing impressive results of a \$1.2 million scrubdown of the century-old building. Old timers around the Capitol claim some parts of the building have never received such attention. The governor rightly suggests that this “facelift of sorts,” as Kentucky Today calls it, offers a visual equivalence of the economic revival currently underway in the commonwealth, resulting in historically unmatched growth in job creation and economic investment and corresponding removal of prohibitive regulatory obstacles. Could the newly polished Capitol also offer a preview of coming attractions “of sorts” regarding what will be experienced by our public education system and enjoyed by Kentucky’s families when we finally decide to empower parents to choose where their children attend school? Bevin favorite Wayne Lewis, the recently appointed Kentucky education commissioner, is doing a stellar job of bringing accountability to a system that

will consume \$10 billion of the state’s current \$22 billion budget. Lewis is confronting achievement gaps, condemning worthless diplomas and reducing the I’m-okay-you’re-okay-we’re-all-okay spin emanating from the huge education bureaucracy. Still, face-lifting Kentucky’s education system cannot ultimately be achieved by Frankfort. While Bevin also raised private money to extensive remodel the inside of the Capitol following the external scrubdown, it’s what’s happened outside that’s most impressive. Lewis is doing a great scrubdown on the inside of Kentucky’s education system. However, only by returning power over our education program to parents whose children are in the system will Kentucky’s educational facelift be complete. After all, even the best of schools isn’t always the right fit to educate every child at the highest level. National School Choice Week on January 20-26 offers an optimum reminder that not only does Kentucky lag behind 43 other states and even Washington, D.C. in terms of options for parents regarding where their children



**Jim Waters**

### Bluegrass Beacon

attend schools, but there’s actually been decay even among the scant options available in the past. One past exception to Kentucky’s general policy that a child’s zip code determines where he attends school has been the district-to-district transfer program which, provided both districts agree, allows the state’s education support funding to follow a student living in one district to another system. Today, however, only a dwindling number of districts still offer such opportunities, which somewhat improved the chances of at least a few Kentucky parents for finding a better educational fit for their children. Even these crumbs which once fell from Kentucky’s school-choice table have been scooped up by anti-choice bureaucrats, who, in their lust for money, regard public school students as a kind of bounty property not to be shared with others. Meanwhile, in other states, not only are par-

ents being invited to the table, they’re deciding the menu and decidedly in charge of their children’s education. Results in other states confirm the rightness of parental school choice, especially for poor black students who, without alternatives for their parents or guardians, usually get assigned to the worst schools. That’s no longer happening – at least at the previous levels – in cities like Atlanta and Cleveland nor states such as Arizona, home of eight of U.S. News and World Report’s top 10 “Best Charter High Schools” in America last year. Black students in Atlanta’s and Cleveland’s charter schools statistically significantly outscored those cities’ blacks in non-

charter public schools in both fourth- and eighth-grade math and reading on the latest National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Talk about a stark before-and-after picture for millions of low-income children once trapped in schools that should have been helping them break the cycle of poverty, prison and despair for generations in their families. Kentucky’s kids deserve to be included in such a picture, as well. Jim Waters is president and CEO of the Bluegrass Institute for Public Policy Solutions, Kentucky’s free-market think tank. Read previous columns at [www.bipps.org](http://www.bipps.org). He can be reached at [jwaters@freedomkentucky.com](mailto:jwaters@freedomkentucky.com) and @bipps on Twitter.

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