

UPDATE

continued from page one

needs with a responsibility to the men and women who get up every day, go to work, and pay taxes. Every dollar spent is an investment in moving our state forward.

The House budget includes a record level of funding for education, including an increase in the per-student allocation sent to schools (SEEK), monies to implement the school safety act, and increased investment in postsecondary education. The bill also includes a debt service ratio of 5.3 percent and a Budget Reserve Trust Fund ending balance of \$392.4 million. This fund is basically a savings account we often refer to as the “rainy day fund.”

Education Funding: The House budget proposal includes a record level of per-student education funding, with \$4,061 in the first year and \$4,112 in the second year of the budget. All certified and classified school district staff will receive a one percent salary increase, paid through SEEK funds. Education funding also includes \$1.13 billion over the biennium to fully fund the Teacher’s Retirement System’s actuarial required contribution (ARC). An additional \$61.7 million is committed in the first year to cover health insurance premiums for those who retired after 2010.

Postsecondary Education: The House proposal includes \$26 million in additional funding for our post-secondary institutions, \$16 million of which will be invested through the Performance-Based Funding Mechanism. Performance-Based Funding has proven to be an effective method of ensuring that higher education institutions continue to focus on educating students for successful career paths.

School Safety Funding: This budget includes the first step in funding the school safety programs called for by the School Safety Act we passed last session. The measure adds \$18.7 million over the biennium to fund facility changes needed to implement the requirements of SB 1, as well as an additional \$2.9 million transfer from Restricted Funds in the first year of the budget. The House also included \$48.75 million to help

school districts hire new guidance counselors to meet the goals of the School Safety Act.

Social Workers: Like many states, we have a critical need for social workers in order to ensure the safety and well-being of children and others placed under state care or oversight. Our budget creates a hundred new positions, but also a five percent raise to retain those who already work for us.

General Government: All state employees will receive a one percent annual increase in wages in both fiscal years, including constitutional officers. The House budget also provides restricted funds support of \$4.8 million for vacant nursing positions in the Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs. The proposal also increases support for the Local Government Economic Development fund from zero percent to 70 percent of coal receipts, which equals approximately \$23 million.

Public Pension: The House budget proposal fully funds the state’s pension contributions in both fiscal years. For the second budget in a row, legislators are not contributing to the legislative retirement plan. The state’s public pension crisis has left us with a more than \$44 billion liability and, frankly, that will take a long time to pay.

Debt Service and Budget Reserve Trust Fund: The budget proposal approved by the House Appropriations and Revenue Committee includes a debt service ratio of 5.3 percent. Also, the ending balance of the Budget Reserve Trust Fund will be \$392.4 million, more than \$76 million more than the original proposal issued by the Governor in January.

In addition to the executive branch, or general government, budget, we also approved the legislative branch budget and the revenue component to the spending plan. All of these bills now go to the Senate for their consideration. I expect that we will have a final product to send to the Governor by April 1 in order to ensure adequate time for review and, if necessary, to override any vetoes he might issue on the document.

If you have any comments or questions. I can be reached during the week from 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. (EST) through the toll-free message line at 1-800-372-7181. You can also contact me via e-mail at Bart.Rowland@lrc.ky.gov. You can keep track of committee meetings and potential legislation through the Kentucky Legislature Home Page at <https://legislature.ky.gov/> and you can also follow me on Twitter @KYRE-PROWLAND.

Carol’s Reads Book Review Possum Gulch is a page turner



Carol Perkins

Possum Gulch delightful book with well-developed characters and a plot that moves like silk on a spool.

It’s 1963, and life in the sleepy town USA is seemingly ordinary, but times are changing, and it is no different for Possum Gulch. The town and its citizens soon come unhinged when an anonymous letter sets into motion a series of sometimes witty and more often comedic series of events.

For instance, Mayor Sweeny is under pressure to rename the

town, and as dedicated to his community as he might be, he is dealing with a secret that lies in the local cemetery. There is the aging town doctor who has more secrets than he does credibility, the postmistress who knows everyone’s business because she reads their mail (and lines away for the doctor), and the pharmacist with his ongoing affair with a married woman until a single lady comes to town.

Meet Doyle, the guy who has never been in love, but hopes to win the heart of the new lady, Little Q’s where locals dine is the hub of the community and where the action begins and ends.

Jennifer Moonson has worked as a journalist for over a decade and familiar to the Herald News readers as the paper’s General Manager. From an early age, she displayed her love for reading and writing. Her ability to engage the reader from the first page to the last makes her recently released work of fiction, Possum Gulch, a book that turns its own pages.

Join Jennifer on March 20, 2020 at the Metcalfe County for her first book signing. A copy of Possum Gulch is like owning a piece of small-town charm. From 2-4 on March 22- I urge you to show your support for another hometown author.

Super Crossword

“CAN’T YOU SEE I’M DIZZY?!”

ACROSS

1 Bar mitzvah language
7 Its capital is Montgomery
14 Old jazz buff
20 Henry II player Peter
21 Horse feed supporter
22 106-Down on Cal Ripken’s cap
23 Amaze a Sherlock Holmes portrayer?
25 — acid (corrosive liquid)
26 — -mo
27 Brighton brew
28 12-month famine?
30 Trendy berry in juices
33 Shire of film
34 Goddess of the dawn
35 Singer Brown got dressed?
42 Gndiron gains: Abbr.
43 Pen giant
45 Make reparations
46 Cosa — (Mafia’s kin)

DOWN

1 Mortar trays
2 List-ending abbr.
3 TV clown
4 “Frasier” woman
5 Jazz singer Fitzgerald
6 Li’l fellow
7 Gasteyer of “Mean Girls”
8 Truckload
9 Deadly pale
10 Neuwirth of “Frasier”
11 “If I Had —” (Lyle Lovett song)
12 American avant-garde artist
13 Antediluvian
14 Toyota rival
15 Iroquois foe
16 Falafel bread
17 Amendment
18 Samuel of justice
19 PC whizzes
24 Intel mission
29 Hi- — (stereos)
31 Positive pole
32 Atlas feature
35 Son of Isaac
36 Video game name

125 Say “no” to

37 Catchphrase
38 Phenyl ender
39 Saw-toothed
40 Ingrain
41 Soft & —
43 Jazz genre
44 Limonite, e.g.
47 Worship
48 Nursed, say
49 Kin of -ess
50 Don’t depart
52 Uses a stool
54 Writer Blyton
55 Grove plant
56 Kind of tea
59 — Field (Mariners’ stadium)
63 Most chancy
64 “— will be done”
65 Very irate
67 Arabian Sea country
68 Actor’s part
69 Long lock of hair
70 Stomped
71 Tip, as a hat
72 Arab bigwig
73 Frank and open
76 Pear variety
77 Corp. shuffling
78 Mother of Isaac
80 — -cone
81 List of dishes

82 Get hitched on the fly
83 Maximum
86 Post-OR area
87 OR worker
89 Before now
92 Prettify
95 “NerdTV” network
96 Bested
97 Online investing site
99 Tom of “Tomorrow”
100 Slacking sort
101 Pataki’s predecessor
102 Make furious
103 Font flourish
106 Nest builder
107 “Picnic” dramatist
108 Organic compound
109 Head, to Gigi
111 Falco with four Emmys
112 In — of (rather than)
113 Jai-alai cries
114 “Auld Lang —”
117 Amp plug-in
118 Masquerade
119 Furry TV alien

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CROSSWORD ANSWERS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 2

Wishing Well®

7	5	8	4	3	7	3	2	4	8	2	7	4
T	P	W	S	B	A	E	F	E	I	O	K	C
2	6	8	7	3	8	2	4	5	7	8	5	4
G	C	S	E	I	D	W	R	A	A	O	Y	E
8	5	2	5	7	8	5	7	2	7	5	7	6
M	C	I	H	C	P	E	H	L	A	C	N	H
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K	R	T	C	E	N	G	V	L	E	C	E	N
5	6	4	5	4	5	7	3	8	3	2	3	5
R	E	A	O	D	W	E	T	V	I	L	V	S
3	6	8	4	8	4	6	4	2	8	2	8	2
E	R	E	M	N	I	A	R	E	T	A	S	R
8	6	4	8	6	4	8	6	8	6	8	6	6
E	B	E	R	O	R	R	U	O	N	R	D	S

HERE IS A PLEASANT LITTLE GAME that will give you a message every day. It's a numerical puzzle designed to spell out your fortune. Count the letters in your first name. If the number of letters is 6 or more, subtract 4. If the number is less than 6, add 3. The result is your key number. Start at the upper left-hand corner and check one of your key numbers, left to right. Then read the message the letters under the checked figures give you.

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Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

			4			3				1
		9			2		6			
6				7		5		2		
			5	6					1	3
8						9		7		
		4	2		1		8			
			9	3	7		2			
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7						4				5

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging
♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down, and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

Differences: 1. Polka dots are added. 2. Knob is different. 3. Towel is shorter. 4. Shirt is different. 5. Cup is missing. 6. Water is off.

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