

The Health Connection

NEWSLETTER

Congratulations to Jamee Helms on Earning Her RN Degree!

We are proud to recognize Jamee Helms, one of our dedicated Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs), on her recent graduation and achievement of earning her Registered Nurse (RN) degree.

Balancing work, studies, and personal commitments is no small task, and Jamee's accomplishment reflects her hard work, determination, and commitment to professional growth. Her dedication to advancing her education will not only benefit her career but will also enhance the quality of care she provides to our community.

Jamee said, "Earning my RN degree was important to me because it represents years of hard work, perseverance, and a commitment to providing the highest level of care to my



patients. As a nurse, I wanted to expand my knowledge and skills so I could better serve my community and advocate for those in need. Completing the LPN-to-RN Bridge program is not only a personal achievement, but also an opportunity to continue growing professionally and making a greater impact in the lives of my patients and their families."

Please join us in congratulating Jamee on this significant milestone. We are excited to see all she will accomplish as she begins this next chapter in her nursing career.

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HANDS Academy 2026 brought together home visitors, supervisors, and community professionals from across Kentucky to learn, collaborate, and strengthen the support we provide to families.

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HANDS Academy 2026: Growing Stronger Together

By: Ashlee McMillan, HANDS Specialist I



HANDS Academy 2026 brought together home visitors, supervisors, and community professionals from across Kentucky to learn, collaborate, and strengthen the support we provide to families. Throughout the conference, participants explored a wide range of topics focused on child development, family resilience, trauma-informed care, maternal health, safety, and strengthening parent-child relationships.

One of the strongest themes throughout the academy was the importance of connection. Sessions highlighted how secure attachment, positive interactions, and joyful play can help children and families heal, grow, and thrive — especially those impacted by trauma, substance use disorders, poverty, grief, or mental health challenges. We learned that meaningful

relationships and supportive environments are powerful tools in building resilience for both children and caregivers.

Participants also gained practical strategies for supporting families through real-life challenges. Workshops covered topics such as developmental milestones, safe sleep and car seat safety, postpartum wellness, perinatal mental health, intimate partner violence, internet safety, suicide prevention, and trauma-informed communication. Many sessions emphasized prevention, early intervention, and recognizing the strengths families already possess.

Another important takeaway from HANDS Academy 2026 was the

value of supporting professionals in the field. Sessions on self-care, emotional wellness, safety during home visits, communication skills, and documentation reminded us that caring for ourselves helps us better care for others. The academy created space for home visitors and supervisors to share their voices, experiences, and ideas for the future of the HANDS program.

As we reflected during the plenary session, “Honoring Our Work, Shaping Our Future,” HANDS Academy 2026 reinforced our shared mission: supporting Kentucky families with compassion, respect, education, and hope. Participants left feeling inspired, empowered, and better equipped to continue making a positive impact on the lives of children and families across our communities.

Alpha-Gal Spotlight on Kentucky: A National Hot Spot

By: Wayne Floyd, RS Environmental Health Program Manager

In Kentucky, Alpha-Gal Syndrome (AGS), often called the "red meat allergy", is a pressing local reality. The Commonwealth's warm climate, dense forests, and abundant wildlife create the ideal ecosystem for the Lone Star tick, the primary transmitter of the condition. According to the CDC, Kentucky ranks among the highest-prevalence states nationwide, with an estimated 6,000 to 8,000 Kentuckians actively living with AGS, though many remain undiagnosed. Notably, a CDC mapping study identified Muhlenberg County as having one of the nation's highest per-capita rates of suspected cases.

Managing the Allergy

Because there is no cure or vaccine for AGS, management requires strict lifestyle adjustments. Affected individuals must completely avoid mammalian meat and monitor for hidden sources in processed

Foods to Avoid (Mammalian)	Safe Alternatives
Beef, Pork, Lamb, Venison, Rabbit, Goat	Chicken, Turkey, Duck, Quail
Lard, Tallow, Mammal-based Gravies	Fish, Shrimp, Crab, Lobster, Tuna
Organ meats (Kidneys, Liver)	Eggs
For sensitive individuals: Dairy (Milk, Cheese, Butter), Gelatin	Plant-based alternatives (Almond milk, vegan gelatin)

foods, medications, capsules, and personal care products containing gelatin or mammal-derived additives.

Prevention is Key

Additional tick bites can worsen symptoms or prolong the allergy, making prevention paramount. To reduce your risk:

- Apply EPA-approved insect repellents before heading outdoors.
- Wear long sleeves and pants in wooded or brushy areas.
- Conduct thorough tick checks and shower immediately after returning indoors.
- Remove attached ticks promptly using fine-tipped tweezers.

AGS is a life-changing condition. If you experience delayed allergic reactions hours after consuming red meat, especially following a tick bite, consult a healthcare provider. Early diagnosis and proactive tick avoidance are essential for protecting your health and quality of life in Kentucky's vibrant outdoors.





Greenup County Health Department

Public Health = Public Wealth

**GREENUP COUNTY
HEALTH DEPARTMENT
WILL BE
CLOSED**

ON

JUNE 19TH

DUE TO

Juneteenth
OBSERVANCE



Check Out the Latest Food Scores!

Can you trust your favorite restaurant with your special night? How do you know if that restaurant is clean?

You can know how clean any restaurant really is! Click to see the scores in Greenup County!

[Click Here](#)



Health Hero of the Month: Buford Hurley

The Greenup County Health Department is proud to recognize Buford Hurley, Public Safety Director, as our June Health Hero.

Public safety is an essential part of a healthy community, and Buford's leadership helps ensure that Greenup County residents receive timely emergency assistance when it matters most. As Director of E-911, he oversees the communication systems that connect residents with emergency responders, helping coordinate critical services that protect lives every day.

Buford has also been instrumental in advancing emergency preparedness efforts throughout the county, including the implementation of new tornado warning sirens. These improvements strengthen Greenup County's ability to alert and protect residents during severe weather and other emergencies.

Through his dedication, leadership, and commitment to public safety, Buford continues to make a lasting impact on the health and well-being of our community. We are grateful for his service and proud to recognize him as our June Health Hero.



Buford Hurley and Andrea Collins

To learn more about E-911 services, emergency preparedness, and the new tornado sirens in Greenup County, listen to Episode 8 of The Healthy Department podcast, "When Every Second Counts: Inside Greenup County E-911." In this episode, Buford shares insights into how E-911 works, the role of public safety partnerships, and what residents can do to stay informed and prepared when emergencies arise.

June Employee Anniversary



LaBreeska Adams
3 Years



Jacklyn Applegate
14 Years



Summer Kershner
1 Year



Kayleigh Hambrick
1 Year

Longest Day of Play Returns to Greenup County on June 20

By: Cassie Mace, Health Educator

The Greenup County Farmer's Market invites residents of all ages to celebrate the annual Longest Day of Play on Saturday, June 20, 2026, from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Greenup County Extension Office, located at 35 Wurtland Avenue in Greenup.

The free community event is designed to encourage physical activity, healthy living, family fun, and community engagement while celebrating the longest day of the year.

The day begins with the first annual Lettuce Run 5K, organized by O Such Tri-State Race Planners. Registration opens at 8:00 a.m., and the race begins at 9:00 a.m. Participants of all fitness levels are encouraged to join the run or walk.

Early risers can also participate in a free Yoga Session at 8:00 a.m. led by Melissa Pace. The class is open to everyone and offers a great opportunity to stretch and prepare for a day full of activities.

Families with young children can take advantage of Car Seat Safety Checks from 10:00 a.m. until noon. Certified inspectors from the Greenup County Health Department will be available to ensure car seats are properly installed and provide guidance on child passenger safety.

From 10:00 a.m. to noon, visitors can enjoy healthy bites sponsored by the Greenup County Extension Office. Participants will have the chance to make a bicycle-powered smoothie and sample delicious recipes featuring fresh lettuce and other healthy ingredients.



Creative activities will be available from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Guests can create a snail craft with the Master Gardeners, build a birdhouse with 4-H, and make a Father's Day card with the Homemakers.

At 11:30 a.m., the excitement continues with Farmers Market Bingo. Participants will use market-themed words for a chance to win fun prizes while exploring everything the market has to offer.

The event wraps up with Zumba at 1:00 p.m., sponsored by the Greenup County Farmers Market. Space is limited, so attendees are encouraged to arrive early and get ready to dance.

Throughout the day, visitors can shop the Greenup County Farmers Market, connect with local organizations, and enjoy a variety of activities designed to promote health, wellness, and community spirit.

The Longest Day of Play is free and open to the public. Organizers encourage families, friends, and neighbors to come together and celebrate an active, healthy summer in Greenup County.



WURLAND, KY
JUNE 20, 2026

Greenup County Extension Office
35 Wurtland Ave
Wurtland, KY 41144

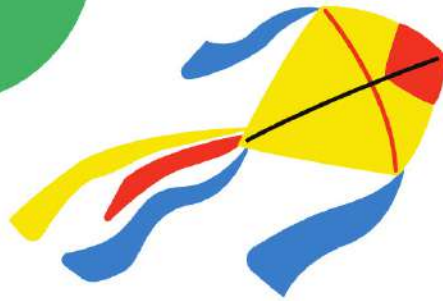
8AM On Site Registration and Check In
9AM Race Start
Race Shirts For All Registered



\$25 if registered before June 8th
\$30 June 8th thru June 18th
\$35 Day of Race



**FUN FOR
ALL
AGES!**



LONGEST DAY OF PLAY

JUNE 20, 2026

9 AM - 2 PM

ACTIVITIES

**LETTUCE RUN 5K,
GAMES, CRAFTS, MUSIC,
FOOD, AND MORE!**

**GREENUP COUNTY EXTENSION OFFICE
35 WURLAND AVE, GREENUP, KY 41144**



Greenup County Health Department
Public Health = Public Wealth

UK Cooperative
Extension Service