

Treasurer Ball Will attend the 2017 SOAR Summit

FRANKFORT, KY (August 1, 2017) - Treasurer Allison Ball will be at the annual SOAR Summit in Pikeville, KY and will not attend the Fancy Farm Picnic this year due to the timing and logistics of the two events, her office announced today.

"I always enjoy attending the Fancy Farm Picnic," Treasurer Ball said in a statement. "I look forward to being back at Fancy Farm in the future."

Shaping Our Appalachian Region (SOAR) is a network of Appalachia which unites fifty-four counties focused on expanding job creation, enhancing regional opportunity, and improving the quality of life for Eastern Kentuckians. SOAR's annual conference is presented to showcase innovative work occurring in the region.

"As a ninth generation Eastern Kentuckian, I am proud of the work SOAR is doing in the region under the leadership of Congressman Hal Rogers and Governor Matt Bevin," Treasurer Ball said. "I am looking forward to continuing to be a part of this important conversation about opportunity and innovation during the 2017 Summit. This region is full of hardworking people; I am excited to once again see their talents on showcase."

August Financial Aid Tip

High school seniors should keep track of deadlines for applying for college financial aid. Here are some tips from the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority (KHEAA):

- File the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as soon as possible after October 1.
- Check with the financial aid offices of the schools to which you've applied to determine if they require any forms other than the FAFSA.
- Look for scholarships using KHEAA's "Affording Higher Education" and a free online scholarship search. You can find a link to a free search site under the "Paying for College" tab on www.kheaa.com.
- Attend any college fairs and financial aid seminars offered at your high school or in your area. If a company charges a fee for helping with applications, remember that you can do that yourself for free. If you decide to pay for help, make sure the company is reputable by checking with the state Attorney General's office or the Better Business Bureau in your area, as well as the area where the firm is located.

KHEAA is the state agency that administers Kentucky's student financial aid programs, including the Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarship (KEES). Its sister agency, the Kentucky Higher Education Student Loan Corporation (KHESLC), offers Advantage Loans to help students and parents pay for college or to refinance student loans. For more information about Advantage Loans, visit www.advantageeducationloan.com.

For more information about Kentucky scholarships and grants, visit www.kheaa.com; write KHEAA, P.O. Box 798, Frankfort, KY 40602; or call 800-928-8926, ext. 6-7214.

Rep. Tim Couch Goes To-Bat for U.S. Rep. Hal Rogers' Plan for Broadband Access

FRANKFORT, Ky. (August 1, 2017) – Late last week in front of a committee examining the Kentucky Wired project, which is the idea of U.S. Rep. Hal Rogers, Rep. Tim Couch, R-Hyden, cautioned lawmakers about pulling the plug since access to broadband is essential to his and other economically depressed areas of the state.

"Solving the still-incredibly high unemployment, which is 11.5%, in Eastern Kentucky is largely dependent on broadband access," said Rep. Couch. "If we can get back to the original intent with Kentucky Wired, we won't have a problem with spending."

KentuckyWired is a public-private partnership established with Macquarie Capital to design, build, operate and maintain the network for 30 years. KentuckyWired is to be an "open access" network, meaning cities, partnerships, private companies or other groups may acquire access to the "middle-mile" lines, but the network would not be providing "last mile" services, or the lines that run to individual homes or businesses.

In last week's meeting, members of the Budget Review Subcommittee on General Government, Finance, Personnel, and Public Retirement heard testimony from the Kentucky Communications Network Authority (KCNA) about delays from pole attachment agreements, permits, access to locally controlled rights-of-way or public property, and private property easements which are delaying the startup of the service in some cases as much as 20 months, which has driven the discussion of shutting down the entire plan.

"When we are talking about locking it up and shutting it down, I don't think we should move forward with that," added Couch. "Let's don't forget that East of I-75 and South of 64, the people need help, and that, along with \$23 million dollars in the budget, were the original intent of Congressman Rogers."

Unemployment Rates Up in 96 Kentucky Counties in June 2017

FRANKFORT, Ky. (July 27, 2017) - Unemployment rates rose in 96 Kentucky counties between June 2016 and June 2017, fell in 20 and stayed the same in four counties, according to the Kentucky Office of Employment and Training, an agency of the Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet.

Woodford County recorded the lowest jobless rate in the Commonwealth at 3.8 percent. It was followed by Shelby County, 4.2 percent; Oldham and Spencer counties, 4.3 percent each; Fayette County, 4.4 percent; Campbell, Monroe and Scott counties, 4.5 percent each; and Anderson, Boone and Jessamine counties, 4.6 percent each.

Magoffin County recorded the state's highest unemployment rate at 18 percent. It was followed by Leslie County, 12.2 percent; Elliott County, 11.8 percent; Letcher County, 11.4 percent; Harlan County, 11.2 percent; Carter County, 11 percent; Wolfe County, 10.8 percent; Knott County, 10.5 percent; Lawrence County, 10.2 percent; and Lee and Breathitt counties, 10.1 percent each.

In contrast to the monthly national and state data, unemployment statistics for counties are not seasonally adjusted. The comparable, unadjusted unemployment rate for the state was 5.7 percent for June 2017, and 4.5 percent for the nation.

Learn more about Kentucky labor market information at <https://kcews.ky.gov/KYLM>.

More than 130 Organizations Set to Highlight Regional Solutions at SOAR Summit

PIKEVILLE – More than 130 organizations will showcase solutions at the fourth-annual Shaping Our Appalachian Region (SOAR) Summit on Friday, Aug. 4 at the East Kentucky Expo Center in Pikeville.

Kentucky's Fifth District Congressman Harold "Hal" Rogers, who is also Chairman of House Appropriations Subcommittee on State and Foreign Operations, and Governor Matt Bevin, each serve as co-chairs of SOAR and will attend and speak at the summit. University of Kentucky Men's Basketball Coach John Calipari is the keynote speaker. Other featured speakers include: Joan Ferrini-Mundy, COO of the National Science Foundation, Phillip Brown, executive director of the Kentucky Communications Network Authority (KCNA) and John Stephenson, senior manager of Public Policy at Amazon Web Services.

Hundreds of individuals and organizations, including those who were selected to showcase at this year's summit, have provided information about their work through the SOAR Network (www.SOAR.network). The website provides an opportunity for individuals and organizations to share ideas and connect with like-minded people across Appalachian Kentucky.

"It is truly a network in every sense of the word," said Jared Arnett, executive director of SOAR. "Early on, we found pockets of passionate people across our service area, and we wanted to provide a medium where we could connect those people and organizations to share ideas and to build upon their respective work."

This year will mark the second year the SOAR Summit will highlight innovative solutions to a multitude of complex challenges. Arnett said providing a platform for the people of Appalachian Kentucky to showcase their work is beneficial to all involved, as SOAR continues to focus on expanding opportunities and supporting those committed to a prosperous region.

"It's an awesome feeling to walk on the arena floor and see the transformational work taking place across our region," added Arnett. "People from all walks of life are diligently being purposeful in their passion to 'shape our Appalachian region.'"

Those individuals and groups showcasing at this year's Summit represent areas that align with SOAR's Regional Blueprint for Creating a 21st Century Appalachia (www.soar-ky.org/blueprint). Areas of focus include: Regional Food Systems, Regional Tourism Development, Industrial Development, Healthy Communities, Small Business in the Digital Economy, Broadband Infrastructure and a 21st Century Workforce.

A full list of those showcasing can be found at <http://www.soar-ky.org/Summit#showcase>.

Special Programs Celebrate National Hunting and Fishing Day

FRANKFORT, Ky. (July 31, 2017) — The Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources invites people of all ages to celebrate hunting, fishing and the great outdoors at the Salato Wildlife Education Center in Frankfort on Saturday, Aug. 5.

Activities and demonstrations will run from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. (Eastern Time) with free admission into the center during this event. The center features animals in naturalized enclosures, conservation displays and hiking trails through a variety of habitats.

National Hunting and Fishing Day events at Salato will include 3-D archery, archery trap shooting, air rifles, laser shot, casting and fishing. Center staff will provide all equipment, poles and bait. Events will also include a presentation by conservation officers, a tutorial on how to field dressing game and hunting retriever dog demonstration. Western Hills High School FFA will sell food and drinks at the event.

National Hunting and Fishing Day began in the United States more than four decades ago. The Salato Center, which is operated by the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources, celebrates the event early instead of the traditional date in September.

"By holding our celebration in August, people can begin making preparations for the fall hunting seasons that are just around the corner," said Salato Conservation Educator Geoff Roberts. "This is also a great way for beginners to receive a fun, hands-on introduction to fishing and shooting sports."

Hunting and fishing licenses are available for purchase at the center. Individuals can also complete the range day portion of their hunter education course during the event.

The Salato Center event recognizes the contributions to conservation made by the 713,000 Kentucky hunters and anglers, and the 35,000 jobs that hunting, fishing and outdoor activities support.

For a detailed list of activities and times, contact the center at (502) 564-7863.

The center is located off U.S. 60, approximately 1½ miles west of the U.S. 127 intersection. Look for the bronze deer statue at the entrance of the main Kentucky Fish and Wildlife campus.

Hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Friday, and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday. Salato is closed on Sunday, Monday and state holidays.

Except for select events, admission is \$5 for adults and \$3 for youth 5 to 18. Children under five are admitted free. The center also offers annual memberships for individuals and families.



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