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DOWNTOWN DISTILLERY

New distillery to attract 20k tourists a year; campground coming to Elk Mountain



Senate President Robert Stivers has worked for over three years bringing the first phase of these projects to fruition. Work is already underway on the second phase of the revitalization.

Staff Report
ENTERPRISE NEWS

Big changes are coming to downtown Manchester and Clay County.

U.S. Rep. Harold "Hal" Rogers (KY-05), Kentucky Senate President Robert Stivers (R-Manchester), and members of 1 Clay County (1CC) announced a comprehensive plan to renovate Downtown Manchester that will boost economic development, tourism, healthcare, and education.

Monday's announcements included the development of the Elk Mountain Trailhead, a Downtown Manchester Marketplace, and the arrival of a new distillery.

The projects will be supported with federal, state, local, and private investments, including \$4.25 million in state funds, and a \$2.2 million federal earmark secured by Congressman Rogers. Total investment in these projects is expected to exceed \$20 million.

Senator Stivers approached the congressman over two years ago with the plan for this project.

"There is strength in unity, and these projects are evidence of our united mission to make the City of Manchester a better place to live for generations to come," said Congressman Rogers, Dean of the House. "I was honored to secure a \$2.2 million federal earmark for the new Downtown Manchester Marketplace, which will be the centerpiece of these exciting changes for Clay County."

The distillery will be a private investment with out-of-state-investors making their way to Clay County. They announced "Blackstone Distillery"

See **ANNOUNCEMENT A13**



The Blackstone Distillery will be located in the former Keith Dry Goods building.



A new campground and ATV trailhead will be built on Elk Mountain.



The Farmer's Market will be located in an area to be filled in on Jockey Street, the new name for Bridge Street.

A true Clay County Hero

Henson risks life to save man from burning truck

By Mark Hoskins
ENTERPRISE NEWS



GLENN RAY HENSON

Heroes come in many shapes and forms. Some think of a hero as fictional character or athlete. Others become heroes due to a selfless act.

Glenn Ray Henson, of Manchester, was on the Hal Rogers Parkway Thursday morning coming from Big Creek enroute

See **SELFLESS A6**



The cab area was completely gone following the fire.

NEW HIGHWAY OFFICE Senate President confirms new bldg.

Staff Report
ENTERPRISE NEWS

The first official statement about a new Kentucky District Highway office in Manchester was announced Monday morning by Senate President Robert Stivers.

During the planned announcement about downtown revitalization, the

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The new Elk Mountain Campground and Trailhead.

Changes coming to Clay County!



Brewing area of the new Blackstone Distillery.



Tasting area for the new Blackstone Distillery.



The parking lot will be extended from behind the Manchester Christian Church to join what will be known as Jockey Street (formerly Bridge Street).



The new Farmer's Market will also be located on Jockey Street (tent area).



Jennifer Hancock, Brian Jackson, Robert Stivers, Trevor Lee, Paul Armstrong, Terry Gray, Rep. Hal Rogers.

ANNOUNCEMENT

From A1

would reside in what was commonly known as the Keith Dry Goods building. Distillery partner Trevor Lee, brought on board by former AdventHealth CEO Chris Self, said they knew Manchester was where they needed to be.

"The deeper we got into the rich history of this region the more passionate we became about this being the right spot for us," Lee said. "This is the right place for our investment. So, we are excited to finally get started on the more tangible aspects of our project. So, these are construction activities, ordering distilling equipment, starting to do other partnerships within the community of distillers."

The distillery is expected to be 15,000 square feet that will include a restaurant and tasting room. It will also be part of the Bourbon Trail, the biggest tourist industry in the state of Kentucky that brings in will over a billion dollars per year. Construction will begin in March 2024.

Senator Stivers says vision and a collaborative effort is changing the narrative for Manchester and Clay County.

"It's most exciting that you are seeing an Eastern Kentucky town that has a lot of problems over the years to make this type of change," he said. "This didn't happen overnight. We've been working towards this day since before COVID struck in 2020. This is what happens when entities put politics aside and work together. Thank you to Congressman Hal Rogers, our current Mayor Stevie Collins, former Mayor James Ed Garrison, and the entire ICC working group because they volunteer so much of their time to make this all happen."

Jennifer Hancock of Volunteers of America agrees with the senate president.

"After two years and 2,500 volunteer hours committed by the members of ICC, I'm delighted we were able to gather today to show the Manchester community what we have worked so hard to develop, and I cannot wait to see the impact these projects will have on Clay County," said Jennifer Hancock, President and CEO of Volunteers of America Mid-States and ICC Secretary/Treasurer.

Founded in January 2022, ICC is a diverse group of community leaders who collaborate with the goal of revitalizing Clay County and Manchester through community development, entrepreneurship and tourism. The vision of ICC is to transform the downtown area, including Main Street and Bridge Street, into a bustling hub of commerce, tourism, and entertainment. With funding from federal and state government and private investors, ICC is making strategic decisions to position the county for tremendous growth and new development.

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