

# Harlan County's Tri-City News

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## Workforce Inmate Program is a Benefit to the Area

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The city of Lynch is benefiting greatly from improvements and beautification through the Inmate Workforce Program, elected county officials, and county solid waste management. Lynch Mayor, Justin Wren, claims that much progress has been made due to the hard work and help of these people and programs.

The Inmate Workforce Program and Harlan County Jailer, BJ Burkhart, is always eager to lend a hand when called upon. Mayor Wren says that when he or city supervisor, Brandon Kelly, request help, that a work crew always arrives ready to work. Typically, the male inmates work on grass maintenance and weed removal, while the female inmates pick up litter and clean. Recently, the female inmates encountered a storm while picking up trash and waited out the storm by cleaning the Lynch Depot. Wren claims that he is very appreciative of the workforce program and of the help of District 3 Magistrate, Paul Browning, who is always there providing hands-on help to various city projects, as well as offering county equipment to help remove the debris that the inmates collect. According to Wren, "Paul Browning always comes to the clean-ups and helps in every way he can. He makes sure county employees are

there with trucks and trailers ready to haul off the garbage."

Lynch has seen great improvements to their walking trail, cemeteries, depot, and sewer plant with the help of the workforce program. The city also requires periodic trash clean-ups due to the large population of black bears, who find garbage receptacles very enticing. All of these tasks are performed by Harlan County Inmates.

April and May have been deemed "Spring Clean Up" months in Harlan County, and county officials including Solid Waste Management Director, Lakis Mavinidis, make community clean up a focus for the county. The Solid Waste Management Department provides dumpsters, trailers, and assistance with removing large items from residents such as appliances,

vehicles, and furniture. They will also help with removing fallen trees and other debris.

Although the county receives many benefits to the Inmate Workforce Program, it is also advantageous to the inmates, who claim they very much enjoy working in the program. It gives them a way to do something positive in a situation that is considered negative. They achieve a sense of pride for a "job-well-done," and may be one of the only constructive things that they have ever accomplished. They acquire work skills and ethics that can be used once released. To be outside in fresh air during a time of confinement is also a welcome advantage of the program. It seems that everyone involved benefits from the Inmate Workforce Program.



Women inmates from the Harlan County Detention Center clean the Lynch Depot.