

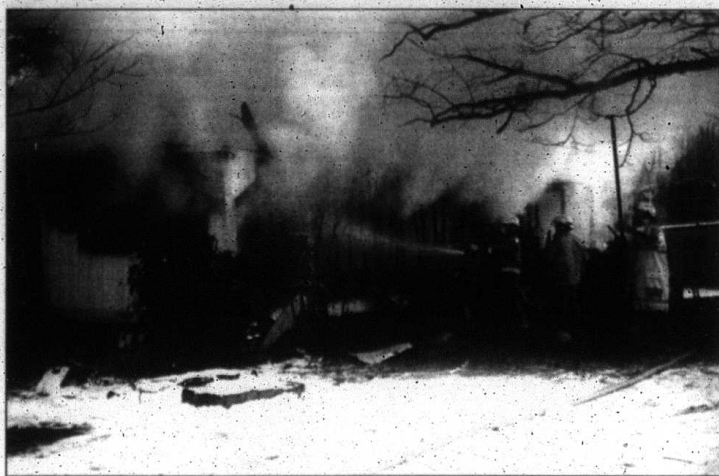


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The mobile home of James Forbes on Stephens Road in the Scaffold Cane area of the county was destroyed by fire on New Year's Day. Members of the Brindle Ridge Fire Department responded to the fire, but the trailer was heavily involved when they arrived. The mobile home was a total loss.

2000 filled with good, bad news

By: Richard Anderkin

As in the past 113 years of the Mount Vernon Signal there was good news for many county residents and very bad news for others in the year 2000.

The year started off with more talk of a payroll tax for workers in the city limits of Mt. Vernon.

David Tapp announced he would seek the office of Commonwealth Attorney and the CenterNet project at the Rockcastle County Courthouse was approved.

The Rockcastle Fiscal Court discussed the possibility of placing a monument on the courthouse lawn.

with the Ten Commandments inscribed and Mike and Lori Gates announced they would build a retreat for the blind and disabled on their property at Pine Hill.

Debra Lambert filed for the office of Family Court Circuit Judge. Danny Ford filed for re-election to the state house and the city of Mt. Vernon passed a half percent wage tax by a vote of 3-2.

Governor Paul Patton announced a proposed increase in gas taxes and Mike Duncan filed his candidacy for Family Court Circuit Judge.

Teresa Yarnall filed for re-election as Circuit Clerk and county lead-

ers applied for a large state grant to improve areas of the county.

In February, Rockcastle Sheriff Shirley Smith lambasted the Rockcastle Fiscal Court saying they had never helped him in his ten years in office and county workers began to comb the county in an effort to get the most accurate numbers.

A major drug bust, mostly involving a Lovell family at Burr, took place and Eddy Montgomery announced he would seek the Commonwealth Attorney's position, a post he had already been appointed to.

A Lexington man was killed on I-75 and Ronnie Patrick Johnson was

found guilty of trafficking in illegal drugs.

Kentucky Utilities announced their local office would close in March and the Mt. Vernon City Council finally put the finishing touches on a half percent payroll and net profits tax.

A federal judge denied bond for all of the suspects in the drug bust earlier in the month and a poll taken at the Rockcastle High School showed that drug use was down among students, but sexual activity was up.

In March, the state announced that the six year road plan included money for a new Hwy. 150 and the Rockcastle County High School girls' track team finished second in the Mason-Dixon games.

A defense attorney for Barbara Lovell, who was accused of murdering a local man with her husband, David in 1997, asked that Circuit Judge Dan Venters and Prosecutor Eddy Montgomery be thrown off the case.

Cont. to A-12

David Lovell pleads guilty

A Burr man pled guilty last week to the Rockcastle Circuit Court to a charge of murder.

David Lovell, 33, pled guilty to the murder of Charles "Tody" Baker, of Mt. Vernon who was shot to death in 1997.

Rockcastle Commonwealth Attorney Eddy Montgomery recommended a sentence of 20 years on the guilty plea.

Lovell's former wife Barbara had already pled guilty to assault in connection with the murder and had given testimony against her former husband.

Both David Lovell and Barbara Lovell have also been convicted of drug related crimes in federal court. Montgomery said that Lovell's sentence for murder will likely run concurrent with his sentence in federal court.

Formal sentencing for Lovell will be held on January 25.

Contractor building landfill

A local contractor says he will use a landfill on his property in the Clear Creek area of Rockcastle County to dump construction materials generated by his own business.

D.L. McFarland said the landfill, which is in the process of being approved by the state, is on his own property and will not be for public use.

McFarland has submitted an application to the state for a permit for a landfill less than one acre.

Court accepts \$1,727,327 bid for Hall

The Rockcastle County Fiscal Court accepted the lowest bid for construction of the Kentucky County Music Hall of Fame at Renfro Valley during a special meeting last Thursday.

The low bidder on the project was Hacker Brothers Construction Company from Corbin. Their bid was for \$1,727,327.

Hacker Brothers was the lowest bidder of six. According to Rockcastle County Judge-Executive Buzz Carlolitis, the Hall of Fame board recommended that the fiscal court accept Hacker's bid.

Construction on the project is slated to begin soon, weather permitting.

The court also discussed the Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program with local Disaster and Emergency Service's coordinator Bonnie Roark.

Roark has served as part-time DES Director, but as of January 1, Roark took over as full-time director of the emergency services agency.

Mrs. Roark is also assistant 911 director and has been involved in helping to map the county for enhanced 911.

Carlolitis said that Roark has agreed to help 911 with the mapping process for six more months and she has hired Mrs. Willametta French, to help with duties in her DES position.

Mrs. French will work ten hours per week.

The court also voted to reimburse the Rockcastle County Development board \$25,000 received from the state for the technology center at the courthouse.

The board had spent their own money to help the project get off the

ground. The court also discussed a contract concerning the Rockcastle County Adoption Agency for Pets.

RAAP is trying to build an animal shelter in the county and they are seeking the help of the fiscal court.

The fiscal court has said they would like to help but so far, the two parties cannot agree on a contract.

The court will take up the matter at the next regular meeting on January 9.

Flat Gap man killed Tuesday in accident

A Flat Gap man was killed instantly Tuesday in a two vehicle collision on US 25 in southern Madison County.

According to Madison County Coroner Jimmy Cornelison, Johnny B. Baker, 70, of Flat Gap Road, died as he traveled north and struck Baker's vehicle, which was traveling south.

Clifford E. Lewis, 37, of Rt. 3, Mt. Vernon.

According to Kentucky State Officer R.D. Stamps, Lewis crossed the center line, 1.5 miles from Berea as he traveled north and struck Baker's vehicle, which was traveling south.

Stamps said Lewis told him he had been sick and was coughing when the accident occurred.

Lewis and a passenger in Baker's vehicle, Golde Tudor, were treated and released at the Berea Hospital.

The accident occurred at approximately 2 p.m.

County still out of salt

The Rockcastle County road department is still without salt for county roads.

Rockcastle County Judge-Executive Buzz Carlolitis said salt had been ordered but still not received.

The Judge said the county was buying sand from a Jackson County company at Clover Bottom, and spreading it on county roads while they wait for the salt to arrive.

Students in the Rockcastle County School system have already missed eight days of school because of inclement weather.

School was dismissed the three days before Christmas break and there has been no school since Christmas break.

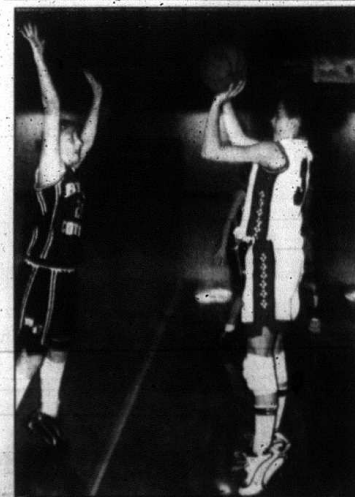
The low temperatures so far this winter was recorded Wednesday morning at the Cox Funeral Home weather station, where the mercury dropped to 0.

The high in January has been 25 on New Year's Day and the high in December was 2, on December 23.

Six inches of snow was recorded at the weather station in December.



Because of the inclement winter weather the county has been experiencing, several wrecks have occurred in the county over the past week. In the top photo, Marvin Mink and Gene Cromer removed a mini-van from the interstate, which was involved in a three car pile-up on Saturday morning. Members of The Mt. Vernon Fire Department had to remove a door from the van to free a small child, who was injured in the wreck. About 15 minutes after the three car pile-up, which occurred on the interstate bridge at Burr, another man lost control of his pick-up and turned it over in the same spot. In the bottom photo, a family from Fayette County lost control of their Acura on the entrance ramp of I-75 at exit 59 on Sunday morning. The Acura was totaled in the crash, but for the most part, none of the wrecks in the county have been extremely serious.



Lady Rocket senior Rachelle Hammond puts up a shot in the Lady Rocket game with Bell County on Saturday night. The Lady Rockets won all three of their games in the Lady Rocket Hoopla tournament and Hammond was named MVP. (See other photos on Page A-8)