



Seniors Honored
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Mount Vernon Signal

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Bullock gets four year probation

The highly publicized criminal case of a local farmer and land developer has come to a close.

Last Friday, Benton Bullock, 53, of Mt. Vernon, who had been indicted for receiving stolen tobacco and for bribing a witness, both felonies, was sentenced to four years probation and ordered to pay a \$3,000 fine.

In December, Bullock was indicted after he allegedly admitted to knowingly buying stolen tobacco from two local men.

The tobacco had been stolen from a farm owned by Kenneth Stewart of Wildie.

According to police, Bullock paid \$40 for twenty bales of tobacco on Sunday and admitted to the crime on Monday. The tobacco was still in Bullock's garage and all twenty bales were returned to Stewart.

And last month Bullock was indicted for allegedly trying to bribe Stewart, concerning the case.

At the recommendation of Commonwealth Attorney Eddy Montgomery, Bullock will participate in a Pre-trial Diversion program during the four years he is on probation.

If Bullock successfully completes the program, all charges against him will be dismissed, and the case will be expunged from the record.

Besides the fine and probation, Bullock will not be allowed to carry a gun and must meet regularly with a parole officer.

Montgomery said that his office made the recommendation for the diversion program because Bullock is 53-years-old and has "absolutely no criminal record."

He said that Bullock cooperated fully with police from the beginning and that the diversion program is a very stringent program. Montgomery said that he thought the recommendation was fair and that he did not think Bullock should be treated any differently than anyone else.

"He is the type of defendant the diversion program was created for," Montgomery said.

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Garbage dumped

Wednesday morning employees and work release prisoners cleaned up an entire truck load of household garbage which had been illegally dumped along Old 461.

Rockcastle County Judge-Execu-

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Dangerous stretch of highway

A Rockcastle County High School senior escaped serious injury Friday in a two vehicle collision at the traffic light on the Hwy 461 by-pass front of Rockcastle County High School. According to police, Jennifer Woodall, 18, of Broadhead, turned her Chevrolet Cavalier into the path of a Taylor's Produce truck, around 2:20 p.m. Ms. Woodall was attempting to turn left into the high school. The intersection has been the site of several accidents, two of which were fatal. Last month, the Rockcastle Fiscal Court passed a resolution asking for help with the intersection from the state's Transportation Cabinet. On Monday night, Mt. Vernon councilman Gene Cromer will present the same petition to the council. The highway 461 by-pass from McDonalds to the traffic light at Hwy. 150 is Rockcastle County's most dangerous stretch of roadway. Above, Josh Thompson surveys the damage to the totaled car.

CenterNet grand opening

The world gets a little smaller for Rockcastle County on Monday, March 5 at 10:00 a.m. EST. That's when a grand opening ceremony to kick off its CenterNet site takes place. CenterNet is a regional network created by The Center for Rural Development in Somerset, which brings vast new telecommunications capabilities to counties in Southern and Eastern Kentucky.

Each site features two-way videoconferencing for large groups with the capacity to connect participants from all parts of the world. Locations also include public access computers loaded with software to

do everything from business plans to Internet searches.

"The uses are unlimited," said

Farmers vote for current program

Burley Tobacco farmers voted 98 percent to two percent in favor of leaving the current federal tobacco program in tact for the next three years.

Votes were counted in all Farm Service Agencies last Wednesday. That means that poundage marketing quotas and the price support program are still in place.

Tobacco farmers will also be able to grow 34.4 percent more tobacco in 2001 than they did in 2000.

The increase is the first in years for tobacco farmers and ends a run of cuts in tobacco quotas.

Two federal indictments

Two Rockcastle County men were indicted last week by a federal grand jury, according to a news release from the Department of Justice.

The indictments were returned by a federal grand jury in London against Jonathan E. Cromer, 21, of Mt. Vernon and Johnny Lee Bullock, 53, also of Mt. Vernon.

According to the indictment, Cromer is accused of having over 17 grams of methamphetamine, 95 tablets of the powerful pain killer OxyContin and marijuana in his possession March 2 of last year.

Cromer is also accused of having OxyContin in possession on March 3, of last year. The indictment alleges that Cromer intended to distribute the drugs.

Bullock is accused of having 50 grams of methamphetamine in his possession earlier this year.

The maximum sentence in Cromer's case is 40 years in prison and a \$2 million fine.

In Bullock's case the maximum penalty is life in prison and a \$4 million dollar fine.

State turns down grant for shelter

By Richard Andrikin
The Rockcastle County Fiscal Court and the Rockcastle Adoption Agency for Pets got some bad news this week, when they were notified that a grant request to the state had been turned down.

In January, the county and the adoption agency applied for a \$65,000 grant, which would have been used to help build an animal shelter at Roundstone, which RAAP had already begun construction on.

Rockcastle Judge-Executive Buzz Carlifus said the grant request had been turned down by the state's Department of Agriculture for several reasons.

First, he said the Agricultural Department pointed out the lack of financial support from the county throughout the years for dog control.

He said that the county does not actually own the property and proposed shelter and the department pointed out that in order to receive the grant money, the county must own the property.

The Judge also said that only 53 dog licenses were sold last year in Rockcastle County, which the state says was an insufficient number to qualify for the grant.

The county is running a public

notice in this week's newspaper concerning the purchasing of dog licenses.

According to state law, each year the owner of any dog of the county in which he or she resides, must obtain a Kentucky Dog or Kennel License.

Locally, dog licenses can be purchased at the Rockcastle County Veterinarian Clinic on School Street in Mt. Vernon.

According to the notice being published by the county, those not complying with the law can be fined up to \$100 and be sentenced to sixty days in jail.

Obviously, the county has never enforced the dog license law and it is unclear, whether they will begin to do so or not.

Carlifus did say that he may instruct the dog warden to pick up dogs that do not have a license, but he admitted that too may be difficult because the county doesn't have a current shelter.

This week's news is bad for the county's on-going lawsuit with the Trixie Foundation, a watch dog agency, which sued the county last year because of the way they handle the animal population in the county.

Stewart, McClure honored by Kentucky Highlands

Kentucky Highlands Investment Corporation (KHIC) recently honored its chairman of the board for 25 years of service to the board.

Wayne Stewart, a native of Rockcastle County, has helped to guide KHIC through a period of tremendous growth over the past quarter-century. During that time, KHIC has helped create more than 8,000 jobs. Their service includes Bell, Clay, Clinton, Harlan, Jackson, McCreary, Rockcastle, Wayne and Whitley counties.

"Wayne Stewart has helped guide our board and this organization to become a nationally recognized leader in community and economic development," said Jerry Rickert, president and CEO of KHIC. "KHIC's achievement is the result of the progressive policies set by the board of directors under Wayne's leadership."

He has given selflessly to the region through his community involvement. Stewart's commitment to service began in his native community of Rockcastle County. He

previously served as an administrator of the Rockcastle County Hospital and as an organizer and past president of the Rockcastle County Improvement Council.

A retired businessman and former school teacher, Stewart currently serves on several local civic boards. He has received several honors for his community service, including the Kentucky Industrial Development Council's Volunteer of the Year and the Southeastern Kentucky Service Award for Contribution to Better Living in Eastern Kentucky.

William McClure, of Rockcastle County, was also recently recognized for his 25 years of service as a board member for Kentucky Highlands Investment Corporation.

"They're just wonderful people and work together to get things done," McClure said of his fellow KHIC board members.

McClure, a farmer and craftsman, has been instrumental in organizing and maintaining the Kentucky Guild of Artists and Craftsmen, and as-

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Lady Rocket and Rocket supporter Kathy Coffey showed her support at Jackson County on Tuesday night. Both the Lady Rockets and the Rockets lost in first round action.

Renfro will begin 62nd season

The lights will come on the Renfro Valley Barn stage again on Friday night when Renfro Valley Entertainment will kick off its 62nd year.

Friday night's show will be the Renfro Valley Jamboree, which will begin at 7:00 p.m.

The Saturday, March 2nd, lineup of shows include the 3:30 Mountain Gospel Jubilee and the world famous Saturday Barn Dance show at 7:00 p.m.

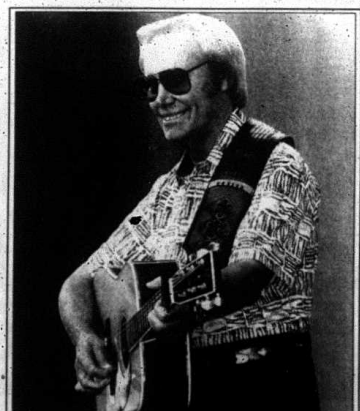
The historic Sunday morning Gatherings will be held at 8:30 a.m. Renfro's special concert series will begin on March 10th with the Reno Brothers and The Bluegrass Thoroughbreds.

Also appearing in March are Lind Tyme Out and the Moran Brothers, Dr. Ralph Stanley, John Cosby, Osborne Brothers and Dean Osborne and Eastbound.

The first big name entertainer to perform in 2001 will be Sawyer Brown on April 7.

Also in April will be The McKameys, Lynn Anderson and Carl Hurley.

A complete schedule of events, ticket prices and other information can be found on Renfro Valley's website at www.renfrovalley.com. Or call (800) 765-7464.



George Jones will perform at Renfro Valley on September 28 and 29.