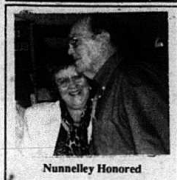


# Mount Vernon Signal

Serving Rockcastle County Since 1887

Mount Vernon, Kentucky 40456 - Volume 114 - Number 35 Ph. (606) 256-2244 - .50 a copy - Thursday, May 31 2001



Nunnely Honored

## John Hale chosen as principal at RCHS

The site based council at the Rockcastle County High School decided on Wednesday to name John Hale as the new principal at the Rockcastle County High School.

Hale was one of two applicants interviewed last week by the council. Hale is currently the principal at the Rockcastle County Middle School and his hiring will create another opening for a principal's position in the county this year.

Rockcastle County School Superintendent Larry Hammond said the vote to hire Hale was 4-1.

The council discussed the situation last Thursday, but did not come to a decision.

On Wednesday the council deliberated for about two hours before reaching consensus.

Council members Dana Singleton, Adam Coleman, Paul Abney and Cindy Anderkin voted for the hiring. Mrs. Connie Riddle was the only dissenting vote.

The vote to hire Hale is public record.

## Rockcastle Blood Drive

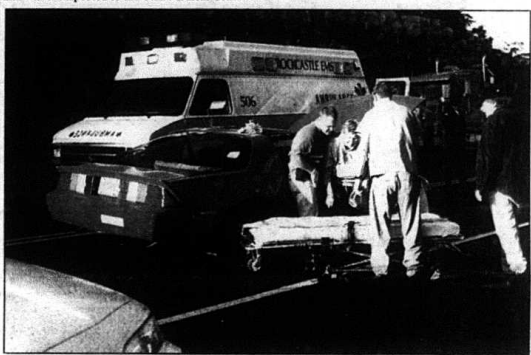
Every day, thousands of patients nationwide receive the gift of blood to help them survive. The Rockcastle County Extension Homemakers realize the continuous need for donors and in conjunction with Central Kentucky Blood Center is sponsoring the next Rockcastle County blood drive. The drive will be held Thursday, June 14th from 1:00 to 6:00 p.m. at the Rockcastle Extension Office in the basement.

Many say, "I'll wait until a member of my family needs blood and then I'll donate." Unfortunately, if a

(Cont. to A10)



The Highway 461 bypass in Mt. Vernon has been the scene of several accidents this past week. Above, four members of a Nicholasville family including a two-year-old and a six-month-old were injured in a wreck Monday. Below, Rockcastle Ambulance Service EMTs help Ms. Elizabeth Woodall, of Brodhead, after she was injured in a two-car collision on the bypass last Wednesday. The wreck she was involved in was caused by traffic slowing down from another wreck at approximately the same time. Also on Monday, ten-year-old Rodney Shane Jones was injured in a 4-wheeler accident on Maple Grove Road. He received a broken arm and was transported to the U.K. Medical Center.



## Hopkins is Valedictorian

# Graduation at high school is Sunday, 2 p.m.

Graduation ceremonies at the Rockcastle County High School will be held on Sunday, June 3rd at 2 p.m.

The 29th graduation class at the high school includes 170 graduates.

Mrs. Loretta Powell, Director of Student Services for the Rockcastle County School System will be the keynote speaker.

Mrs. Powell, who has a daughter in the graduating class, is retiring from the school system on June 30.

The Valedictorian of the class of 2001 is Stephen Hopkins, son of Tony and Donna Hopkins, of Mt. Vernon.

Hopkins has maintained a perfect 4.0 grade point average and scored a 31 on the American College Test (ACT).

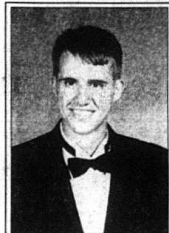
Amanda Chism is the Salutatorian of the class of 2001. She is the daughter of Dr. James and Marcia Chism of Mt. Vernon.

Miss Chism also maintained a perfect 4.0 grade point average and scored a 30 on the ACT.

75 graduates in the class of 2001 received some type of college scholarship and 12 of them kept a perfect 4.0 during their high school career.

Graduation at the Rockcastle County Middle School is at 9 a.m. on Saturday, which is also the last day of school.

School will be dismissed at



Valedictorian Stephen Hopkins



Salutatorian Amanda Chism

10:50 a.m. at the Middle School and High School and shortly thereafter at the three grade schools.

# Judge Venters rules against Fiscal Court

By: Richard Anderkin  
The Rockcastle County Fiscal Court has lost a battle in Circuit Court after Circuit Judge Dan Venters issued a summary judgement ruling in favor of a local landowner.

Venters ruled last Friday that Mike and Lori Gates are correct in asking that the majority of the Toddle Payne Road, which runs through their property at Pine Hill, be closed to public traffic.

The Gates filed suit against the county in 1999 after the fiscal court refused to close the portion of the road that runs through their 800 acres, although the road is virtually impassable.

Judge Venters ruled in favor of the Gates based mainly on the minutes of the fiscal court in the 1980s and because of the depositions of Rockcastle Judge-Executive Buzz Carlolius and magistrate Donald Bullock.

The Circuit Judge ordered that the road be left open from the blacktop to the Allen family cemetery and that the road be used only by those who have relatives buried in the cemetery.

The Judge also ordered that the county maintain the road to the cemetery.

Rockcastle Judge-Executive Buzz Carlolius said Wednesday that he was disappointed in Venters' ruling.

Also during a special meeting the court voted to ask Rockcastle County Attorney Jeff Burdette to appeal part of Venters' ruling.

Carlolius said the fiscal court would ask Venters to clarify his ruling about maintaining the road from the blacktop to the cemetery.

"It seems like the ruling says that the Gates basically have a private road, but the Judge ordered us to maintain part of it," Carlolius said.

Burdette said he would file the appeal in the next few days.

The Gates head the Christ Out-

reach for the Blind and have spent \$484,000 cash and have received \$192,000 in in-kind contributions, since they started the project a couple of years ago.

The center is located on their property and its construction is the main reason the Gates asked for the road to be closed.

Once complete, the Outreach center will have ten bedrooms, all with baths, a commercial kitchen and a community room.

For the Gates the road is a safety issue.

Mike Gates himself is blind, the result of a hunting accident several years ago, but as he explains, instead of letting that accident ruin his life and the lives of the people around him, he, along with the help of his wife, decided to start the Christ Outreach for the Blind Organization.

The Gates currently have two buildings under roof, one an 8,500 square foot center, where 36 children will be housed on a weekly basis.

The entire project centers around helping the blind and disabled to get on with their lives.

Everyone who spoke did so in praise of Keeney and many expressed the view that the council had decided to dismiss him already.

Larry Sizemore of Walnut Street said that Keeney had written several tickets and slowed the traffic on his street.

David Helton of the D&D Mini Mart said that Keeney was the first officer Crab Orchard had who investigated a burglary athis store.

Billy Blankenship said that anyone who listens to the police scanner would know that Keeney was doing a good job and that he had slowed speeding traffic in town.

Jo Ann Smith called him the best police officer the city had ever had. That's why he made some enemies in his six month stay, she added.

Kyle McKnight asked the commissioners to explain, in writing, why they wanted to fire Keeney. He added that Keeney had a good record productivity during his time on the job and deserved permanent status.

Before the mayor and commissioners went behind closed doors to discuss the future of Keeney as po-

lice chief, they opened the floor to an unusually large contingent of residents to express their views.

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The Rockcastle County High School Girls' Track Team captured the regional championship last weekend.

Members of the team are pictured above, front row from left: Mourine Ramsey, Jessica Asher, Elizabeth Bussell, and Sarah Parsons. Second row from left: Johnna Abney, Sheena Swinney, Chere Embes, Heather Hammond, Danielle Arnold, and Kayla Hayes. Back row from left: head coach Mark Brummett, Cheyenne Carmack, Rachelle Hammond, Mindy Bullock, Tara Abney, Teresa Chism, and assistant coach Linda Howard.



The Rockcastle County Rockets baseball team won the 49th District Tournament last week at Oneida.

They are currently participating in the regional tournament at Whitley County. Members of the team are pictured above, front row from left: Aaron Cash, Cody Alexander, Devin Taylor, Brandon McIntosh, James Michael Bussell and Tim McIntosh. Second row from left: Shea Taylor, Brandon Bishop, Greg Harper, Billy Hackworth, Derrick Bussell, Christopher Parsons and Dackery Larkley. Back row from left: head coach J.D. Bussell, assistant coach Bert King, Marty Reagan, assistant coach Chris Hendrickson, Tim McClure, Aaron Anderkin, Stephen Borring, Devon Bussell, John Bray, Austin Miller and assistant coach Adam Coleman.