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Northside holds groundbreaking
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Mt. Vernon Signal

Serving Rockcastle County Since 1887

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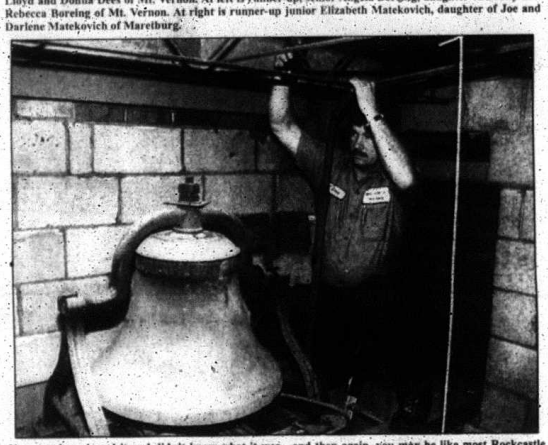
Rockcastle County High School Junior Miss Tammy Dees, center, was crowned basketball homecoming queen during ceremonies at the Rockcastle County High School on Saturday night. Miss Dees is the daughter of Lloyd and Donna Dees of Mt. Vernon. At left is runner-up, senior Angela Boreing, daughter of Bobby and Rebecca Bureing of Mt. Vernon. At right is runner-up junior Elizabeth Matekovich, daughter of Joe and Darlene Matekovich of Maretburg.



You may have heard it and didn't know what it was - and then again, you may be like most Rockcastle County residents and not know that it is even there, but the Rockcastle Courthouse on Main Street in Mt. Vernon has its own bell. Above, county maintenance supervisor Gene Cromer is shown with the courthouse bell, located in the ceiling on the second floor. The bell was recently repaired and rings at noon every day and for several minutes on New Year's Eve and Independence Day. The bell was repaired by Leroy Moore of Disputanta. The bell was originally used in the county's first courthouse, which was constructed in 1876. When that building was replaced by the present structure in 1964, then County Judge Charles Carter and magistrates built a bell tower room in the courthouse to save the bell.

The home of Billy Gene Kirby, 56, on Chestnut Ridge Road, was completely destroyed by fire Tuesday night. Mt. Vernon firefighters were called to the scene around 7:15 a.m., Wednesday, but the structure had already been completely leveled by the fire, which had been burning for sometime.

County's financial situation better than in other years

By: Richard Anderkin

Many Rockcastle County residents and taxpayers seem confused about the financial situation of the Rockcastle Fiscal Court.

In a nutshell, the county's financial situation is better than it has been in several years, according to Rockcastle County Treasurer Joe Clontz.

Much of that is due to the passage of the county's insurance tax a few years ago and the completion of the renovation project at the county jail.

Last week, Clontz presented the monthly financial statement to the fiscal court during their regular monthly meeting, which showed a positive balance in all 13 accounts the county has.

Some of those accounts are held by the county, but actually have nothing to do with the county.

The Renfro Valley Hall of Fame construction account is basically administered by Cumberland Valley Area Development District and the office of Justice Programs is a program through Commonwealth Attorney Eddy Montgomery's office in Somerset.

Although the county actually has nothing to do with the money, any payments out of those accounts must be approved by the fiscal court, therefore the reason for the accounts.

The county's other eleven accounts include: general fund, road fund, detention center, detention center debt service, economic assistance fund, forestry fund, economic development fund, federal emergency management agency fund (FEMA), 911 fund and chemical stockpile emergency preparedness program fund and the fairgrounds fund.

At the end of January, the county's general fund had a balance of $188,800. During the month the general fund received $102,300 and $67,800 was spent.

The county can spend money for basically anything out of the general fund and they can transfer money from the general fund to any other

(Cont. to A-10)

Four arrested on drug charges

Four Rockcastle County residents were arrested on Sunday afternoon, after police found what they called a working drug lab and indoor marijuana grow in a house on Hamm Road off Hwy. 1250.

According to court documents, Kentucky State Trooper Lafe Owens, Rockcastle Deputy Sheriff Arron Matthews and Brodhead police officer William Harris, responded to a 911 call that two males were breaking into a house being rented by Joey L. Chattelle, around 1:30 p.m. Sunday afternoon.

After police arrived at the residence they encountered Dwayne S. Blair, 35, of Chestnut Ridge Road and Johnathan H. Saylor, 28, of Crawford Lane, Mt. Vernon.

Blair apparently told police he had permission to be in the house, because he was the brother of Joey Chattelle, 29, who was residing at the house.

Not long after police arrived, Chattelle's estranged husband Scotty K. Chattelle, of Hwy. 150, Mt. Vernon,, also arrived at the scene. Joey Chattelle also arrived later at the scene.

According to court documents, police secured the area and obtained a search warrant for the house from District Judge Walter McGuire.

According to the citations issued by officer Owens, police found materials used in making methamphetamine(meth) and an indoor marijuana grow in the basement of the house.

Also according to the citations, Scotty Chattelle was arrested and charged with manufacturing meth, first offense, cultivation of marijuana, first offense, possession of drug paraphernalia, first offense, carrying a concealed weapon, prescription in improper container, First offense, possession of marijuana and operation of a motor vehicle while under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

(Cont. to A-10)

Two people reported missing

Two missing persons reports have been filed this week by Rockcastle County families looking for loved ones.

Shirley Lamb, of Mt. Vernon, filed a report on her son, Danny Paul Smith, 30, of Mt. Vernon, who she says she has not seen or heard from since July of last year.

Smith also has outstanding warrants against him in Rockcastle Circuit Court, one for manufacturing methamphetamine.

Debbie Smith, of Conway, has also filed a missing persions report on her niece, Nicole Neeley, who ran away from a foster home in Western Kentucky last Thursday.

Ms. Smith says the 13-year-old has ran off from other homes and has been known to hitch hike rides with truck drivers.

Anyone with information should contact police at (606) 256-2032 or (606) 256-3437 or (800) 222-5555.

Danny Paul Smith has been missing since July.

Family members are looking for Nicole Neeley.

Indictments

The Rockcastle County Grand Jury handed down indictments against five Rockcastle County residents last week.

Neil Sparks, 24, of Mt. Vernon and Chad Williams, 31, also of Mt. Vernon were indicted in connection with a September 27th robbery at the home of Larry and Dana Bullock.

Both men are accused of having a firearm in their possession when they

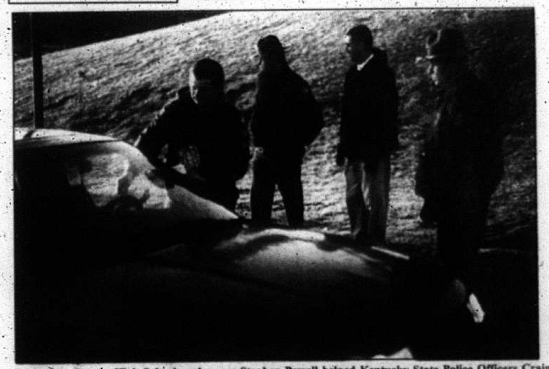
(Cont. to A-10)

Needed mortgage loans available for low income

The USDA Rural Development office, formerly the Farmers Home Administration, announces funds are available for low income Rockcastle County applicants wishing to become homeowners through its Single Family Direct Loan Program.

According to Ken Arterburn, Rural Development Manager for this area, "Advantages to the homebuyer include: (a) No required down payment, (b) Loans may include closing cost, (c) 100% financing, (d) Adjusted income limits for family of four up to $28,700., (e) Loans may be for purchase of new construction, existing housing or new manufactured housing, (f) Maximum loan of $86,317."

These funds are available to individuals or families including minorities, females and persons with disabilities. For more information, interested applicants may call the local office serving Rockcastle County at 859-624-1982 ext. 4.



Rockcastle County High School sophomore Stephen Powell helped Kentucky State Police Officers Craig Sutton, of the London Post and Mike Coyle, of the Richmond Post, pass out rewards and demerits to Rockcastle County High School students and staff on Thursday morning. Those who had their seat belts on got a smarty candy and those who did not got dummy candy. Governor Paul Patton had declared February as Buckle Up Kentucky month in the Commonwealth. There is also a bill pending in Kentucky General Assembly which would make not wearing a seatbelt a primary offense. Currently, only children under a certain age not buckled up can be considered a primary offense. In 2001, 847 people died on Kentucky highways. In January alone, four people died on Rockcastle County highways and eleven fatalities were recorded at the London KSP Post. Also looking on is RCHS assistant principal Barry Noble.

RCHS set school record for wins

The 2002 edition of the Rockcastle County Rocket basketball team has set a school record with 20 wins during the regular season, after an easy win over Monticello on Tuesday night.

The Rockets are 20-6 and the number one seed in the 49th district tournament.

They will finish regular season play on Friday night when they host McCreary Central, a team they defeated earlier in the season.

The district tournament is being held at Clay County High School.

The Rockets finished regular season district play with a five and one record, tops in the district.

On February 9th, the Clay County Tigers defeated Jackson County, at Clay, to assure Rockcastle of the number one seed

If Jackson County had beaten Clay they would have finished district play with a five and one record and there would have been a coin toss for the number one seed.

As it stands now, the boys will play Oneida Baptist, a team they have defeated twice, in the first round.

That game is scheduled for 7:45 p.m. on February 25th.

The Generals of Jackson County will take on Clay County in the first game at 6:00 p.m., on the 25th.

The Rockcastle varsity boys have never won the 49th district tournament.

Rockcastle's Lady Rockets, who have also had an excellent year and had a mark of 17-8, will play Clay County in the district tourney on Tuesday, February 26th at 6:00 p.m.

The Lady Rockets have lost both regular season games to the Lady Tigers this season, although both games were very close.

The Lady Rockets won the district in 1999 and won the 13th region in 1997 to advance to the state tournament.

The 13th regional tournament will be held at Rockcastle County High School for the first time ever, beginning on March 4th.

Rocket head coach Clayton Cash is in his tenth season at the school.

The Rockets were ranked third in the region this week behind Cawood and Bell County.

(Cont. to A-10)