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Mount Vernon Signal

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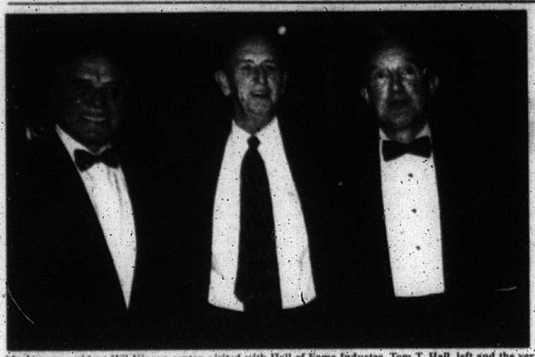

Mt. Vernon resident Wil Kincer, center, visited with Hall of Fame Inductee, Tom T. Hall, left and the very famous Ralph Emory during the Kentucky Music Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony Thursday night in Lexington. (See complete story and other photos on Page A-12)

Mayor King accused of taking "kick-back"

By: Richard Anderkin

The Mt. Vernon City Council fielded complaints on Monday night about poor road conditions and cable television service.

They even heard from one couple who accused Mayor Karen King of taking a kick-back from Greer Brothers of London.

Dr. James Cunningham and his wife, Sue, told the council they were very upset by the fact that the city did not maintain their road, Red Bud Drive in Chestnut Hills Subdivision.

The Cunninghams said they had lived in the subdivision for ten years and that their road had never been maintained by the city or the county.

Chestnut Hills Subdivision is in the city limits of Mt. Vernon, but according to Mayor King and maintenance supervisor Dennis McClure, the city has never accepted Red Bud Drive into the city's work program.

Ms. King and her former husband David actually developed most of Chestnut Hills Subdivision.

Ms. King lives in Chestnut Hills Subdivision but not on Red Bud Drive.

The Cunninghams also said that last fall when the city was doing blacktopping in the subdivision, Greer Brothers laid blacktop in front of King's driveway. "I think that was a kick-back," said Sue Cunningham.

The blacktop was laid along the main road in the subdivision which is named Chestnut Hills Drive. Ms. King lives at the end of that road.

King and McClure told the Cunninghams that the blacktop Ms. King received was a donation from Greer because it was left over and had to be used before it "setup".

However, Dr. Cunningham said that he knew for a fact that the blacktop laid in front of King's driveway was the first off the truck.

Councilman Joe Mullins suggested that King and Rockcastle County Judge-Executive Buzz Carloftis work out some kind of arrangement on the roads inside the city limits, which are not maintained at the present time by either the city or the county.

McClure said it would take $80,000 to fix Red Bud Drive like it should be and he also suggested raising the payroll tax to pay for the maintenance on all roads in the city which needed it.

McClure's suggestion of raising the payroll tax drew a harsh comment from Councilwoman Clarice Kirby, who said there would be no raise in the tax.

Dr. Cunningham told McClure that he thought his estimate of $80,000 was crazy and that it would take a lot less to fix the road than that.

"If you all would have just fixed some of the pot holes, we probably wouldn't have said anything, but we pay city taxes just like everyone else," she said.

The Cunninghams said they had also spent $5,000 of their own money on the road and that they had received an estimate of $17,000 to fix the road entirely.

Mayor King said that Red Bud Drive was never accepted by the city, although the subdivision is in city limits. "The Mayor at that time (Roland Mullins) said the road was never built to specifications and he would not accept it," King said.

Councilwoman Kirby also said she did not understand the way the city decides to fix roads. "Now you (McClure) and the Mayor just ride around and decide where blacktop will be put and where it won't," she said.

Two current council members, Lonetta Daugherty and Gene Cromer are also in the same quandry as the Cunninghams.

They live in the city limits on streets that have never been maintained by the city and which are not maintained by the county anymore.

McClure said the roads were not worked by the city because the city has never taken over ownership, although the roads are in the city limits.

As for working something out with the county, Judge-Executive Carloftis said that he would be willing to discuss the problem, but that the state had made it very clear that the county was not suppose to work on roads which are inside the city limits.

"They told me, no mowing, no snow removal, no patching, no ditching, no garbage removal and certainly no blacktopping," he said.

Carloftis said that he met with officials at the transportation office in Somerset last fall and they made it perfectly clear that once a roadway is placed inside the city limits it is no longer the county's responsibility to take care of it.

"I was told by the state that when a city expands its corporate limits, it cannot simply take in a territory, collect city taxes on the residents and then arbitrarily refuse to provide proper street and road service to the new city residents," Carloftis said.

Councilwoman Kirby pointed out that the problem was only going to get worse if and when the city redraws city limit boundaries, bringing in more residents and, of course, more roads.

At Monday night's meeting the council approved a payment of $40,000 to Greer Brothers for last fall's blacktop.

Hudson has some answers

Charter Communications General Manager Dave Hudson was at the Mt. Vernon Council meeting Monday night and this time he had a few more answers for the crowd, than he did a month ago.

Hudson said that the recent upgrade of the Charter's cable television system was virtually complete and had been inspected.

He said that if customers were having any problems at the current time, their problems were most likely inside their homes, but that they should still call Charter's service department.

"We are not responsible for problems inside the house, but during this upgrade we will help our customers figure out what the problems are and fix them," he said.

Hudson said Charter had spent millions of dollars on their recent

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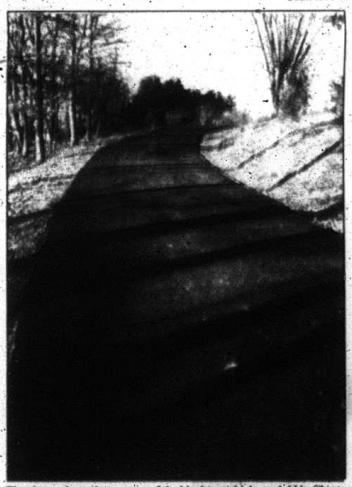


The above photo shows some of the blacktop which was laid in Chestnut Hills Subdivision last fall. Monday night a local couple accused Mt. Vernon's Mayor of getting a kick-back in the form of blacktop.

The above photo shows the poor condition of Red Bud Drive in Chestnut Hills subdivision. The road is one of several in the city limits not maintained by the city or the county.

Charter P.E.G. channel discussed at council meeting

Mt. Vernon physician Dr. Tony Arvin thinks that the community could benefit greatly from a local television station.

Arvin brought up the subject during Monday night's regular monthly meeting of the Mt. Vernon City Council.

Arvin told Charter Communications General Manager Dave Hudson, that although he wasn't a subscriber he appreciated all of the work Charter had done to improve their cable television service in the county.

According to Hudson, he and Arvin had talked on a couple of occasions concerning the possibility of Charter providing a channel for local access.

Arvin said he thought the entire community could benefit for several reasons, such as school water advisories and weather updates.

He said that he also thought such things as council meetings, school board meetings, fiscal court meetings and sporting events could also be broadcast on the station.

Hudson said that Charter would be obligated by law to provide the channel on the cable, if that was a requirement in Charter's franchise agreement with the city and the county.

Hudson said that he thought it would be a good idea and that he would not have any problem including that stipulation in the next franchise agreement, which is due to be renewed in about a year.

Hudson said that the biggest problem faced by those involved in producing programming for such a station was the amount of content.

"It seems like it becomes very difficult to produce enough good programming to keep people tuning in," he said.

Arvin said that the 21st Century Community Learning Center at the Rockcastle County Middle School was already in the process of building their own studio and providing a media class for students.

Arvin said that he thought that students there and at RCHS would be very interested in working on such a project. Arvin also said that he had checked into other forms of programming such as putting on the weather and time when no programming is scheduled.

The council seemed very open to the possibility of such a station and it was decided that the matter would be discussed at length at a later date.

Mt. Vernon city council balks on 30 million gallon request

The Mt. Vernon City Council turned down a request by officials from Western Rockcastle Water Association for 30 million gallons of water a month, during their regular monthly meeting on Monday.

Mayor Karen King told the council that Western was currently buying about 20 million gallons a month from the city and that when the city got their own problems at the water plant straightened out they would provide Western with all the water they needed.

Water Superintendent Dennis McClure said the problem was with the amount of raw water coming from Lake Linville to the plant.

"We just can't get enough to the plant to take care of such a request," McClure said.

"The pipe coming from the lake to the plant isn't big enough," he said.

"When we are able to get enough in there we have the capabilities of treating it," he said.

The city recently completed a $4.5 million expansion and upgrade at the plant, which was suppose to take care

Cont. to A-11

Rockets beat Bobcats, will play Corbin Friday

The Rockcastle County High School Rockets will play in the boys semi-finals of the 13th regional tournament on Friday night, after a 65-56 over Bell County, Tuesday night.

Bell County, the region's top rated team, did not lead in the contest.

Rockcastle got the opening tip and never looked back as they upped their season record to 23-7, in front of a packed house at the Rockcastle County High School.

The Rockets, who have already smashed all win less records for the boys at RCHS, will take on a Corbin team which walked over Evans 104, 78 in the second game, Tuesday.

Of the eight teams who qualified for the regional tournament only four are left:

The Cawood Trojans, a team which walked over Whitley County in the first round will take on Clay County, a team who easily defeated Middlesboro in the first round.

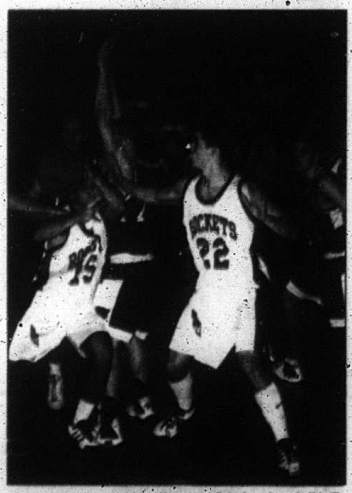
The Rockets will play the second game Friday night.

Fans will have to have a ticket for both games, because the gym will be cleared after the first contest, according to tournament director Barry Noble.

Noble, who is also an RCHS assistant principal, said that clearing the gym after a semi-final game is common practice in regional tournaments across the state.

The boys finals of the region will be held at 8 p.m. on Saturday.

Advance tickets for the Rocket game are on sale at RCHS.



Aaron Cash, left and Andrew Hammond fight for a loose ball in Tuesday night's win over Bell County in the regional tournament. Cash had 29 points to lead all scorers and Hammond grabbed 13 rebounds. The Rockets will play Corbin on Friday night.