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Hail storm causes a lot of damage

By: Richard Anderkin
A dangerous storm swept through Rockcastle County Wednesday night, causing tremendous hail and wind damage to structures and especially vehicles.

In the southern portion of the county near the Rockcastle-Pulaski line, some residents reported baseball size hail.
Pat Craig, an insurance adjuster for Kentucky Farm Bureau in Rockcastle County, said Saturday that his office alone would work over 600 insurance claims caused by the hail and wind. Farm Bureau's local loss could exceed \$1.5 million.

Most of the heavy damage occurred in the western and southern portions of the county. The flooding was the worst in the south and the hail damage was the worst in the west.

Rockcastle County roads have also been adversely affected by that storm and other small storms this Spring.

Federal Emergency Management Administration officials were scheduled to be in the county beginning on Thursday (today) and the rest of the week to take an assessment of both public roadway damages and private property damage.

"This initial survey will determine Rockcastle County's ability to access federal funds for assistance," said Rockcastle County Judge-Executive Buzz Carlotis.

Carlotis, road foreman Jack Cromer and local emergency management director Howell Holbrook will be with FEMA officials during the inspection of the county.

Carlotis declared a state of emergency last Thursday, seeking both state and federal assistance to help rebuild roadways.

"I ask that people understand that we have some roads completely washed out and several contractors have been hired during this emergency to help with the damage to the roadways," he said.

Rockcastle County weatherman Bud Cox said that over four inches of rain has been recorded at the weather station during the first eight days of May and that precipitation has been recorded seven out of the first eight days.

"The ground is pretty saturated," Cox said Wednesday as more rain was coming down.

The high temperature so far for the month of May has been 77 and low 46.

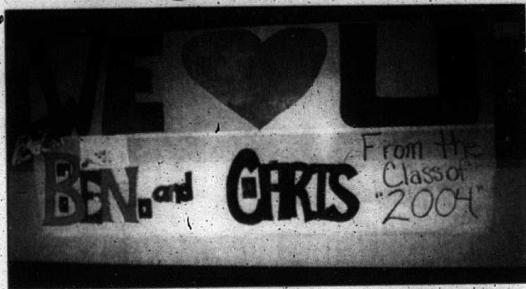
Mike Combs to perform in Renfro

Renfro Valley Entertainment Center continues to bring the best in gospel music when Michael Combs performs on Saturday at 7:00 p.m. in the New Barn Theater.

Michael Combs' style is unique, as is everything else about him. He has an acute love for the Lamb of God, which bubbles over into everything he says and does. Combs is known for gospel favorites such as "Drinking From My Saucer," "I Have Seen Him," "I Know My Name Is Written There" and "Not For Sale." The message within "Not For Sale" has significantly influenced many.

(Cont. to A-12)

Tragedy Strikes



In top photo: Rockcastle County High School students displayed their sympathy by constructing two large banners which were hung in the high school this week, after the tragic auto accident on Saturday. Shown in the other photos are the number of people who stood in line at both visitations for the 16-year-olds.

Lee Keene will retire from top hospital post

Lee D. Keene, President/CEO of Rockcastle Hospital and Respiratory Care Center, Inc., since 1989, has announced his retirement from that position effective July 1, 2002. Keene, 70, will continue to be associated with the hospital as public relations and planning officer.

Having formerly served as administrator of Pikeville Methodist Hospital, Keene was broadly experienced



Lee Keene



Residents on Liberty Drive in Mt. Vernon experienced more flooding on Wednesday night, after a severe storm went through the county. Some residents complained about the problem at the Mt. Vernon City Council meeting on Monday night. Mayor Karen King said that developers would build a retention basin (pond) in the Castle Ridge Subdivision to help catch the water. Wednesday night, some homes in the Mt. Vernon area were flooded.

Tragic wreck claims lives of two teenagers

By: Richard Anderkin
A tragic single vehicle accident on Hwy. 70 Saturday claimed the lives of two Rockcastle County High School students.

Another student is listed in stable condition at the University of Kentucky Hospital and will recover from his injuries.

Killed as a result of the wreck were Benjamin McKibben, 16, of Quail and Chris Tolle, 16, of Mt. Vernon.

Seriously injured was the driver of the car, Jameson Cable, 16, also of Quail.

All three were sophomores at the Rockcastle County High School.

According to Kentucky State Trooper Coby Smith, the accident occurred at 3:45 p.m., near the intersection of Carl Brown Road and Hwy. 70.

According to Smith's report, Cable was driving a 1994 Ford Mustang toward Ottawa when he lost control on wet pavement.

Smith's report said that the right rear of the Mustang hit a tree and came to rest in the creek that runs along Hwy. 70.

The impact from the crash threw Tolle from the vehicle.

Cable and McKibben remained in the vehicle after the impact, and members of the Rockcastle County EMS, Mt. Vernon and Broadhead firefighters had to use the jaws of life to free McKibben from the back seat of the vehicle.

Tolle died a few minutes after being taken to the Rockcastle Hospital. McKibben was flown to the University of Kentucky Medical Center and Cable was taken by ambulance.

McKibben died around 11 p.m. from massive internal injuries.

It is unclear at this time if Cable or Tolle had their seatbelts on, but McKibben was wearing his.

The news of the tragic wreck spread quickly throughout the county, which was evident by the number of people, many of them classmates, who were at U.K. on Saturday night to support the McKibbens and Cables.

Ben McKibben was the youngest of four boys and Chris Tolle was an only child.

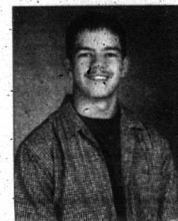
Numerous counselors and clergy were at Rockcastle County High

School on Monday morning to help students and faculty members cope with the loss.

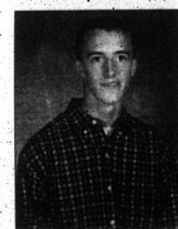
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Benjamin McKibben



Christopher Tolle



Jameson Cable

County's obligations exceed \$4 million

There have been a lot of questions about the Rockcastle County Fiscal Court's financial condition.

The bottom line - they owe a lot of money for a lot of projects.

"We may owe a lot, but we operate a tight ship and we have always met our obligations - we are actually in very good shape," said Rockcastle County Judge-Executive Buzz Carlotis.

The county owes \$1.46 million on the courthouse annex, but Carlotis pointed out that the state pays the

majority of the payment on that debt.

The county owes \$1.38 million on the jail renovation and expansion and an additional \$83,000 on the jail for expenses incurred while the jail was closed for renovation.

They owe \$540,000 on a road fund bond, which originally started out as a million dollars under the former administration, additional obligations \$61,000 on the county garage, a debt that started out as \$90,000, a \$153,000 note for the

(Cont. to A-10)



Residents in the county were hit with a hail storm last Wednesday. It was worse in some areas of the county than others. Above, Clayton Cash shows the golf ball size hail he picked up out of his yard on Ottawa School Road after the storm.