



Boys and Girls Win
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Mount Vernon Signal

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Mt. Vernon holds last meeting of year 2002

Current Mt. Vernon Mayor Karen King resided over her last meeting on Monday night at city hall. King presented three city employees, Burgess Mullins, Denny McClure and Junior Gray with watches in honor of their 20 years of service to the citizens of Mt. Vernon.

King and the council also passed a resolution to make a walking track at the city's ballpark on the Old Mt. Vernon-Broadhead road.

The property has been used for several years by local sports teams and Mayor King said that it would still be available to them, but that the city would make a walking track around the outside of the property.

In January, current council member Charlie Kirby will take over as Mayor after beating King in November.

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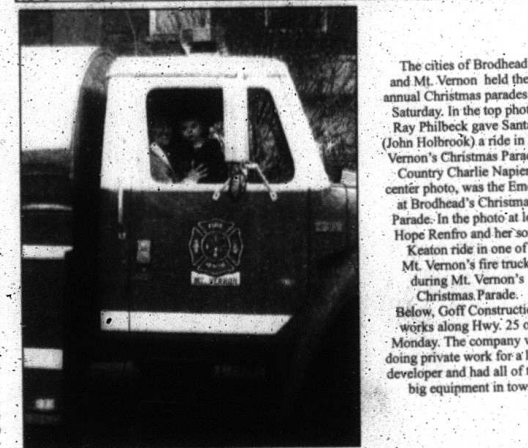
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The cities of Broadhead and Mt. Vernon held their annual Christmas parades on Saturday. In the top photo Ray Philbeck gave Santa, (John Holbrook) a ride in Mt. Vernon's Christmas Parade. Country Charlie Napier, center photo, was the Emcee at Broadhead's Christmas Parade. In the photo at left Hope Renfro and her son, Keaton ride in one of Mt. Vernon's fire trucks during Mt. Vernon's Christmas Parade. Below, Goff Construction works along Hwy. 25 on Monday. The company was doing private work for a local developer and had all of their big equipment in tow.



Patton lets eight out of local jail

Increased county prisoner levels, new mandates for lower prisoner numbers by the Department of Corrections and Kentucky's Governor Paul Patton's release of Class D felons, is putting the pinch on the Rockcastle County Detention Center.

The Detention Center has been a lucrative enterprise for Rockcastle County, bringing in over \$60,000 per month, on average, for the housing of state prisoners over the past few years.

However, Governor Patton's new edict, by way of executive order, releases many Class D felons from jails all over the state, including eight locally, Wednesday, at noon.

Jailer Miller, who is on the Jail Association Board of Directors, says that the crisis being created is statewide.

"Counties have relied on the income generated by jails who have contracted to house state prisoners, and Rockcastle is no exception," Miller said. "Our jailer's association, and other county officials' associations, are meeting to discuss options in light of Frank's recent decision to reduce the Class D felon population," he added.

The growing numbers in county prisoners being housed in the past few years had already affected the number of state prisoners that could be held by the Rockcastle County Detention Center.

"We have a moral obligation to be fair, and that includes the detention of county defendants who break the law, especially in serious matters, and with the increase in the meth problem all over the state, we focus on keeping dangerous defendants in jail, pending indictment if and when the Grand Jury meets," said County Attorney Jeff Burdette, who is responsible for prosecution in District Court.

Then, in October of this year, the state began requiring local jails to reduce their populations based on bed capacity, regardless of the number of state prisoners versus county prisoners. "That was unexpected, but we

could still make money. But with the Governor's plan to release Class D felons, that is troubling. We simply cannot foresee a possibility of breaking even now," Jailer Miller explained.

"I cannot believe there are not alternatives to releasing criminals back on our streets before their sentence is served," County Attorney Burdette said. "It is disheartening, disappointing and a slap in the face of our citizen juries, and the people who follow the law."

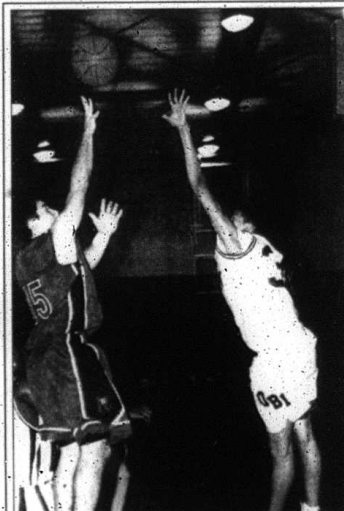
County Judge Executive Buzz Carliford said the state has housed many of its inmates in local county jails because it is a cheaper method of housing prisoners than building state-operated prisons. "The fiscal court expanded our jail to house state prisoners in order to prevent local taxpayers from having to pay jail salaries. I think we now have around 42 state inmates. The loss of the eight who were released today, by the state, represents an \$80,000 loss in revenue to our jail over a year's period."

Carliford went on to say, "Although I am not in agreement with such early releases, it looks as though it is just going to be a budgetary fact of life as the state seeks out the easier cost-cutting measures."

Released Wednesday and what they were convicted of were:

Christy Robinson, promoting contraband; Verria Burton, trafficking in a controlled substance and two counts of trafficking in marijuana; Marietta King, burglary and theft by unlawful taking, under \$300; Mark Baker, receiving stolen property, under \$300; James Mason, flagrant disobedience; Larry Taylor, arson, 3rd degree; Tommy Collins, two counts of burglary, 3rd, theft by unlawful taking, under \$300 and receiving stolen property, under \$300 and Chris Newland, theft by unlawful taking, under \$300 and criminal possession of a forged instrument.

Some of these prisoners are getting out with half their time served, the others are being released from three to six months early.



The Rockcastle County Rockets basketball team is consider the number one team in the 13th region in most polls. So far this season, they are 3-0. Aaron Cash, pictured above, is also considered the number one player in most polls. The Rockets play at Knox Central on Friday night. Cash scored 20 points against OBI to lead the Rockets. The Rockets have won two straight district games and will play Clay County on January 3, which will be a pivotal game.

State sets rate of five percent on delinquent taxes for payers

Pursuant to KRS 131.183(1), the 2003 tax interest rate charged by the Kentucky Revenue Cabinet (KRC) on unpaid and delinquent taxes has been set at five percent. Where applicable, the same rate is paid on refunds issued by KRC.

The rate, effective January 1, 2003, is based on the prime interest rate charged by Kentucky banks during October 2002. A recent survey of Kentucky banks showed that the prevailing average prime interest rate in October was 4.72 percent, which was rounded by law to the nearest full percent (five percent).