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Mount Vernon Signal

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Mount Vernon, Kentucky 40456 - Volume 113 - Number 21 - Ph. (606) 256-2244 - 50¢ a copy - Thursday, February 24, 2000

Mt. Vernon passes wage, earnings tax

One half percent will be collected beginning April 1

By: Richard Anderkin
Beginning April 1st if you work inside the city limits of Mt. Vernon you are going to take home a little bit less money.
On Monday night, the Mt. Vernon City Council finally passed a final

reading of an ordinance which will tax the wages of the working man/woman and the profits of the businesses operating inside the city.
The tax will be one-half percent of every dollar earned and will be paid to the city on a quarterly basis.

After nearly ten weeks of discussions and protests only two people, besides the council showed up for the final vote.
Mayor Karen King read a short summary of the ordinance and asked for a vote.

Council members Lou Vanhooose, Clark Mullins and Wayne Bullock voted in favor and Clarice Kirby and Jackie Renner voted no.
Because former councilmember Daryl Smith resigned from the council last month after he moved out of

the city limits, only five council members have voted on the ordinance.
There are two major differences in the ordinance now than there were in November when the council first passed it.

In November, the council attempted to pass one and a half percent tax on just wage earners.
Then they decided to include the net profits of the businesses in the county as well.

At a later meeting, a committee formed by Mayor King to study the tax recommended a one percent tax instead of a one and a half percent tax.

And when the city finally got information from the state that showed a one percent tax would generate and estimated \$1.2 million annually, the council voted to lower the rate to a half percent.

On the recommendation of councilmember Clarice Kirby, the city also exempted the wages of ev-

eryone 65 or older from the tax. The ordinance also exempts the first \$2,000 of net profits on a business owned by someone 65 or older.

Mayor King said the city would begin mailing out forms to businesses as soon as possible, so that on April 1, they can begin withholding the tax from employee's wages.

The tax will be paid to the city on a quarterly basis. The net profits tax will be paid to the city on an annual basis.

Mayor King said that city clerk Kaye Rader would be designated as the tax administrator, but that she would hire additional clerical help for the city to handle the extra paperwork that will be required in the office.

According to the ordinance, the city will have the authority to audit the books of businesses in the city to make sure they are complying with the tax.



A Mt. Vernon man miraculously escaped serious injury in a two vehicle crash on Interstate 75 Monday afternoon. Johnathon Eric Cromer, 28, was treated for several injuries at the Rockcastle Hospital after the wreck, although none of them were life threatening. Members of the Mt. Vernon Fire Department used the jaws of life to cut the top off Cromer's Oldsmobile so he could be freed from the wreckage. Police said Cromer's vehicle ran underneath the back of the above delivery truck after traffic became stopped on the Interstate at the 65 mile marker. An earlier accident near the Madison County-Rockcastle line probably caused the traffic to stop on the interstate. That wreck involved a tractor-trailer.

Federal Judge denies bond for Lovells until April 17 trial date

Ten defendants in an alleged drug-running ring based in Rockcastle County are a danger to society and will be held without bail until their trials, a federal judge ruled Tuesday.
Family members sobbed and ankle chains clinked as two women and eight men hobbled out of the Lexington courtroom after U.S. Magistrate James B. Todd issued his ruling.

Eight of the 10 are connected by blood or marriage to the Floyd and Bernice Lovell family of Burr. They are among 16 indicted of February 3 on charges ranging from selling cocaine to transporting drug money across state lines, according to an indictment unsealed last Wednesday. The 10 were arrested last Tuesday, and federal prosecutors asked yesterday to detain them without bond until their April 17 trial.

Two others, David and Barbara Lovell, are already in jail awaiting a murder trial in Rockcastle County. A third man, Ronnie Bradley, is in federal

prison. It is unclear where the other three men, all Cubans residing in Miami, are.

Investigators who testified at the detention hearing said the family, led by Richard Allen Lovell, had used drug money to buy as much as \$2 million worth of cocaine from connections in Florida then transported it to Kentucky for sale here.

An IRS agent testified that from 1995 to 1998, Richard Lovell and his wife, Cathleen, spent at least \$680,000 more than they could have earned through legal means, since their only legitimate income was from gambling and payments from Social Security and welfare.

Several of the defendants sold cocaine to undercover informants, according to a Kentucky State Police investigator. Detective Alan Lewis testified that the transactions were "tape-recorded and that police found tens of thousands of dollars of cash in the possession of the defendants

during the search of a house and several traffic stops.

Federal prosecutors maintained that they had a strong case and the defendants were dangerous enough to detain without bail, in part, because they had allegedly threatened witnesses. Defense attorneys pointed out that the police claims were based largely on confidential informants, and said they shouldn't be taken as fact.

Judge Todd noted their concerns but he also noted the lengthy criminal records of many of the defendants, and decided they might flee if they were let loose.

Those indicted last week were: Richard Allen Lovell, Cathleen Lovell, Charles Lovell, David Lovell, Barbara Lovell, Wendell Ford Lovell, Brian Lovell, Darren Sturgill, Charles Brock, Teresa Lovell.
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Big names headed to Renfro Valley for 2000 concert series

Some of the biggest names in country music are headed to the stage in historic Renfro Valley in 2000.

"I think it is the best line-up we have ever been able to schedule in the Valley, since we started having headliner concerts," said Jane Thorne, Renfro Valley Entertainment's Chief Operating Officer.

Renfro Valley will open for its 51st season on March 3 when the Jamboree will take place at 7 p.m. on the old barn stage. The Renfro Valley Barn Dance will take place on Saturday night at 7 p.m., also in the old barn.

The concert series kicks off on March 11 with Dale Ann Bradley and Coon Creek and Mountain Heart.

On March 18 the Osborne Brothers will perform with Dean Osborne and Eastbound and on March 18 and 25 the Gospel Talent Show will be held.

The Lonesome River Band will perform on March 25 and the first big name star to arrive in Renfro Valley on April 1st when Lee Greenwood takes to the stage.

Greenwood will be followed in April by Joe Diffie, Mike Snider, Charley Pride, The McKameys and comedian Carl Huxley.

In May, Glen Campbell, Charles Johnson and the Revivers, Aaron Tippin and Brenda Lee will perform.

In June, June Carter Cash and The Living Circle Band, Don Williams, The Inspirations and Brad Paisley.

The Old Joe Clark Bluegrass Festival is scheduled to begin on June 29 and in July several big names will.

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Local KU office to close on March 24

A fixture in Rockcastle County for the past several decades will soon be gone.

Kentucky Utilities is closing its Mt. Vernon office on March 24.

According to a local employee, Louisville Gas and Electric, which now owns Kentucky Utilities is closing 28 of its 60 offices across the state.

Kentucky Utilities has approximately 3,000 customers in Rockcastle County.

The employee said that no guarantees about their jobs had been made to current employees at the Mt. Vernon office, some who have been there for twenty-two years.
KU will have pay stations located throughout the county.

LG&E Energy (NYSE: LGE) announced measures Tuesday that

will further integrate its two utility operations. The measures include reducing 250 positions in the company's 5,500 employee work force over the next several months.

Enhanced early retirement and severance programs will be offered to company employees to achieve the reduction. The company hopes to achieve these reductions through voluntary means and will use involuntary separation only as a last resort.

"While the decision to reduce our work force is difficult, it is consistent with our goal to continue to integrate the operations of KU and LG&E, adopting the best practices of each company, while providing award-winning service to our customers," said Victor A. Staffieri, president and chief operating officer for LG&E Energy.



Loretta Lynn will be in Renfro Valley in November.

By: Richard Anderkin
Only eight percent of those polled said they thought weapons at schools were a problem and 88 percent said they felt safe at school.

29 percent of those polled said they did not use any type of birth control when they did have sex and 13 percent said they had contracted a sexually transmitted disease.

Seven percent said they had been pregnant or caused a pregnancy and 45 percent said they thought teen pregnancy was a problem at the school.

25 percent of those having sex said they had been with four or more partners, while 41 percent said they had been with only one person.

62 percent of those polled said they had used alcohol.

Pills, pot and speed were the most used drugs and of those using drugs 71 percent of them said they had used drugs on school property.

Only 53 percent of those polled said they thought officials at RCHS did enough in drug prevention and 58 percent said they thought that staff at RCHS was aware of the presence of drugs.

73 percent of those polled said they talked to their parents when they had a problem, while 64 percent said they talked to a friend.

49 percent also said they would feel comfortable talking to a teacher at school if there were a problem.

Students at RCHS said drug abuse counseling and prevention programs was listed as the most important issue for students at RCHS. Number two was alcohol abuse and counseling, number three was dropout prevention programs, number four employment and vocational training and number five was health services or referral to health services.

Poll says sexual activity on rise at high school

Student drug use down

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Blood drive March 6th

There are a few of us who would hesitate when given the direct and obvious opportunity to save the life of another human being. We have all envisioned ourselves racing into a burning building to save the life of a small child or pulling a car wreck victim from a mangled automobile.

Heroism, however, is not always displayed in the midst of flashing lights and sirens. One of the greatest acts of heroism is overlooked day after day...donating blood. Rockcastle County Extension Homemakers is joining together with Central KY Blood Center to give you the opportunity to save lives.

In order to save lives, a blood donor must be at least 17 years of age and weigh 100 pounds or more. The Rockcastle County Extension Home-

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