



Mount Vernon Signal

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Fiscal Court may assume ownership of former Livingston school property

By: Richard Anderkin

There may be hope yet for the former Livingston School property, if Rockcastle County Judge/Executive Buzz Carlifotis and Rockcastle County Jailor James Miller can get all the details worked out.

Last week, Carlifotis and Miller told the Rockcastle Fiscal Court that they had been working for sometime on a project that will not only make the county money, but one that will also help renovate and restore the former Livingston School property.

Miller and Carlifotis have plans for the property, which is now owned by the Daniel Boone Development Council. The plan is for a minimum security dormitory for work release prisoners from the Rockcastle County Detention Center.

Daniel Boone Development Director Mike Buckler told the court that Daniel Boone has been unable to come up with any funding for renovating the school property and the board was willing to give up the property to the Fiscal Court, or any other governing body such as the Livingston City Council, at no charge.

"I'm extremely excited about what the jailer and I have come up with so far, but the project itself is still in the very earliest of stages," Carlifotis said.

The court took no action on Tuesday, but seemed extremely interested in the project.

"We are going to get our cost estimates together and have a complete detailed plan for the magistrates to go over before we make a recommendation to the court, but I certainly think this is a worthwhile project that would not only benefit the city of Livingston but the entire county," Miller said Friday.

Currently, the Rockcastle County Detention Center has beds for 22 work release prisoners in a minimum security area.

Carlifotis and Miller said they could convert those 22 minimum security prisoner beds back to maximum security, if the minimum security prisoners were held in Livingston.

The two said the minimum security prisoners would be housed in the new building on the Livingston

property, which was being used for three classrooms when the school was closed in 1993.

"It would be fairly simple to get that building ready to house 25 work release prisoners because bathrooms are already in the building. We would have to install showers, but other than that, it could be ready for use pretty quickly at a minimum cost," Carlifotis said.

The Judge said he and Miller and members of the Fiscal Court would meet with the Livingston City Council about the project and, it was his hope, that the council would accept it.

"We have to look at what is best for Livingston and what is best for the entire county because, after all, we (the fiscal court) represent the entire county. It is not going to be a popularity contest and we will make

our final decision on what is best for the county as a whole," he said.

The Judge also said that it is estimated that 25 work release prisoners would generate \$237,000 annually with a good profit built in. "We could take the profits we make from the minimum security prisoners and use it to renovate the gymnasium at the school for public use," Carlifotis said.

Carlifotis said that an inspector with the state's Department of Corrections had already been on the site and given verbal approval to the project.

"We are talking about class D prisoners who have not been convicted of violent crimes and who have been evaluated by the state as no risk offenders," he said.

A security fence would be built around the building housing the prisoners.

(Cont. to A12)

EPA helping in county during Commonwealth Clean-Up Week

On Monday, the Kentucky Environmental Protection Agency was in Rockcastle County to begin work on the clean-up of four illegal dumps.

Rockcastle Council Solid Waste Coordinator Scotty Berryman said Rockcastle County was the only county chosen from 13 by the EPA for the clean-up.

Besides providing equipment and manpower to help in the week long clean-up, the EPA has also given Rockcastle County \$1,250 for a tire fund, which will help dispose of tires picked up during the clean-up.

Broader resident Bill Belcher, who works with the EPA in London, made the final decision to help the county in the clean-up.

Three of the four illegal dumps to be cleaned up will be along U.S. 25 from the Rockcastle River to Livingston. Berryman said that each

of those dumps are close to the river basin.

The other dump is at Piney Branch, near the Piney Branch creek in one of the most majestic areas of the county.

Berryman said that county road workers, work release prisoners and members of the PRIDE committee will also help in the clean-up.

The county will also find out this week if they have been awarded any of the six PRIDE grants they applied for. The applications go through U.S. Congressman Harold Rogers' office and, all total, the county is seeking \$120,000 in funding to clean-up more illegal dumps. It is estimated that 40 illegal dumps exist in the county.

To deter illegal dumping, the county has issued notices to those people whose names are found in illegal dumps and those people have been required to give them some legitimate way of disposing of their garbage. Some people have also paid a \$25 fine, according to Berryman, who said that at least three cases are currently in the County Attorney's office because people did not respond to their notice.

Berryman said the county would not hesitate to prosecute those people who are illegally dumping and that if any resident gets a notice they should respond to his office.

Hospital schedules

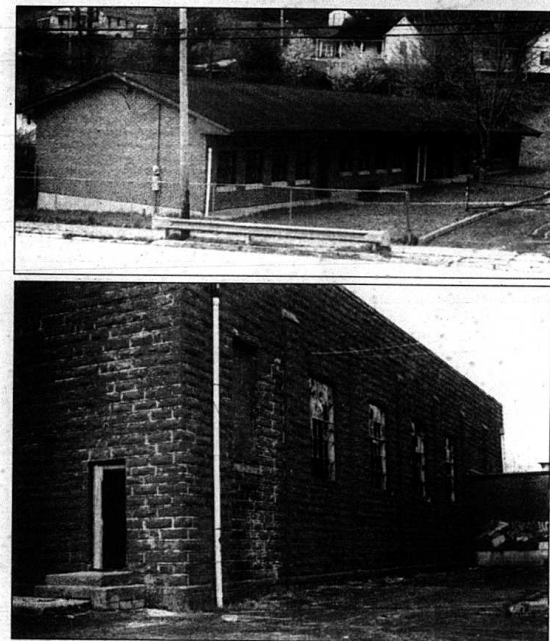
External Disaster Drill

The Rockcastle County Hospital and Respiratory Care Center has scheduled an External Disaster Drill for Thursday, March 23.

The drill is being held in cooperation with 911, the ambulance service, law enforcement agencies and fire departments and rescue squads.

The purpose is to determine if the community can be served in the event of a natural or man-made disaster.

Citizens should not be alarmed at an excess of sirens or radio traffic on Thursday.



In the top photo is the building on the site of the Livingston School property which Judge Carlifotis and Jailor James Miller hope to use for a dormitory for work release prisoners. In the bottom photo is the old gymnasium at the former Livingston School which would be renovated for public use with profits from using part of the property to house work release prisoners.

Lambert rules on Lovell case

By: Richard Anderkin

The Chief Justice of the Kentucky Supreme Court has ruled that Rockcastle Circuit Judge Dan Venters can continue to preside over a local murder case.

On February 14, Somerset attorney Mark Stanziano filed a motion in Circuit Court on behalf of his client, Barbara Lovell of Mt. Vernon, who has been accused, along with her husband, David, of murdering Charles "Tody" Baker in 1998.

In his motion, Stanziano asked Judge Venters to recuse himself and Acting Commonwealth Attorney Eddy Montgomery from the case.

Stanziano's motion centered around a January 6 meeting in the chambers of Judge Venters in Somerset where, according to court records, Venters interviewed Lovell, although she had no counsel present. And, later that day, also according to court records, Montgomery interviewed David Lovell, without the presence of an attorney.

Barbara Lovell, according to court records, told Venters she had fired her attorney (Stanziano) and wanted to talk to Montgomery about the murder case. Court records also indicate that Montgomery intended to offer Lovell a deal if she would testify against her husband.

On March 1, Venters denied Stanziano's motion to recuse himself from the case and Stanziano asked the Chief Justice to overrule Venters' ruling.

On Wednesday, March 15, Chief Justice Joseph Lambert of Mt. Vernon, ruled in Venters favor. In a short order, Lambert said that the affidavit submitted by Barbara Lovell concerning the January 6th meeting was insufficient to demonstrate any disqualifying circumstance which would require the appointment of a special judge in the case.

In his motion, Stanziano claimed that Venters and Montgomery violated Lovell's constitutional rights when they talked to her without an attorney being present although, according to court records, Venters advised Lovell he could appoint one in a minute.

In his February 14th motion, Stanziano also asked that Montgomery be relieved of his duties in the case and that the indictment against Lovell be dismissed. He also asked that, if Montgomery and Venters were allowed to stay on the case, the statements Lovell gave to Venters and

Montgomery be suppressed and not allowed into evidence.

According to court records, Lovell told Judge Venters that she wanted to make a statement to Montgomery because she feared for her life. Lovell told Venters she was afraid a member of her husband's family would kill her because she knew too much about them.

But Stanziano claims that Lovell was coerced and threatened into making a statement by Kentucky State Police Detective Gary Lane and Rockcastle County Deputy Sheriff Darrell Dean, after she was picked up on a warrant because her sister-in-law had decided to go off her bond.

Their scare tactics and repeated requests for a statement - induced their legal advice, violated Mrs.

Lovell's right in the process," Stanziano's motion read.

Another reason that Stanziano gave for asking that Venters and Montgomery be dismissed is the fact that they are now potential witnesses in the case.

No trial date has been set in the murder case, but Barbara and David Lovell have also been indicted in federal court on illegal drug charges. Both were transferred from the Rockcastle County Detention Center on Friday to Woodford County to await an April 17 federal trial.

Several other members of the family were also indicted in federal court last month and will also stand trial on April 17th. All of those accused in the federal case have been held without bond.

Grand Jury indicts four

A Mt. Vernon man was indicted last week by a Rockcastle County Grand Jury on a charge of second degree rape.

Roger Sturgill, 41, of Rt. 4, Mt. Vernon is accused of having sexual intercourse with his girlfriend's daughter in the Spring of 1997. The girl was less than 14 at the time of the alleged incident.

Sturgill is also accused of having sexual contact with the same girl 25 other times from 1997 to February of 1999.

Blood Drive in RCH parking lot

Before blood is available for patients in Central and Eastern Kentucky hospitals, a volunteer donor must first give the Gift of Life.

Rockcastle County Hospital joins Central Kentucky Blood Center in encouraging local residents to help our community by giving blood on Thursday, April 6, 2000 from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. at the CRKB bloodmobile located in the parking lot. The community is encouraged to give.

"When you give blood, you help people in your community who are battling life threatening illnesses," said Loretta Robinson, spokesperson for Central Kentucky Blood Center. "There is no substitute for a volunteer blood donor."

Nearly 250 units of blood are needed daily for Central and East-

Sturgill, whose bond was set at \$10,000 cash or property, will be arraigned in Rockcastle Circuit Court next week.

Melvin Smith, 37, of Hwy. 461, Mt. Vernon, was indicted on four counts of first degree wanton endangerment.

Smith is accused of shooting a firearm towards Ernestine Carpenter, Chelsey Carpenter, Beverly Bishop and Angela Bishop on March 5, the incident apparently took place in The Dusty Trails Subdivision off Hwy. 461.

Smith will be arraigned on Friday in Rockcastle Circuit Court.

Tommy J. Lovell of Mt. Vernon and Gary D. Ramsey, also of Mt. Vernon, were both indicted on a charge of making false statements to the Department of Employment Services concerning their unemployment insurance benefits. No arraignment date has been set.

Train hits truck

A truck, belonging to Ronnie Spoonamore of Mt. Vernon, was damaged Tuesday morning, March 14, when it was struck by a train at the Gary Liville crossing off U.S. 25.

Spoonamore said he had been traveling south on U.S. 25 when he turned left to cross the tracks and met an oncoming truck, driven by Roy Gadd. Since the crossing is without any one vehicle to cross at a time, Spoonamore said Gadd backed off to



Nettie Elliott, 66, of near Pine Hill, escaped with a sprained right knee Tuesday afternoon when her 1999 Ford Ranger truck went off the road and over a hill on U.S. 25 south of Mt. Vernon. Mrs. Elliott, who was traveling south, said the truck began pulling to the left. She said she managed to correct it a few times but the last time it crossed the road between County Sam's and Hill Top Market, struck a Daniel Boone Trail crossing marker, went over the hill and wound up facing the opposite direction. Mrs. Elliott, who was not wearing a seat belt, said the truck flipped three times. In the above photo, Mark Eaton prepares to attach a second cable to winch the truck up the hill.