

Hale is first to win state essay contest

Josh Hale, a sophomore at Rockcastle County High School, and the son of Nancy and John Hale, was recently recognized by *The Courier-Journal* as Rockcastle County's first state Area 7, which covers 15 counties, winner in the 1999 Conservation Writing Contest. The writing contest, in its 56th year, is for sixth-through 12th graders. It is sponsored by *The Courier-Journal* in cooperation with the Kentucky Division of Conservation, the Kentucky Association of Soil Conservation Districts, Kentucky Farm Bureau Companies and the Kentucky Department of Education.

More than 107,000 students submitted written works or designed artwork for this year's Conservation Writing and the Jim Claypool Conservation Art contest. Schools sent their winning entries to district conservation offices for judging. After being selected as the Rockcastle County Conservation District's Writing Essay Winner, Josh's composition was sent on to the state level

where he has been recognized as one of nine state-wide Area winners.

For composing the outstanding written piece in his Area in the Conservation and Writing Contest, Josh is the recipient of a plaque, a Certificate of Outstanding Merit and a \$150 U.S. Saving Bond from *The Courier-Journal*. He will also be featured as a winner of the contest in a special Young Achiever's section of *The Courier-Journal* scheduled to run on Sunday, May 14, 2000.

The following is the winning essay:

Soil Conservation: Ground for Kentucky's New Millennium

As Kentucky prepares to enter the new millennium, we must do so with our eyes focused on the past, the present and the future. The theme, "Soil Conservation: Ground for Kentucky's New Millennium," requires us to see from where our soil has come, what we are doing with the soil today and how it will affect our lives in the future.

In its simplest sense, soil conservation

means saving the soil. This would be an extremely easy problem were it not for the fact that, while saving the soil, we have to use it. We must find a way to ensure its productivity for future years.

According to some scientists, we have not always had soil on the earth. Soil is the product of two processes: the decomposition of rock and the decay of plant and animal life. Volcanic action and the disintegration of large masses of rock left a blanket of mineral material over most of the earth. These mineral particles mixed with organic materials accumulated from dead plants, roots and decomposing animals. The few inches of productive topsoil on which agriculture depends today required thousands of years for development.

Although soil covers our land in an almost continuous blanket, it differs in how it is used by man in each region and on each farm. For many years, soil was associated with the lowly position of the farmers who tilled it and was not considered worthy of study or conservation. Most people had the opinion that the soil had always been there and always would be in existence. Perhaps, that opinion would have become fact had it not been for man. Soil depletion and erosion began to take their toll during the early days of our nation's settlement. Most of the colonists, who came here, came from countries where the rain fell gently. They did not know how to handle soil in the North American climate. They began cutting down the forests along the eastern coast, building their homes, clearing fields to plant crops, and plowing more land to grow food for the increasing population.

A few "old" farmers began to notice a change in the soil after many years. At first, the soil had been so dark that it was almost black but it was becoming lighter in color. When heavy rains came, the loose soil mixed with the water and flowed down the hills, carrying away the topsoil or

rich soil. By 1775, rivers that once ran clear were described by writers as being "black with mud." The older farmers expressed their concerns but, for the most part, their words fell on deaf ears.

Slowly, the soil's condition became a matter of great concern to some of our early leaders. Patrick Henry is credited with saying, "He is the greatest patriot who fills the most gullies." George Washington, as a farmer, continually sought to conserve his land and prevent erosion. In his 1796 final message to Congress, he urged the legislators to form a board of agriculture. Congress did not recognize the need. (It would be over sixty years before the United States Department of Agriculture would be created during President Lincoln's administration.) Thomas Jefferson was another who was constantly looking for ways to improve his soil's production. He introduced a system of horizontal plowing that would be the forerunner of contouring. However, people simply were not concerned about soil damage because there was so much virgin land. They failed to look to the past or the future, only using the present soil.

Early in the 20th Century, President Theodore Roosevelt called for the first conference to consider conservation of our natural resources.

Hugh Hammond Bennett, the "Father of Soil Conservation," and a soil surveyor in the 1920s, was constantly calling attention to what he termed "the serious erosion" he found while surveying. Bennett and others involved in the soil conservation movement were blessed with the gift of soil hindsight and foresight. They tried to arouse interest in a corrective program. Their movement was given a big push in 1933 when the soil erosion service was set up in the department of the interior. Bennett was made chief of the first erosion control agency. He went on to find out what was known in 1941 as the Soil Conservation Society of America. We, today, owe much to these early pioneers of soil conservation. We must follow their example - looking to the past, using soil for the present, while saving it for the future.

In my home county of Rockcastle, we are diverse users of the soil. Primarily, we are farmers and loggers. I believe that these two groups must join together in the fight to save our soil, thus saving their own livelihoods. Much of Rockcastle's agriculture land and forests have been destroyed in the name of development. It is a horrible feeling to see a beautiful field that once produced

crops to be turned into a trailer park or simply to be left bare.

I feel that one of the best pieces of legislation to come from the Kentucky General Assembly was the establishment of the PACE (Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easement) Corporation in 1994. It ensures that "lands currently in agricultural use will continue to remain available for agriculture and not be converted to other uses." The PACE Corporation is a result of looking at the past, the present and the future.

If we are to continue to use our soil, which we must do in order to live, it is necessary that we learn to prepare for the future use of this most precious resource. We must listen to the warnings of the colonial farmers, H.H. Bennett and others. Even the writer of Ecclesiastes (3:20) recognized the importance of our soil, its

past, present and future "... all come from dust, and to dust all return."

Resources

The Courier-Journal, "Soil Conservation: Ground for Kentucky's New Millennium" 1999.
Encyclopedia Britannica, Vol. 20, pp. 925-935. "Soil." Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., c. 1962.

The Kentucky Cooperative Soil Survey

<http://www.n.state.ky.us/nrcps/dnc/conserved/doc2.htm>

Soil and Water Conservation

<http://www.w.scs.org/AboutSWCS/LocationHistory.htm>

Soil Conservation Systems

<http://www.acres.usda.gov/departments/dm/scl.htm>

USDA Conservation Programs

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/NRCSProg.html>

Subscribe to the Signal



Calvary Baptist Temple
Welcomes You
Timothy J. Perry, Pastor
6041 N. U.S. Hwy. 25, East Bernstadt, KY 40431-9661

Radio: WCHM 93.9 FM Ministry: Sun. 9:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.	WTRF 90.5 FM Sun. 2 p.m.	DEAR MINISTRY: Sunday Worship: 10 a.m. - 11 a.m. - 7 p.m.
OUR PURPOSE: Expose Sin - Exhort to the Scripture - Edify the Saint - Evangelize the Sinner - Exalt the Savior		
OUR POSITION: Old-Fashioned - Independent - Fundamental - Mission Minded - Bible Preaching (KJV 1611)		

Bishop's Tire Service
Richmond St. • Mt. Vernon

256-4029 • 256-2168

Oil Change Special - \$19⁹⁵
(Includes one free car wash at Bob's Car Wash)

April Special - 1558013 Firestone 40,000 Mile \$32⁹⁵ Installed

Mechanic on duty
call 256-2391

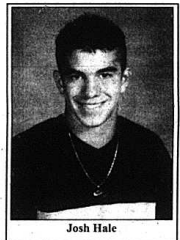
Open Mon. - Fri. 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Sat. 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Notice: Parents of 2000-2001 R CHS Students

If you are interested in serving on one of the following standing committees during the next school year, please sign up at the high school office before May 2, 2000:

- Needs Assessment, School Review and Planning
- Budget
- Media and Technology
- Professional Development
- Buildings and Grounds
- Discipline
- Student Support
- Curriculum and Instructional Practices

For more info., please call 256-4816



SANTO'S

Auction

Saturday, April 29th • 10:30 a.m.

Gary & Amy Santo's

3 Bedroom Home on 1 Acre Lot +/-

389 Sycamore St. Brodhead, KY



Directions: From Mt. Vernon take Hwy. 150 west approx. 7 miles to Brodhead turn right only Hwy. 150 watch for auction sign on left. From Crab Orchard take Hwy. 150 east approx. 7 miles to Brodhead turn onto Hwy. 1505 cross bridge turn left onto Sycamore Street.

AUCTIONEER'S NOTE: This fine home nestled in the edge of beautiful woods, consists of 3 bedrooms, 1 bath, kitchen, living room with stone fireplace with insert, property has above ground pool with large privacy deck.

TERMS: 10% down day of sale. Balance on or before 30 days with deed.

NOTE: 7% Buyers Premium added to winning bid to determine final sales price.

OPEN HOUSE APRIL 23 FROM 2 TO 4 P.M.

Your Host Randall Johnson at 792-6927 or 304-3030

Any announcements take precedence over printed matter
Not Responsible for Accidents

859-792-4025 (Office)

859-792-6263 (Fax)

DANNY AYRES REALTY & AUCTION
ESTATES • FARMS • AUCTIONS
LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY 40244

Danny Ayres Auctioneer 859-792-4571 (Home)	Lonnie Napier Auctioneer 859-792-2535 (Work)	Rick Sutton Auctioneer 859-792-4277 (Home)	Adam Pence Auctioneer 859-792-2402 (Home)
Ray Hammonds Auctioneer 859-792-4289 (Work)			

FREE Lowest Prices in America FREE

Baker's Carpet Barn

Grand Opening Sale

Professional Installation

100% Nylon
PLUSHES and
SCULPTURES

\$6⁹⁹ sq. yd.

10 year warranty

Official Dalton Carpet Outlet

6 Months
Same As Cash
w.a.c.

No Pymt. Till Oct., 2000

Professional Installation

Super Heavy
Reggie
Berbers

Regular \$27⁹⁹ sq. yd.
NOW ONLY \$10⁹⁹ sq. yd.

Non-Pattern Berbers

As Low As

\$3⁹⁹ sq. ft.

Mention This Ad and Receive An Extra \$1 off per sq. yd. any carpet in stock cash and carry only

Heavy Pattern

Asst. Colors and Patterns

ONLY \$6⁹⁹ sq. yd.

Tarkett Rock Vinyl

Starting at only

\$3⁹⁹ Sq. Yard

Nobody Sells for Less ... NOBODY!

Largest Selection of In-Stock Carpet in area

Hundreds of Rolls to choose from

WE CAN SAVE YOU MONEY

Baker's Carpet Barn

Look for big carpet sign

HOURS
Mon-Sat 9-5
Friday 9-7
(606) 679-2333

on the new
914 By-Pass in Somerset
ON CARPET MOUNTAIN