



Rockets ranked 11th - Pg. A10

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The annual Easter Egg hunt at Renfro Valley was held last Saturday with more than 200 participants. Thirty-three prizes were handed out after the hunt. Several local businesses helped sponsor the annual egg hunt. (Photo by Linda Boone)

Local officials cracking down on illegal turkey hunting

The Department of Fish and Wildlife is focusing on illegal turkey hunting in Rockcastle County this season, according to Rockcastle County Attorney Jeff Burdette.

Republican banquet

The Rockcastle County Republican Party banquet will be held Friday, April 25 at 7 p.m. at Renfro Valley Lodge.

Tickets are \$20 each. All Republican Party candidates have been invited to speak.

Buckle-Up! It's the Law

The Rockcastle County Health Department conducted a Safety Seatbelt Survey on April 22, 2003 on Main Street and at Rockcastle County High School. The survey targeted young adults and children 21 years old and younger. This is the third year that the health department has conducted this safety program.

Unintentional injuries are the number one cause of death for those 21 years old and younger. Someone will die every hour, simply because they do not buckle up. Failure to buckle up contributes to more fatalities than any other single traffic-related behavior. Seat belts are the most effective safety devices in vehicles today. It is estimated to save up to 10,000 lives every year.

There were only 42% of those surveyed on Main Street that were wearing seatbelts, and there were only 49% of students at Rockcastle County High School. Rockcastle County has room for improvement. The safety survey will be repeated at the end of May.

Volunteers needed

The Rockcastle Health Department is seeking volunteers for its Medical Response Team. Volunteer sign-up sheets have been distributed to churches and agencies throughout the county. If you are interested in signing up and have not done so, please call the Rockcastle Health Department at 256-2242.

Volunteers with medical backgrounds are needed as well as volunteers able to assist with clerical responsibilities. Training will be provided as needed.

The Medical Response Team will be activated in response to any major event that affects the health of the residents of Rockcastle County. Plans are underway to set up a mass clinic site to vaccinate our citizens in the event of a smallpox outbreak.

For more information, call 256-2242.

Several reports have been made that at least seven officers with the department are in Rockcastle to check for illegal hunters and to observe any hunting activities, including hunting over "baited areas."

A "baited area" means an area where feed, grains or other substances capable of luring wild turkeys have been placed. A person shall not hunt on a baited area or by the aid of baiting while the bait is present, or for thirty days after the bait has been removed. This does not include bona

fide agricultural practices. Turkey season began April 15 and runs for 21 consecutive days, from one-half (1/2) hour before sunrise until one-half (1/2) hour after sunset. It is extremely important that hunters have specific permission from the landowner to hunt turkey, or charges of criminal trespassing could be brought by Fish & Wildlife officials.

"I would encourage hunters to know the laws and regulations applicable to turkey hunting by reviewing their hunter's guidelines and license information," Burdette said. "The Department for Fish and Wildlife is aggressive in protecting the natural resources, but also in creating a safe and wildlife rich environment for our local sportsmen and

women. This should also be a time when officers should be working and communicating with landowners in seeing that damages are not done to their crops, fences or livestock. This is mostly a farming community and respect for people's land and property should be a top priority for everyone," he added.

According to number provided by the department, more turkeys were checked by the second day of the season this year, than the total number of turkeys checked last year. Also, according to officers with the department, 95% or more of the hunters checked have been legal in all aspects by having their license, turkey tags and permission to hunt.

Sheriff's office busy

Another backhoe stolen

Last week Rockcastle Deputy Sheriff William Harris responded to a theft of a backhoe at a farm owned by Steve and Jill Ponder at Scaffold Cane.

Harris said that someone stole the

backhoe during the early morning hours driving it through the field and apparently loading it onto a trailer. Steve Ponder is a local contractor. Mrs. Ponder said the backhoe was valued at around \$25,000.

The Sheriff's office has asked that anyone with information concerning the case to notify the Sheriff's office at 256-2032.

About six weeks ago a backhoe and dump truck belonging to Western Rockcastle Water Association was also stolen. Those two items have not been recovered, but the investigation is continuing.

On Monday, Rockcastle Sheriff Darrell Doan recovered a 1995 Ford Windstar van belonging to Mrs. Gail Clark of Mt. Vernon. The van was recovered on Sand Hill in a rural

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Last day of school is May 30th Board votes to take five days from state

In an about-face, Rockcastle School Superintendent Larry Hammond recommended to the board of education Monday night that the five "disaster" days, allowed by the State Legislature, be accepted.

Mr. Hammond's recommendation came at a special meeting of the board and, after a lengthy discussion, was approved 3-2 on a motion by Mike Burdette, seconded by Sam Stallworth.

Voting against the motion were board members Martin Vanzant and Tina Haston with board chairman Terry Burton breaking the tie.

While students, who will be dismissed after a half day May 30th, will not be in school during the five days, school staff will attend for professional development and their last day of school will be June 6th.

Hammond told the board that the school principals had sold him on the advantages of improving the quality of education in the county with the intensified professional development days.

Mr. Vanzant reminded Hammond that on at least two occasions, he (Hammond) had said it was best for students to go to school the five days. Vanzant also recalled that, during a discussion of whether taking spring break would interfere with teachers being able to go to summer school, he was told that it wouldn't interfere. However, Vanzant pointed out that on an e-mail received from Mr. Hammond listing the justifications for taking the five days, one was that it would enable teachers to attend summer school thereby using the same argument both ways, Vanzant said.

Hasty asked that if taking the five days wouldn't mean more actual instruction time lost for school students because of the block scheduling system, Hammond agreed with this, saying it would actually be about 75% more lost instruction time.

However, Hammond, along with

David Pensol, Instructional Supervisor and Rebecca Isaacs, District Assessment Coordinator, all reiterated to the board what an opportunity the five days would be to have the teachers in place and focused for professional development which could only better the quality of education in the county.

In fact, Hammond told the board that he would not recommend taking the days unless he felt the professional development days would improve the quality of education.

"All staff members realize they are going to be assessed and accountable and need to make use of this time (the five days)," Hammond said.

As the last item of business for the meeting, the board reviewed a revised Driving Records Release Authorization for new bus drivers, giving the state Department of Transportation authority to release the results of a driving records check for five years to school district personnel.

RCHS SBDM elections to be held May 6th

Elections for the site based decision making council at Rockcastle County High School will be held Tuesday, May 6th.

Two new parent members will be on the council, after they were the only parents to accept nominations on the council. Dr. John Parsons and Rhonda Bray will replace Paul Ahney and Eddie Delaney on the five member board.

Teachers nominated for the three positions are incumbent members Travis Brenda, Connie Riddle and Dana Singleton.

Also nominated for the teaching positions on the council are Angie Hendrickson and Stephanie Harmon.

It will take a majority vote of 28 teachers to be elected to the council, according to principal John Hale.

All other county schools will also hold elections in May, but all nominations for the positions on those councils have not been finalized.

At Mt. Vernon, deadline for nominations for the three teachers is (today) Thursday and elections will be held May 1st.

The deadline for parent nominations is May 6th and elections will be held on May 13th.

At Brodhead the deadline for parent nominations is May 19th and the election will be held on May 27th. The deadline at Brodhead for teacher nominations is May 14th and elections for teachers will be held on May 21st.

At the Rockcastle County Middle School the deadline for nominations for teachers and parents is May 2nd and the elections will be held on May 5th.

At Roundstone Elementary School the deadline for nominations for teachers and parents will be held starting Thursday, (today), through next Wednesday. The elections at Roundstone will take place on May 1st.

Betty Lewis Award to be presented this Friday

The Betty Lewis Children's Service Award will be presented on Friday to a local person, who has directly affected the lives of children in Rockcastle County.

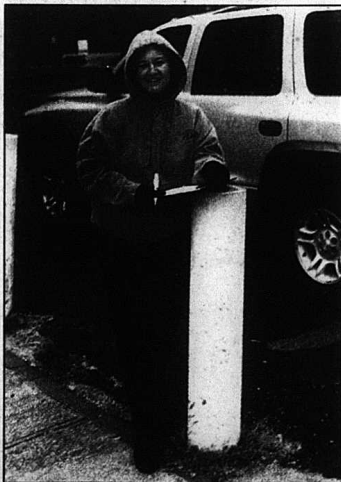
The award was established several years ago in honor of the late Ms. Lewis, who was very involved in helping children in Rockcastle County.

The nominees for this year's award are Mrs. Shirley Martin, a retired Brodhead teacher who is still very involved in the PTA at Brodhead Elementary.

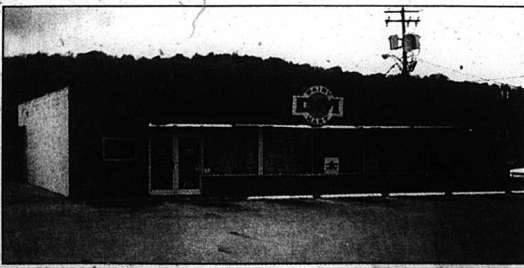
Sgt. Major Keith Taylor and his wife Jenny, who head up the JROTC program at Rockcastle County High School.

Stacia Morgan, the Family Re-

(Cont. to A10)



Lynnett Fortney and other members of the Rockcastle County Health Department were busy Tuesday conducting a seat belt survey in Mt. Vernon.



For those who asked - Mt. Vernon Dairy-Mart recently closed after 30 years in business. Property owner Jerry Cox said he is negotiating with a national parts company, which is planning to locate in his Richmond Street building.