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Mt. Vernon Signal

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Mount Vernon, Kentucky 40456 - Volume 118 • Number 42 - Ph. (606) 256-2244 - 50 a copy - Thursday, August 7, 2003

# Arson suspected

A Rockcastle County man will likely be indicted on arson charges after Mt. Vernon firemen found him at the scene of a house fire on Toddy Payne Road at Pine Hill Monday night.

Mt. Vernon fireman Bryan Hansel said Tuesday that William "Billy Boy" Renner, 42, of Pine Hill was detained by firefighters Monday night until police arrived.

Hansel said the Mt. Vernon fire department was dispatched to an empty house owned by Donald Dees around 11 p.m. Monday and assistant fire chief David Bales was the first on the scene.

Hansel said Bales saw a man in the house and there was fire in the living room.

Apparently when Renner saw Bales pull up, he ran out the back of the house, but before he could get away other firefighters arrived on the scene and detained him.

"He seemed intoxicated and there were curtains piled up in the floor, which had obviously been set on fire," Hansel said.

Firefighters managed to limit the damage to the living room floor, although the house did receive some smoke damage, according to Hansel.

Rockcastle County Attorney Jeff Burdette said Wednesday that

(Cont. to A7)

# New school year has begun

Wednesday, approximately 2,850 students attended their first day of school in the 2003-04 school year.

Wednesday's starting date was the earliest in modern history in Rockcastle and started a trend that will likely continue, according to Rockcastle County School Superintendent Larry Hammond.

However, Hammond said that speculation that the early start date was a move toward year-round school in Rockcastle County was not accurate.

"I think the principals and calender committee have been thinking about an earlier start date for a few years, which would put students out of school not long after the assessment tests are completed," he said.

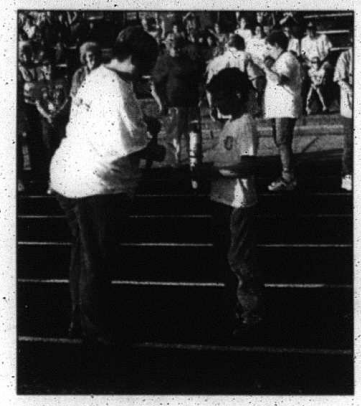
"It is extremely hard to keep students' attention after they take their tests in the Spring and this calander will help that," he said.

Hammond said a Fall break, of one week may be put into the calender next year, but this year's calender includes only one extra day of time off for students.

Local students first break with be Labor Day, September 1.

In October, their will be no school on October 2 and 3.

In November, school will be dismissed for the general election on November 4, and Thanksgiving on November 27-28.



**Medallions were handed out to Cancer Survivors at the start of the Relay for Life Friday night and then the survivors were given the honor of opening the walk around the track which lasted, in relays, through the night. Kelly McClure, chairman of Relay for Life, served as master of ceremonies for the event which, at a preliminary accounting, had raised almost $30,000. At left, Layne Ponder, son of Steve and Jill Ponder, receives his medallion for being a cancer survivor from Marti Harris who works with the American Cancer Society.**

*For City of Mt. Vernon*

# Terry Jackson hired as new police chief

Mt. Vernon Mayor Clarice Kirby announced at Monday night's regular meeting of the city council, that Terry Jackson of Mt. Vernon had been hired as the new police chief for the city.

Mr. Jackson, who is married to Teresa Jackson, State Farm agent in Mt. Vernon, has been with the Barbourville Police Department and with the Somerset Police Department for the past 17 years, the last three as a detective.

Mr. Jackson told the council that he was looking forward to assuming his duties. "I come from the most professional police department in the state," Jackson said "and I want to see Mt. Vernon's police department grow in professionalism."

Jackson told the council that he had already met with government officials to seek out any funds avail-

(Cont. to A7)

**Mt. Vernon Police Chief Terry Jackson**

*Charged with Patty Clark murder*

# Davy Stewart hearing set for Friday

**By: Richard Anderkin**

A hearing will be held on Friday in the murder case involving Davy Stewart, 39, of Orlando in the death of Patty Gail Clark.

Clark, who was 25-years-old at the time of death, was found in a remote section of Rockcastle County on August 24th of 2000. She had been shot to death.

According to police reports, Clark had been reported missing on August 13th of that year and was last seen alive four days earlier.

Police were led to her badly decomposed body by Sally Hoskins, now 27, of Crooked Creek, who told police that Clark had been shot to death by Stewart.

Clark's body was found in a wooded area, off a logging road in Cove Branch area, near McNew Cemetery, where police had found an abandoned Jeep the day after Clark was reported missing.

Hoskins told police that she, Stewart and Clark were all sitting in the Jeep at the McNew Cemetery when Stewart shot her (Hoskins) after an argument.

Police said that Stewart then took the two women, both of whom he had either dated or was dating at the time, into the woods where he told them to pray for their souls.

Hoskins told police that she prayed, but that Clark didn't and Stewart shot her, (Clark).

Rockcastle County Coroner Bill Dowell said after the autopsy on Clark that she had been shot twice in the head.

The day after Clark disappeared, Hoskins walked to the home of Sammy Stewart, Davy Stewart's brother, and some local people took her to the hospital.

But before Hoskins was taken to the hospital she took a bath. The two women who helped her said they thought she had been in a car wreck.

Rockcastle County Sheriff Darrell Doan, who was a deputy at the time, said that when he interviewed Hoskins about the supposed car wreck, she told him she had been hit in the head and didn't know what happened the night before.

Hoskins would later tell police she was scared for her own life and that is why she didn't tell police sooner about the murder.

Hoskins had been shot once. The bullet hit her in the wrist and went through her left leg and lodged in her right leg.

Doctors at the University of Kentucky Medical Center did not remove the bullet from Hoskins' leg because, according to them, it was safer for Hoskins for the bullet to be left in her leg.

The day before Hoskins led police to Clark's body, Kentucky State Police in Madison County shot Stewart, after he tried to steal a van from a rural residence.

Police said Stewart apparently was high on drugs when he broke into a mobile home three miles east of Richmond and demanded the keys to the vehicle.

Police said Stewart was armed with an assault rifle and handgun at the time of his arrest.

A woman at the residence told Stewart she couldn't find the keys to the vehicle, but that she would drive him where he wanted to go.

(Cont. to A9)

# Four sentenced in Circuit Court

Eddy F. Montgomery, Commonwealth's Attorney for Rockcastle, Lincoln and Pulaski Counties, announced today that one person entered a plea of guilty and four people were sentenced to prison in Rockcastle County Circuit Court.

According to Montgomery, Angela Miller, 24, of Mt. Vernon was sentenced to one year imprisonment for escape, second degree.

Keesha Saylor, 24, of Crab Orchard, received a five year sentence for burglary, second degree.

Walter, Price, 51, of Mt. Vernon was sentenced to ten years for manufacture of methamphetamine and possession of a controlled substance, first degree.

Mignon Looney, 21, of Brodhead, pleaded guilty to burglary, third degree and Montgomery has recommended a sentence of four year's imprisonment. Sentencing is scheduled for September 26, 2003.

Also sentenced was John Campbell, 42, of Georgetown, to one year's imprisonment for operating a motor vehicle under the influence of alcohol, fourth offense.

**Davy Stewart**

# Dallas Rigsby fought in War on Iraq; now home

**By: Richard Anderkin**

1996 Rockcastle County High School graduate Dallas Rigsby is one of many Rockcastle Countians who has served his country in the armed services and he recently returned home from his tour in Iraq.

Dallas, who played football and basketball at the ROCK, is what most Americans would consider a typical Marine, strong, levelheaded and willing to die for his country.

During an interview last week, Dallas spoke of some of his experiences while in Iraq, but as most men who have been in combat, he didn't share a lot. However, one of his comments that he repeated over and over was that he hoped his fellow soldiers would return home safely as he has.

Dallas was stationed in Camp Pendleton California, and was due to get out of the Marines a couple of weeks before orders came down that he would be deployed to Kuwait, where he would wait with fellow Marines until they would head to Iraq.

Dallas had even declined a trip home from California for Christmas in order to speed up the process to finish his four years of service to his country.

But because of the impending

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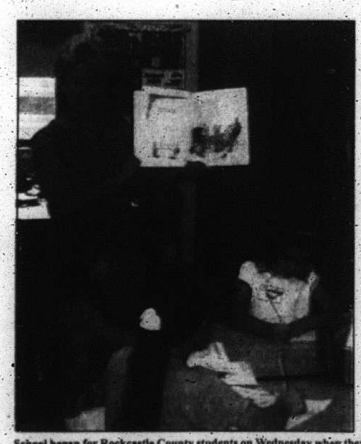
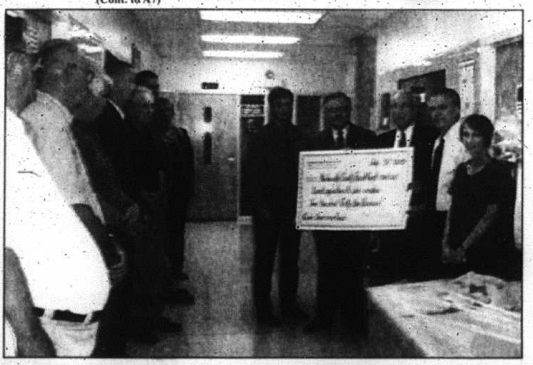


**School began for Rockcastle County students on Wednesday when they attended a half day. It is the earliest starting date for the school system in modern history. Above, Mt. Vernon Elementary primary teacher Marian Cable is shown with students, Bethany Robbins and Lindsey Abel.**

**Corporal Dallas Rigsby**



**Rockcastle County got a nice visit from the governor last Wednesday. They knew that Ky. Governor Paul Patton was coming to hand out a coal severance check but they didn't know the amount. When Gov. Patton arrived, the check was for $245,000 and has to be used for land acquisition and job creation. It will be the last check of its type the county receives since we are no longer listed as a coal producing county. According to County Judge/Executive Buzz Carloftis the official check will arrive the latter part of the year and, as of yet, no plans have been made for the funds. In the photo are, from left: Jerry Renner, Economic Development Board chairman; State Rep. Danny Ford, Gov. Patton, Judge Carloftis and Mt. Vernon Mayor Clarice Kirby.**