Volleyball team headed to state - P

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Eastern water tank shotup

Offense would fall under Domestic Terrorism

Eastern Rockcastle Water Association's 85,000 gallon water tank, located near Three Links, was vandalized early Sunday morning when it was shot 15 times with a high-powered rifle, nine of which pierced the tank.

Randy Corry, general manager of the association, said Tuesday that a $500 reward is being offered for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the parties involved. Corry also said that the offense was not being considered just vandalism but has been classified as domestic terrorism, a federal offense under Title 18, which can carry a 20 year jail sentence.

The stiffer penalty is because the incident involves a public water supply. In fact, all of Jackson County's water supply is affected when the Eastern's water supply is interrupted. The association lost about 100,000 gallons of water before the 1/2 inch holes could be temporarily plugged by Corry.

The tank is only three years old and this is the second incident; the first happened in early September, Corry said, when the tank was shot once.

Corry and the Rockcastle County Sheriff's Department, along with state agencies and the office of Emergency Management are asking for anyone with any information about the incident to call the sheriff's office at 256-2032.

PRIDE Clean-up

The All-American Club, along with PRIDE and the City of Mt. Vernon, will clean up trash on Saturday, October 18 beginning at 3 p.m.

Volunteers should meet at Cox Funeral Home.

Streets to be cleaned include: Williams Street, Floyd Street, Maple Drive, High Street, old U.S. 25 and Elmwood Cemetery.

For more information, call Wayne Bullock, president of the All-American Club and City of Mt. Vernon PRIDE Coordinator at 256-0344.

CSEPP Exercise

The Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program (CSEPP) will hold its annual exercise Wednesday, October 29, according to Hal Holbrook, EMA/CSEPP director.

The Rockcastle County Middle School and Rockcastle Hospital will play a vital role in the exercise this year, so do not be alarmed if you notice quite a bit of activity around the school and hospital on that day.

The largest crowd ever attended the Mt. Vernon Bittersweet Festival over the weekend. In the top photo Grand Marshal Mike Barr and his wife Lynette are shown giving Mt. Vernon Mayor Clarice Kirby a ride in the parade. In the middle photo the Hot Rods of Rockcastle County are shown, Doug Proctor of Mt. Vernon has coached the Hot Rods for nearly twenty years and was the founder of the program. In the bottom photo are three members of the Bittersweet Cloggers, Shari Proctor, right, Scherrie Cromer and Gail Hardin.

Test scores in Rockcastle improve again

Brodhead Elementary School posted the highest index score in the county school system with a score of 101.3, according to scores released by the system this week.

The results were for last school year.

Brodhead ranks tenth in the state and is the first school in Rockcastle County to surpass the state goal of 100.

According to Brodhead Principal, Caroline Graves, "Brodhead is very fortunate to have dedicated faculty, parents and community members who value education and strive to assure that every child achieves to their fullest potential. "These scores are only one piece of evidence that proves working together works," Graves said.

The Rockcastle County School System received a district accountability index of 81.3 when the state released last year's test results.

This year for the first time an accountability index was assigned to each district.

"Rockcastle ranked 14th out of 176 districts. "This ranking places Rockcastle in the top eight percent in the state," said Rebecca Isaacs, District Assessment Coordinator for the school system.

The Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS) shows how much a school has improved or declined.

Last year's scores represent the mid-way point toward a two-year accountabilty goal which is different for each school in the state. This year's score will be averaged with next year's score to determine a school's combined index.

"If that index meets or exceeds the school's goal, the school will receive monetary awards," according to David Pensol, District Instructional Supervisor for the local school system.

"And the good news for schools that may not meet their goal is that they could and most likely will receive assistance from the state," he added.

At one point, a few years ago, RCHS received some help from what the state labels a distiquished educator.

"The ultimate goal is for all schools to reach proficiency by 2014," said Larry Hammond Superintendent of the local school system, where he has served in the top job for the past nine years.

"A score of 100 or more means a school is proficient and I truly believe, with the staff we have employed and with the help and support of parents, we will accomplish our goals," Hammond said.

The Kentucky Core Content Test assesses students at grades 4,5,7,8,10, 11 and 12 in reading, math, science, social studies, arts and humanities, practical living/vocational studies and writing.

Students earn a performance level of distinguished by scoring 140, proficient level is 100-139, apprentice, 40-99 and students who score the lowest on the scale are considered novice.

Locally, Brodhead, Mt. Vernon and Roundstone Schools exceeded their goals last year. RCHS and RCMS, while showing gains from 2001-2202, missed their goals by 3.2 and 1.9 index points, respectively.

"The 2002-2003 results will serve to boost the morale of the staff as we face the dilemma of meeting the expectations of both CATS and the No-Child Left Behind Legislation," said Hammond.

"When the current results are viewed, in conjunction with previous years' data, it is evident that Rockcastle County Schools show a trend of continuous improvement. Consequently, I am both proud and thankful. I am most appreciative of the combined student effort, parental support and the entire staff that has followed the leadership team to reach the current level," said Hammond.

Roundstone continues to be one of the top performing elementary schools in the state of Kentucky with an index of 97.34, while Mt. Vernon showed the largest gain with an 8.8 increase over last year's score.

"The content area with the overall highest score was reading," Mrs. Isaacs said.

"We have had a strong focus on literacy skills, a strong emphasis on reading and writing integration which will eventually improve scores in all areas," she said.

Reading indices are 98.93 at the elementary level, 86.4 at the middle school and 75.1 at the high school.

Individual school report cards, containing complete content area program information, will be mailed to each student's home in January.

Mrs. Isaacs presented members of the Rockcastle County Board of Education with the results of last year's testing during their regular monthly meeting on Tuesday.

Ghosts and Goblins are coming!

Ghosts and Goblins are coming to Mt. Vernon with "Halloween on Main Street" on Friday, October 31st.

From 5 to 8 p.m., Mt. Vernon merchants will "treat" ghosts and goblins and decorate their businesses for the event.

The event is being sponsored by the Mt. Vernon Renaissance Committee, in conjunction with the Kiwanis Club and Mt. Vernon businesses.

Any business operator that would like to participate or contribute can contact Lynn Gilbert at 256-9223.

Official trick or treat hours for the city are from 6 to 8 p.m. on the 31st.

Fiscal Court enters into agreement with UNITE

Will be part of 11 county drug task force

At Tuesday's regular monthly meeting of the Rockcastle County Fiscal Court, the court voted to enter into an agreement with a federally-funded non-profit corporation called Unlawful Narcotics Investigation, Treatment and Education, Inc. or UNITE.

County Attorney Jeff Burdette proposed the agreement to the court and, in a press release, said that UNITE has been set up to "declare an all out war against the illegal drug trade in our communities."

"We are making headway with increased convictions, arrests and unprecedented cooperation between local, state and federal authorities, so now is not the time to let up," Burdette said.

Burdette was instrumental in initiating search and arrests that have resulted in several citizens, and drug rings, being sentenced to significant jail and prison time in both state and federal courts.

UNITE was formed for the purpose of empowering local communities to combat illegal drug use through a comprehensive campaign of investigation, treatment and education and to integrate the functions of government, the private sector, academia and volunteer citizen participation.

"Congressman Hal Rogers is to be commended in working with the 11 counties the UNITE task force is to be assigned, to help end this scourge. I believe that with the help of county government, the private sector and our volunteer citizens, we will more effectively clean out the mess," Burdette stated.

The Rockcastle County Sheriff's office already has an officer that has concurrent county and federal jurisdiction. The Drug Enforcement Administration now has a constant presence in the community, and UNITE will further strengthen the partnership by allowing the task force members to have arrest powers inside the county boundaries. Task force members will consist of sworn officers of local and state law enforcement agencies.

Chief Sheriff's Deputy Nathaniel Price told the court Tuesday that the Task Force would be dealing with primarily street level drug activities.

In other action, the court:

•Proclaimed October as Roadside Pride Month.

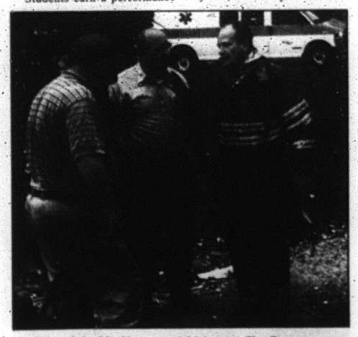
•Discussed adding constables to the county's health insurance program and approved the measure, if the constable desire the benefit.

•Approved a FEMA request for the purchase of a four-wheel drive vehicle for EMA-CSEPP for $8,000 of which $6,000 will be reimbursed to the county by the state.

•Approved a Memorandum of Agreement with the Rockcastle County Development Board for use of the $245,000 in coal severance money from the state that was earmarked for Rockcastle County. The money can be used only for land acquisition and job creation/expansion.

•Approved $300 to the Bittersweet Festival commitee for utility support and

•Approved the payment of $13,400 in matching money for the purchase of a $134,000 fire truck for Brindle Ridge Volunteer Fire Dept. from a Homeland Security grant.



Members of the Mt. Vernon and Livingston Fire Department responded to a house fire at the home of Glenna Mink on U.S. 25 at Burr Thursday afternoon. The house was heavily damaged, but no one was injured. Firefighter Steve Griffin is shown above talking to Mt. Vernon fire chief Garry Hansel and assistant fire chief David Bales.