



A retired RCHS teacher was killed in a two-vehicle accident Monday night at the intersection of Hwy 461 and Hwy 150 in Mt. Vernon. Rick Barnett, 55, of Mt. Vernon was driving the above 2011 Hyundai Sonata, above, when he reportedly ran a red light and was struck by the 2006 Dodge Caravan, at right, driven by Kimberlee R. Benien, 23, of Somerset.



Former RCHS teacher killed in accident

By: Doug Ponder

A former Rockcastle County High School teacher was killed in a two-vehicle accident around 9:15 p.m. Monday night at the intersection of Hwy 461 and Hwy 150 in Mt. Vernon.

According to state police reports, a 2011 white Hyundai Sonata driven by Don Rick Barnett, 54, of Mt. Vernon was traveling west on Hwy 150 when he reportedly ran a red light and was struck by a 2006 blue Dodge Caravan driven by Kimberlee R. Benien, 23, of Somerset who was traveling south on Hwy 461.

Barnett was transported by ambulance to Rockcastle Regional Hospital where he was later pronounced dead by Deputy Coroner Bud Cox.

Benien and her passenger, Serena Howell, 23, of Somerset were also transported by ambulance to Rockcastle Regional Hospital. Benien was treated for non-life threatening injuries and later released. Howell, who is also pregnant, was flown to the UK Medical Center where she is currently listed in stable condition.

Investigators say Barnett was not wearing his seat belt.

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Four days missed thus far Snowfall closes Rockcastle Schools

By: Doug Ponder

Rockcastle County students received an extra two days off this past week as a result of a snow system that pushed its way across the state.

All Rockcastle County Schools were dismissed last Friday and Monday as a lot of the rural county roads remained slick and too dangerous for traveling.

According to local weatherman Bud Cox, he reported an accumulation of one inch of snow last Friday and another half-inch last Saturday. He also reported a trace of snow on both Sunday and Monday. The record low during the four day time span was nine degrees last Friday and the record high was 52 on Monday.

Rockcastle County Schools have now missed a total of four days during the 2012-2013 calendar year as a result of either snow, ice or the recent water main break at the middle school.

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RCIDA discusses Business Park South updates Monday

By: Doug Ponder

Many items were discussed at the monthly Rockcastle County Industrial Development Authority on Monday including updates on several Rockcastle Business Park South projects.

RCIDA Executive Director Holly Hopkins is currently working on the lease amendment with SourceHOV and trying to clarify when their employees will be working according to the lease amendment.

Hopkins said that SourceHOV is planning to be at full capacity by March and are hiring 490 employees instead of 300. She told the board that SourceHOV definitely needs an extra parking lot as soon as they can get it.

County Judge Executive Buzz Carloftis said the Fiscal Court agreed to pave a blacktop parking lot with 86 additional parking spaces adjacent to the current SourceHOV parking lot. However, Carloftis said they haven't been able to work on the parking lot due to the inclement weather.

"We won't be able to start on it until we have good weather," Carloftis said. "They have to remove the topsoil before they start and they haven't been able to do that because of the weather."

Hopkins said that she understood but urged Carloftis to at least make a gravel parking lot until they can blacktop it.

"Even if we can get gravel for them to park on until we get it paved, that will be suitable," Hopkins said "It's not a terrible problem that we are getting 490

jobs instead of 300. I will take a problem like that any day of the week."

RCIDA Chairman Robert Lawson was concerned about where SourceHOV employees would park until the parking lot was made.

Hopkins said SourceHOV currently has a 30 minute gap between the first and second shifts to allow employees who are leaving on first shift to give the second shift employees enough time to take their parking spots. She said this process is currently working well for SourceHOV and that they are trying to hold off on establishing a third shift until the parking issues are resolved.

Carloftis told the board that county workers will be measuring off the parking area within the next week and that they will begin the construction of the parking lot soon.

Employees from White House Clinic also provided the board with an update on their current operations.

Chief Executive Officer Stephanie Moore and Chief Financial Officer Chuck Morgan presented their blueprints for their 8,970 square foot building. At last month's RCIDA meeting, White House Clinic purchased 2.6 acres for \$65,000 in Rockcastle Business Park South. The blueprints called for the new building to face Hwy 150 and for their sign to face Progress Drive. The blueprints also called for 76 parking spaces, rooms for four medical providers, four dental stations and a full pharmacy.

After presenting the blueprints and design for their sign to the board, Moore asked the board what else they needed to do and Hopkins said she would like to see a better design for their sign. Moore replied saying the sign was the least of her concerns as she was ready to start building.

Moore said that their next board meeting is on February 28th and that they plan to open bids for the construction of their building during the board meeting.

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Anthony Barnett arrested for violent home invasion

By: Doug Ponder

Police have arrested a man who recently assaulted a homeowner and broke into their home on Freedom School Road in Mt. Vernon.

According to the Rockcastle County Sheriff's Department, Anthony Wayne Barnett, 29, of Mt. Vernon knocked on the door of the residence on Freedom School Road on January 24th and told the homeowner that he needed to use her phone because his cell phone was out of minutes and his vehicle was broken down. The homeowner let Barnett use her phone in the living room while she took her dog to the bedroom.

When the homeowner returned to the living room, she noticed that her son's Nintendo Wii games were missing. As Barnett was leaving the residence, she confronted Barnett and asked him about the missing video games. Barnett replied that he didn't know what she was talking about as he continued to exit the residence.

The homeowner then grabbed Barnett's coat and told him that she could feel the games inside his coat and demanded that he return the games before leaving.

During the altercation, Barnett shoved the homeowner and knocked her to the ground. She then stood back up and once again attempted to retrieve the games from Barnett's coat. As she was holding on to Barnett's coat, Barnett was dragging the homeowner down her driveway and hitting her with his open fist until she eventually let go of his coat.

While the homeowner was calling the police, Barnett returned to the residence and demanded her to open the door. He also told her that if she called the police, that he

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66-year-old Livingston man earns his GED

By: Doug Ponder

A Rockcastle County senior citizen recently received his GED from the Rockcastle County Adult Education Center in Mt. Vernon.

Estill Cromer, 66, of Livingston received his GED last Thursday morning during a private graduation ceremony that was organized by the RCAE staff.

Cromer started taking GED classes at the Center in August of 2011. He finished all his course work and passed the final exam on January 25th.

Cromer was born and raised near the Sandhill Community in Livingston. He completed all eight grades of grade school before dropping out of Livingston High School six weeks into his freshman year.

After dropping out of high school, Cromer married his wife Betty and they moved to Lexington in the summer of 1965 after he was hired as a factory worker at Pepsi-Cola Bottling Company. During the 1960s, Cromer said a lot of factories would hire people who didn't have a GED or high school diploma.

"Back then you didn't have to have a high school diploma or GED to get hired at a factory," Cromer said. "Even though I dropped out of high school, there was still a lot of opportunities for me in those days."

Cromer said they moved to Lexington so he could spend more time at home with his wife as he wouldn't have a long commute to work. However, the newlyweds would later rethink their decision of moving to Lexington after living in the city for three months.

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Estill Cromer, 66, of Livingston received his GED last Thursday morning during a private graduation ceremony that was organized by the Rockcastle County Adult Education Center staff. Shown above from left are: Instructor Kelli Loudermilk, instructor Rachel Falin, Estill Cromer, instructor Amy Nicely and instructor Rebecca Cummins.