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briefs

Governor gets clean bill of health

The Associated Press

FRANKFORT — A routine colon examination revealed no sign of cancer or other problems for Gov. Ernie Fletcher Thursday, who temporarily ceded authority to Lt. Gov. Steve Pence while he was under sedation.

Dr. Alberto Castellanos, who performed the procedure at a Lexington facility, said it was a routine screening.

Fletcher transferred authority at 9:30 a.m. and regained it just over 6 hours later, according to documents on file with the secretary of state.

Fletcher's office said it was done because the governor was sedated during the procedure.

A spokesman for Pence said it was a fairly routine day of work, highlighted by meetings with National Guard and Transportation Cabinet officials dealing with the snow storm.

Officials in the governor's office believe it was the first transfer of power to take place under a 1992 amendment to the Kentucky Constitution.

Prior to the amendment, power transferred to the lieutenant governor or someone even further down the line of succession whenever a governor left the state.



photos by Tom Doty

Arthur Huff became the last defendant to plead guilty to charges from the April drug roundup. Huff will not be formally sentenced until after the holidays and will remain free until formal sentencing in January.

Roundup charges fill docket in circuit court

by TOM DOTY
STAFF WRITER

PRESTONSBURG — Nearly 100 drug traffickers were arrested in drug roundups this year and Wednesday saw defendants from all three raids in court at various stages of adjudication.

The April roundup saw its last defendant, Arthur Huff, enter a guilty plea to one count of complicity to traffic in narcotics.

The April Fool's Day roundup was entirely conducted by the Floyd County Drug Task Force and Huff's plea resulted in a 100 percent conviction rate for the task force, which was terminated after the creation of Operation UNITE.

Huff also received a Christmas bonus, with Judge Caudill allowing him to stay out on bond until he is formally sentenced next month. This was also due to Huff's delicate medical condition, which will necessitate a facility with medical personnel on site.

The Operation UNITE roundup from last July also saw several defendants enter court Wednesday. Several were on hand to enter guilty pleas, with only one suspect opting to go to trial.

Timmy Wayne Hall remains the only accused trafficker to ask for a trial date out of July raid. He is facing two counts of trafficking and two charges of being a persistent felony offender.



Foster Mitchell was sentenced to 10 years in prison on Wednesday for using his grocery store to traffic in drugs.

Hall appeared in court with his attorney, Gerald DeRossett, to fight a motion that was entered by the Commonwealth Attorney's Office asking for his offenses to be tried together. DeRossett argued that the charges stem from alleged drug transactions that happened on two separate days and, if tried together, would prejudice a jury against Hall.

Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney Wayne Taylor countered that both arrests were part of the same investigation and that the same informant was involved in both cases. Judge John Caudill decided that the charges could be

put together for one trial but noted that the Commonwealth would lose one of the persistent felony offender charges.

Hall was one of five suspected traffickers who was arrested for selling prescription drugs out of Mitchell's Grocery at Branham's Creek. The arrests at the grocery store collared five suspects who also included Foster Mitchell, owner of the store; Paul Mitchell, his son; Mark King; and Rachel Tackett.

Foster Mitchell and Paul Tackett.

(See DRUGS, page three)

Courtroom not immune to spirit of holidays

by TOM DOTY
STAFF WRITER

PRESTONSBURG — Several area families got to spend their holidays with loved ones who had been guests of the Floyd County Jail due to Judge John Caudill's motion hour in circuit court Wednesday.

The judge was able to lower bonds for four inmates who were picked up in the latest Operation UNITE roundup and could not raise the funds needed when their original bonds proved too high. There was little that the judge could do, however, for two inmates who still could not post the lowered bonds though he did mention that they could contact his office during the holidays if their situations changed.

Caudill reserved his most lenient ruling for Donnie Bentley, to whom he had previously showed very little lenience after he showed up at the Justice Center while under the influence. Caudill remembered that incident and denied Bentley a plea bargain that he had made, saying that his actions circumvented the arrangement reached with the Commonwealth.

A judge is always free to reject plea agreements and offer the accused a trial date if they wish to change their

plea. This the Judge did with a January trial date set for Bentley following an August incident that saw him accused of fleeing police as well as other charges which would have been dismissed when Bentley took the plea.

Caudill may have been moved by Bentley himself who had his attorney, Jim Adkins, request that Bentley be allowed to speak. The judge granted him permission and Bentley was succinct saying, "I owe you an apology, judge."

Caudill relented and gave Bentley a better deal allowing for him to enter a four-year probation that day rather than serve some time first, as the Commonwealth originally asked for. Bentley will have to endure a strict probation schedule, however, which will see that he gets treatment for his substance abuse problems. Any violation of law could see Bentley back in jail to serve out his four years.

Caudill also gave a Christmas gift to the child of a drug trafficker who was formally sentenced on Wednesday. The judge allowed the parent to spend a few uninterrupted minutes with the child after his bailiff, Lt. Greg Clark, of the sheriff's department, brought the situation to his attention.



photo by Kathy J. Prater

Jerome Greathouse, outgoing president of The Dream Factory of Eastern Kentucky, stopped by The Times office Thursday afternoon with one more announcement before taking a break from presidential responsibilities — that of a donation of \$3,000 to the wish-granting organization from Rudd Equipment Co., of Allen. Standing near a map of the world in The Times office, Greathouse said, "I'm going to stand as close to Florida as I can get because that's where this money is going. We've got a child that is headed to Disney World and this will help get him there." Joy Hall, of McDowell, is the new president of the local Dream Factory. She can be contacted at 377-2053.

3 DAY FORECAST

Today



High: 38 • Low: 23

Tomorrow



High: 51 • Low: 31

Tuesday



High: 54 • Low: 42

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Man killed in collision with 18-wheeler

by TOM DOTY
STAFF WRITER

DORTON — Jonathon Johnson, 25, of Burdine, was killed on Wednesday when he tried to pull onto U.S. 23 at Dorton.

Johnson was driving a 1994 Ford Ranger when he attempted to enter northbound traffic from the shoulder of U.S. 23 south and pulled into the path of a southbound Peterbilt tractor-trailer. The resulting collision

flung his passenger, Jerry Sturgill, out of the vehicle through the passenger-side window.

Sturgill was taken to Pikeville Medical Center and later transported to St. Mary's Hospital in Huntington for further treatment.

Johnson was pronounced dead at the scene by Pike County Coroner Russell Roberts.

Neither man was wearing a seat belt.

Ronald Tackett, the driver of the

other vehicle was, however, wearing his belt and escaped the wreck without serious injury.

The accident is under investigation by accident reconstructionist Eddie Crum.

Crum was assisted at the scene by Troopers Mitchell Adkins and Randy Woods. Further assistance at the scene was provided by Kentucky Vehicle Enforcement, the Dorton Fire Department, Shelby Creek Rescue Squad and DHP Ambulance.



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Obituaries

Enos Browning

Enos Browning, 80, husband of Geneva Smith Browning, died Sunday, December 19, 2004, at St. Joseph Hospital.

Born in Wooton, he was the son of the late Kash G. and Bessie Begley Browning. He served in the U.S. Coast Guard during World War II, graduated with an associate degree from Eastern Kentucky University and attended the University of Kentucky. He was a retired teacher at Mayo State Vocational School in Paintsville, where he had taught for approximately thirty years. He was a member of the Kentucky Vocational Association, the Kentucky Teacher's Association, and the American Vocational Association. He was a Kentucky Colonel and a

member of First Methodist Church in Paintsville.

Survivors other than his wife, include a son, Larry (Dale) Browning of Brookings, South Dakota; a daughter, Lella Ann (Gary) Strowig of Lexington; two grandchildren: Emily Ashlyn Browning and Joseph Michael Browning, both of Brookings, South Dakota.

A memorial service will be 12:30 p.m., Thursday, at Kerr Brothers Funeral Home, Harrodsburg Road, with Rev. Ronnie Hupp officiating.

Memorial contributions are suggested to the Lexington Humane Society, 1600 Old Frankfort Pike, Lexington, KY 40604 or the Oleika Hospital Transportation Fund, 326 Southland Dr., Lexington, KY 40603. (Paid obituary)

Luther Hunter

Luther Hunter, age 81, of Garrett, passed away on Wednesday, December 22, 2004, at Highlands Regional Medical Center, in Prestonsburg.

Born November 30, 1923, in Floyd County, he was the son of the late Ballard and Amanda Cox Hunter. He was a general laborer, and a member of the Martin Branch Church, at Estill.

He is survived by a sister, Elsie Hunter Thornsby, of Garrett; and several nieces and nephews.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by two brothers, French Hunter and Bert Hunter; and three sisters, Violet Cox, Annis Bowling, and Mable Martin.

Funeral services were conducted Friday, December 24, at 1 p.m., at the Nelson-Frazier Funeral Home, in Martin, with Bethel Bolen officiating.

Burial was in the Will Chaffins Cemetery, Rock Fork, at Garrett.

Visitation was at the funeral home (Paid obituary)

State police following aggressive enforcement during Christmas-New Year's holiday period

FRANKFORT — Auto travel is expected to reach record levels throughout the nation during the Christmas-New Year holiday according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and the American Automobile Association (AAA). The organizations predict that about 81 percent of the 62.7 million holiday travelers will choose motor vehicle transportation this year.

As a result, the Kentucky State Police is starting its highway enforcement efforts early to combat a possible surge in traffic deaths. The Governor's Highway Safety Program will begin airing "You Drink and Drive, You Lose" television commercials today in support of the holiday enforcement activities. Increased KSP traffic enforcement efforts, which include saturation road patrols and safety checkpoints, will begin today and continue through Sunday, Jan. 2. Approximately 943 KSP troopers, in conjunction with local police and sheriff's offices, will be using all possible resources in their enforcement efforts including video, radar, unmarked vehicles and passive alcohol sensors.

"Through Dec. 19 of this year, Kentucky has experienced 931 highway fatalities," reports Kentucky State Police Commissioner Mark Miller. "That's already equal to our 2003 total and there are still 12 days left."

During last year's four-day Christmas holiday period, six people lost their lives in six separate crashes on Kentucky roadways. One of those fatalities involved the use of alcohol and four were not

wearing seat belts. "Unfortunately, whether they're driving across town or across the state, impaired drivers will pose the greatest threat to Kentucky motorists during the holidays," says Miller. "However, these needless tragedies do not have to happen. Those who endanger themselves and others should know they will pay a serious price. We will be aggressively enforcing the law to save lives and penalties will be severe."

"We urge all motorists to exercise added caution and flexibility in their travel plans during this peak period," says KSP Capt. Lisa Rudzinski, commander of the Governor's Highway Safety Program. "Three actions can significantly increase the chances of surviving holiday road travel: slow down, buckle up and don't drink and drive." Remember the following:

- Kentucky has a zero tolerance policy regarding driving while impaired by alcohol. Impairment begins with the first drink.

- Your best defense against a drunk driver is your seat belt. In 2003, 67 percent of highway fatalities in Kentucky were not wearing seat belts. (Kentucky law makes the driver responsible for assuring that all passengers in their vehicle are properly restrained.)

- Speeding reduces a driver's ability to steer safely around curves or objects in the roadway. It extends the distance required to stop a vehicle and increases the distance a vehicle travels while the driver reacts to a dangerous situation.

Rudzinski offers the following additional tips for safe highway travel during the holidays:

- Get enough sleep. Sleep

deprivation and fatigue can cause lapses in attention, slowed awareness and impaired judgement.

- Obey speed limits. Excessive speed reduces your ability to avoid a crash, extends your vehicle's stopping distance and increases the severity of a crash when it occurs.

- Slow down in roadway construction zones. Watch for flaggers, signs, lane closures and merge well before the actual closure.

- Don't tailgate. Follow other vehicles at a safe distance. If you find yourself being tailgated, don't hit the brakes. Slow down gradually and let the other vehicle pass you.

- Expect the unexpected. Watch traffic around you and be prepared to react.

- Watch for road debris such as tire treads, garbage, lumber, gravel, tree limbs, mufflers and exhaust parts.

- Avoid or minimize in-car distractions such as cell phone use, changing tapes or CDs, eating or other activities that can remove your attention from the road.

- Take extra care on rural

roads with 55 mile per hour speed limits.

- Don't use cruise control. Keep your body involved and active in the driving process.

- Slow down when driving on icy or snowy roads where stopping distances are longer.

- Turn on your headlights any time your drive. This increases visibility and decreases risk.

- Avoid smoking when you drive. Nicotine and carbon monoxide can hamper night vision.

Citizens can contribute to highway safety during the holiday period by reporting erratic drivers to the KSP toll-free hotline at 1-800-222-5555. Callers will remain anonymous and should give a description of the vehicle, location, direction of travel and license number if possible.

"Holiday travel should always be taken seriously. Don't let the joys of the season be ruined by a vehicle crash or an impaired driving arrest," advises Miller. "Adjust your driving behavior to stress safety. It's an alternative you can live with."

Drugs

Continued from p1

Mitchell were also in court on Wednesday for formal sentencing. Foster Mitchell got the stiffest sentence, with 10 years to serve for three counts of trafficking. Paul Mitchell received a three-year sentence for one count of trafficking.

Several suspects from the December roundup were also in court seeking bond

reduction, with four getting out in time for the holidays, while two are still waiting for family members to raise money for their reduced bonds.

Three traffickers from the April roundup were also in court petitioning for shock probation. Judge Caudill will rule on those requests next week.

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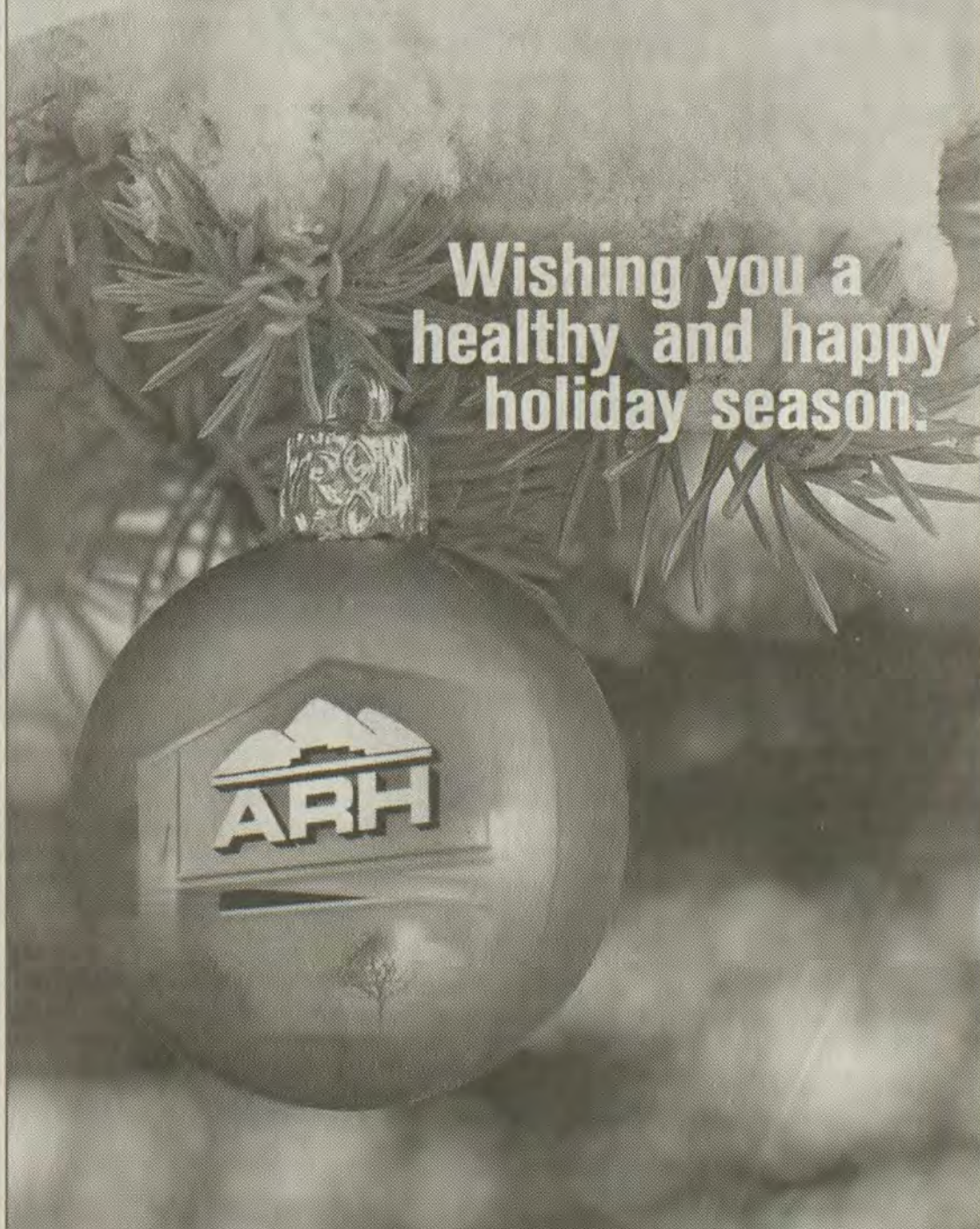
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Wishing you a healthy and happy holiday season.



expression

Freedom of the press is not an end in itself but a means to the end of [achieving] a free society.

— Félix Frankfurter

Guest view

Renewable Bill

Earlier in December, in a speech that got less attention than it deserved, Bill Clinton gave a plain accounting of the swamp this nation is in for lack of a progressive policy — or any real policy — on how we produce, consume and conserve energy.

U.S. emissions of greenhouse gases keep rising, warming the atmosphere and isolating us from a world community working concertedly to reverse this march toward catastrophe. U.S. oil imports are 50 percent higher than they were in the late 1980s, binding us politically to unstable or unsavory governments in the Middle East, and tying our economy to volatile prices in markets manipulated against our interests. Though the way out of this bind is clear — a national commitment to rapidly develop domestic energy from clean, renewable sources — progress has gone from slow to slower.

This is the kind of problem for which Clinton's brain was built: a complex aggregation of economic, political, technological and cultural variables — like health care, only global. Not surprisingly, his remarks to a conference at New York University spotlighted a long list of key questions, from the feasibility of "clean coal" to the efficiencies of computerized electricity grids to the fuel-saving potential of automobiles built from lightweight fiber-and-plastic composites. His political analysis was all the more compelling for being unattached to any candidacy or campaign:

"Now, what are the problems? Well, the old energy economy that emits greenhouse gases and relies on imported oil is very well-organized, very well-financed and very well-connected politically. The new energy economy is diffuse, entrepreneurial, underfinanced and, by and large, woefully underconnected politically."

While other speakers assailed President Bush's loyalty to the old energy economy, and his indifference to global warming, Clinton cautioned against "bellyaching and whining" over political realities. "It's time to stop worrying when, if ever, the current administration will change its mind about climate change," he said, and to start looking for ways to move the American mind-set forward without leadership from the White House.

There's a role in this for every citizen, he said, an opportunity to make smarter choices about retrofitting an office building with heat-saving glass, or replacing the living room light bulbs with energy-saving fluorescents, or investing in companies that are developing the next wave of efficiencies — and then telling others about it. Each of these little steps, proving the worth of a new energy economy, will accumulate toward a "tipping point" where public attitudes could force a change in national policy, rather than waiting for it to happen the other way around.

A fanciful notion? Not to the many companies, local governments and nonprofit organizations that have been investing heavily in the new energy economy for a decade or more — and often, it must be noted, without much more federal help in the Clinton years than now.

His record is complicated, but it seems fair to say that Clinton's leadership on energy and environmental issues was unremarkable in his first term, far better in his second, and hamstrung in both by Republican congressional opponents, especially in the House. Interestingly, his record as Arkansas governor shows considerable achievement on energy issues, and might also explain his faith in the effectiveness of smaller, more localized efforts in the absence of leadership from Washington.

As a private citizen, Clinton is pledging to devote his considerable skills to leading nongovernment initiatives on American energy self-sufficiency, which he quite rightly describes as a more critical issue than most of those that got debated in the last presidential campaign. This is a good thing, for Bill Clinton's greatest political gift has always been his ability to suspend both ideology and politics-as-usual in favor of solutions that actually work.

— The Minneapolis Star Tribune

ZACHARY COLLEY NEWS SERVICE
GARY MARKSTEIN



—Rich Lowry Column

Bush reaches out

This is how the media would write the story of George Bush's second term if they had their way:

WASHINGTON — President Bush announced that former Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle would be his new White House counsel, in a move interpreted as part of an effort to reach out to Democrats. The Bush team has reconciled itself to the reality that in a polarized political environment, elevating partisan enemies and encouraging internal critics is the only way to govern effectively.

Bush set the tone for the day by throwing his arm around Daschle and saying: "Tommy fought every day to obstruct my agenda and paid the ultimate political price in a crushing defeat. That is the sort of pluck and political courage that should be honored in Washington — and that's exactly what I intend to do."

Not everyone was happy with the appointment. A statement released by

the Senate Democratic caucus said: "This appointment is empty symbolism from an administration with no mandate. It is the rankest hypocrisy to select Daschle while leaving Sen. Carl Levin (Mich.), who has done as much if not more to obstruct Bush's judges, out in the cold." A senior White House official sighed, "I guess we're just going to have to try harder."

The Daschle move comes after Bush reached out to Secretary of State Colin Powell, begging him to stay to continue, as one State Department insider familiar with the conversation put it, "to sabotage Bush policy from within." A close friend of Powell's said: "It was extremely gratifying to Colin that the president finally gave his role in fomenting internal dissension the recognition it deserves."

Bush's maneuvers represent a departure from his typical political style. Bush usually presents voters with clear policy ideas and, should he win, implements them. "We all real-

ized that was just too simplistic," a Bush official said. "Look, there's no getting around the fact that 55 million people voted for 'nuance' and incoherence. That's exactly what we're going to give them."

White House Chief of Staff Andy Card will stay on board, but under strict orders, say insiders, to leak once a day to Dana Milbank of The Washington Post or David Sanger of The New York Times. "There's such a thing as being too loyal," said a Bush loyalist, who spoke extensively about sensitive internal deliberations in keeping with a new leak-friendly policy.

The Bush team's ambition in implementing its new approach was evident in rumors of a shake-up at the Republican National Committee. Soon-to-depart Democratic National Committee Chairman Terry McAuliffe is being considered for a post there.

"The problem is, the Republicans have a slight majority in the country, which isn't very bipartisan if you think about," said a member of the Bush political team. "We've got to get some of the ineffectual guys from the other side working for us, so they can help tamp down our popularity. Terry would be perfect. We're considering Bob Shrum too — if we can get him to come down on his fee."

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.



The Rich Lowry column

—beyond the beltway

If you look, there are smiles in the news

Who says there's no good news anymore? The news lately may not have been thrillingly good but a lot of it's been very funny, which is the next best thing. For example:

■ Medals — President Bush gave the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest national honor that doesn't involve getting shot at, to three architects of the current war in Iraq, George Tenet, former director of the CIA; Paul Bremer, former civilian administrator of the occupation of Iraq; and Gen. Tommy Franks, the overall commander of the invasion.

Tenet, you'll remember, is the guy who said that finding Weapons of Mass Destruction in Iraq would be a "slam dunk;" Bremer the chap who disbanded the Iraqi army, leaving no effective local forces to keep order; and Franks the fellow who, though he argued privately for more troops, publicly supported the disastrous decision to try and

run the occupation on the cheap with as few troops as possible.

You know who didn't get medals? The people in the intelligence community who were right on WMDs, right on the need for keeping Iraq forces intact and right on the need for more troops. Proving again the truth of the maxim: "There is no greater sin a bureaucrat can commit than to be right when his superiors are wrong." Incompetence, laziness, bad judgment — all that can be forgiven. A failure to go along with the program, never. I hope Tenet, Bremer and Franks enjoy their medals; they earned them.

■ Deception — Word comes via "The New York Times" that the Defense Department (and they really should change the name back to "War Department," don't you think?) is considering "manipulating" information it dispenses with an eye toward influencing opinion abroad. There's a technical term for that, of course: "lying."

Opponents within the government argue the plan would risk shattering the Pentagon's credibility and might make folks skeptical of everything the military says. I feel safe in saying that the Bush administration should stop worrying about damaging its credibility overseas. It doesn't have any.

Europeans, Middles Easterners and Asians are far more cynical than Americans. They don't believe governments tell the truth, ever. It is only Americans who swallow what their politicians tell them.

In any case, what credibility the United States did have was shredded when Secretary of State Colin Powell went before the United Nations with badly forged documents to argue that invading Iraq was necessary because Saddam had (the still-missing) Weapons of Mass Destruction.

So go ahead and lie if you want to, people.

You won't be fooling anyone but American voters, and only 51 percent of them at that.

■ Dumb luck — Two years ago, Jack Whittaker, a West Virginia businessman, won the richest undivided lottery jackpot in U.S. history: \$314 million. (After taking the lump-sum payout and paying taxes, it amounted to \$113 million cash.)

In the months since, the 57-year-old has been arrested for drunk driving and ordered into rehab, gotten into a number of fights for which he's being sued and had his car and home have been robbed several times. In one of the thefts, he had a briefcase containing more than \$500,000 stolen from his SUV. (It seems he's developed a gambling habit.)

Does that sound like the resume of a happy man? No.

"I wish all of this never would have happened," his wife told a newspaper. "I wish I would have torn the ticket up."

No, no, no, no, no. Don't tear it up, ma'am. Give it to a worthy person — me, for example. If any of you out there have a winning lottery ticket and you are afraid it will ruin your life, mail it to me. I promise not to get arrested for drunk driving (I'll have a chauffeur) or get into fights (I'll have a bodyguard) or lose money gambling (the charm of gambling escapes me).

In my lifetime, I've overcome genteel poverty, lack of recognition and obtuse, ill-tempered bosses. I'm confident I can overcome great wealth too.

Try me.

Donald Kaul recently retired as Washington columnist for the "Des Moines Register." He has covered the foolishness in our nation's capital for 29 years, winning a number of modestly coveted awards along the way. Email him at donald.kaul2@verizon.net.

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PUBLISHER
David Bowyer ext. 18
publisher@floydcountytimes.com

MANAGING EDITOR
Ralph B. Davis ext. 17
web@floydcountytimes.com

FEATURES EDITOR
Kathy J. Prater ext. 26
features@floydcountytimes.com

ADVERTISING MANAGER
Kim Frasure ext. 12
advertising@floydcountytimes.com

SPORTS EDITOR
Steve LeMaster ext. 16
sports@floydcountytimes.com

CLASSIFIED MANAGER
Pauline Branham ext. 19

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Faith Extra

Holidays a time of bigger crowds and opportunities for churches

by JAY LINDSAY
ASSOCIATED PRESS

BOSTON — To describe his feelings at the pulpit during a jam-packed Christmas worship service, the Rev. Paul McPheeters talks "Monday Night Football."

The excitement of speaking in front of a big holiday crowd is like a player's during the prime-time game, he says. So many worshippers attend only on the holidays, and every preacher wants the service to be memorable and moving.

The result, says McPheeters, of Forestdale Community Church, is that when he stands in the pulpit he's just "a little more jacked up about it" than on a typical Sunday.

So are many of his colleagues. Around the country, ministers in churches big and small are preparing to welcome the annual rush of visitors who attend just on Christmas or Easter. These "Holiday Christians," as some call them, come for many reasons — whether they're dragged by family members or attracted to a hopeful message during what can be a time of loneliness.

Pastors and priests say they strive to be friendly, inspirational and clear about the Christmas message of God coming to earth to redeem humanity.

But whether it's music, drama or homilies, church leaders know that whatever they do must be done exceptionally well, said the Rev. Daniel Benedict, director of worship resources at The United Methodist Church General Board of Discipleship.

"Culturally, the expectations are extremely high for Christmas," he said. "Worship services that don't meet the high

expectations are doomed to failure for everyone, but particularly for the guests that are there infrequently."

Despite its commercialization, Christmas remains a time of personal and spiritual reflection, and that makes people open to the Christian message, said Gerald Mann of the Riverbend Church in Austin, Texas.

"This is the time of year to shine the light on all the dark places in your head," Mann said. "I think it's God's declaration that no matter how secular society gets, you can't kill God."

Pastors say they don't want holiday visitors to feel guilty because of their infrequent attendance or embarrassed because they're unfamiliar with church rituals. Some churches don't take offerings, so visitors won't feel the church is just after their money. Others remove religious readings that visitors might be unfamiliar with, or make sure to explain them in church bulletins.

"We don't want people singled out or feeling awkward," said the Rev. Gordon Hugenberger, pastor of the historic Park Street Church in Boston. "We're thrilled they're here."

Churches offer a variety of ways to tell the Christmas story, from simple candlelight services to elaborate musical presentations. For instance, the "Christmas Bursts Into Beauty" presentation at Washington Cathedral in Redmond, Wash., features a live manger scene, soloists and harpists.

Involving children is a way to grab the attention of visiting parents and grandparents who come to watch them. It also emphasizes how God came to earth as a child, said the Rev. Erwin Lutzer of The

Marcy Church in Chicago. He gathers his congregation's children around him to tell the Christmas story during his service.

And, yes, he and other pastors get nervous when they look out at the congregation.

"I think that there's extra excitement at Christmas time. There's a certain mood," Lutzer said. "We all want to do well. We want to make Jesus look good, if I can put it that way."

The Rev. Joseph Juknialis, associate pastor at St. Peter and Paul Parish in Milwaukee, said Christmas is one of those times "when you really wish you could preach well."

"What happens is that's usually when you're least satisfied," said Juknialis, also the director of The Preaching Institute at Saint Francis Seminary.

McPheeters said that, for the first five of his 20 years in ministry, his main thought before the Christmas service was "Lord, get me out of here." But as years have passed, he's learned to rely on God to work through him, he said. Benedict of the Methodist board said that kind of thinking can help.

"Perhaps that is what unbinds the tension in this," he said.

Pastors interviewed said they don't do much to follow up with Christmas visitors, apart from routine steps such as sending letters to those who sign a guest book. White, of Washington Cathedral, said he relies on Christmas story to draw people back.

"The Christmas message itself is inspiring to people who come from an unchurched background," White said. "If it's an inspiring experience for people ... that takes down a lot of barriers."

Minister's Moment

God's ultimate display of love

by FATHER BOB DAMRON
ST. MARTHA CATHOLIC CHURCH

One very cold Christmas not long ago, Tony sat at home gazing out his window at the falling snow. It was a lovely sight. Occasionally, he would look down at the book lying on his lap; but for the most part Tony delighted in watching the snow, enjoying the warmth and imagining the cold outside. He could even hear the wind howling through the trees nearby.

Earlier, when Tony's wife left for Christmas Eve mass, he had decided to remain at home. Christmas had lost its meaning for Tony. To him, the idea of God as a helpless little baby just didn't make any sense. "Perhaps there is a God," Tony thought, "but the idea of a God who became human is hard to swallow." He was comfortable with his decision to forget the question of God and the Christ-Child and to spend Christmas Eve at home relaxing near the fire.

A little later, while he was dozing in his chair, Tony woke at the sound of a thumping noise against his large picture window. He began to hear more tapping and scratching sounds. When he went to the window, Tony found several small birds huddled outside on the ledge, pressing against and pecking at the warm glass — trying to get in, away from the cold wind. Touched by their plight, Tony became anxious to do something to help these fragile creatures who had so suddenly entered his life. He decided the only thing to do was to try to get them into the house so that they

could get warm.

First, Tony tried leaving the door open for a while so that the birds could fly in. The cold wind came in; so did the snow. But the birds didn't come near the door and kept tapping at the window.

So Tony decided to do something else. He placed pieces of bread in the snow leading to the opened door. When he went inside, two of the birds did hop down to eat some of the bread, but they didn't come near the door.

Now, Tony was beginning to get frustrated. He wanted so much to help the birds, but he couldn't think of any other way to help them. Worse yet, Tony realized that the birds refused his invitation of help because they feared him. He wanted to be their friend and helper, but to the birds, he was only a large creature that could hurt them.

Tony came up with one final idea. If the birds were afraid of him, he could use that fear to his advantage. He got a broom and tried to chase them away from the window toward the open door. Unfortunately, all that Tony accomplished with his broom was to frighten the birds to some nearby trees.

Tony felt bad. Never had he experienced such feelings of compassion towards such creatures. He wanted desperately to help them, but what could he do? How could he reach them? How could he bridge the gap that separated him from them? What could he do to show them that they could trust him? If only ... if only he could show them what he was really like ... if only they could know his true


concern for them ... if only he could spend some time with them on their level ... if only, if only he could become one of them. That would do better than anything else. That would be perfect. If only he could become one of them and show them the way into the warmth of the house.

Tony suddenly shuddered. His mind raced from his concern for the birds outside in the freezing cold to thoughts about his wife at mass, the meaning of Christmas and the birth of the Christ-Child. The notion of God "in the flesh" no longer seemed so strange to him. If he himself wanted so much to show his concern for the birds by becoming one of them, how much more would God want to reveal His love for us — by becoming one of us. Tony looked outside for the birds. In his heart, he thanked them. Christmas would never be the same again for Tony.

On a night, a night of cold and darkness, long ago in a land far away, a child was born — not just any child, but the Christ-Child — a Light shattered the darkness of sin, a warmth of love melted the coldness of hate — a child was born, the Christ-Child. The almighty God became flesh in the child Jesus.

On that night, the child Jesus (the Light that breaks the darkness of sin) has only the stars of the night to cast light upon Him. Jesus, whose love will warm the hearts of many, was born in a borrowed stable with only the animals and straw to give Him

(See FAITH, page six)



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Regional Obituaries

FLOYD COUNTY

Allen (Pin-Ball) Patton Jr., 82, of Langley, died Sunday, December 19, at the Hazard Appalachian Regional Hospital. Funeral services were conducted Wednesday, December 22, under the direction of Nelson-Frazier Funeral Home.

Timothy Wayne "Timmy" (Earl) Johnson, 26, of Melvin, died Thursday, December 16, at Highlands Regional Medical Center. Funeral services were conducted Tuesday, December 21, under the direction of Nelson-Frazier Funeral Home.

Haskell Hall, 71, of McDowell, died Thursday, December 16, in the Prestonsburg Health Care Center, following an extended illness. Funeral services were conducted Saturday, December 18, under the direction of Hall Funeral Home.

Harry A. Martin, 75, of Lexington, formerly of Drift, died Sunday, December 19, at Central Baptist Hospital, Lexington. He is survived by his wife, Reba T. Martin. Funeral services were conducted Wednesday, December 22, under the direction of Hall Funeral Home.

William Gable "Bill" Vasvary, 64, of Catlettsburg, a Wheelwright native, died Monday, December 20, at King's Daughters Medical Center. He is survived by his wife, Glenita Blair Vasvary. Funeral services were conducted Thursday, December 23, under the direction of Neal Funeral Home.

Curtis Hall, 54, of Dana, died Saturday, December 18, at Highlands Regional Medical Center. He is survived by his wife, Brenda Sue Sparks Hall. Funeral services were conducted Wednesday, December 22, under the direction of Hall Funeral Home.

James Clifford Daniels, 65, of Stanville, died Saturday, December 18, at his home. He is survived by his wife, Betty Jean Workman Daniels. Funeral services were conducted Tuesday, December 21, under the direction of Lucas and Hall Funeral Home.

Joe Oney, 88, of Greenwich, Ohio, a native of Floyd County, died Thursday morning, at Hillside Acres in Willard, Ohio. Funeral services were conducted Monday, December 13, and burial was in Greenwich Greenlawn Cemetery.

Melissa Patrick Lykins, 31, of Olive Hill, a Prestonsburg native, died Thursday, December 16. Funeral services were conducted Monday, December 20, under the direction of Salyersville Funeral Home.

JOHNSON COUNTY

A memorial service was held Thursday, December 23, at the Kerr Brothers Funeral Home for Enos Browning, 80, who died Sunday, December 19, at St. Joseph Hospital in Lexington. He is survived by his wife, Geneva Smith Browning.

Naomi Jean Blair, 77, of Columbus, Ohio, a Johnson County native, died Friday, December 17, at Cabell Huntington Hospital in Huntington, West Virginia. Funeral services were conducted Tuesday, December 21, under the direction of Jones-Preston Funeral Home.

Pauline Burton, 72, of Richmond, a Paintsville native, died Friday, December 17, at her residence. She is survived by her husband, Lawrence "Wiggie" Burton. Funeral services were conducted Monday, December 20, under the direction of Paintsville Funeral Home.

Virginia "Virgie" Faye Johnson Ray, 61, of Hager Hill, died Saturday, December 18, at St. Mary's Hospital in Huntington, West Virginia. Funeral services were conducted Tuesday, December 21, under the direction of Jones-Preston Funeral Home.

Irene Davis, 88, of Columbus, Ohio, formerly of Johnson County, died Sunday, December 12, at Scioto Community Nursing Home. Funeral services were conducted Wednesday, December 15, under the direction of Graum-Lich and Son Funeral Home, Columbus.

Lora Johnson Craft, 54, of Meally, died Sunday, December 19, at King's Daughters Medical Center in Ashland. She is survived by her husband, Ronney Craft. Funeral services were conducted Wednesday, December 22, under the direction of Jones-Preston Funeral Home.

PIKE COUNTY

Glema Lawson Brown, 81, of Raccoon, died Friday, December 17, at Pikeville Medical Center. Funeral services were conducted Tuesday, December 21, under the direction of Community Funeral Home.

Julia Coleman, 92, of Elkhorn City, died Friday, December 17, at Pikeville Medical Center. Funeral services were conducted Monday, December 20, under the direction of Lucas and Hall Funeral Home.

Roger Keene, 47, of Shelbiana, died Tuesday, December 14, at his home. Funeral services were conducted Sunday, December 19, under the direction of Lucas and Hall Funeral Home.

Donald "Duck" Morgan, 54, of Dandridge, Tennessee, a Pike County native, died Thursday, December 16, in Dandridge. He is survived by his wife, Jeaneatte Norman Morgan. Funeral services were conducted Monday, December 20, under the direction of Bailey Funeral Home.

Ruby Ratliff Scott, 90, of Pikeville, died Sunday, December 19, at her home. Funeral services were conducted Tuesday, December 21, under the direction of J.W. Call & Son Funeral Home.

Arnold Blackburn, 72, of Turkey Creek, died Monday,

December 20, at the South Williamson Appalachian Regional Hospital. He is survived by his wife, Barbara Ann Allen Blackburn. Funeral services were conducted Thursday, December 23, under the direction of Rogers Funeral Home.

James Clifford Daniels, 65, of Stanville, died Saturday, December 18, at his home. He is survived by his wife, Betty Jean Workman Daniels. Funeral services were conducted Tuesday, December 21, under the direction of Lucas and Hall Funeral Home.

Daniel Pete "Danny" George, 46, of McVeigh, died Monday, December 20, at his home. Funeral services were conducted Thursday, December 23, under the direction of Rogers Funeral Home.

James "Rod" Pinson, 37, of Winns Branch, died Wednesday, December 15, at his home. He is survived by his wife, Penny Jane Slone Pinson. Funeral services were conducted Sunday, December 19, under the direction of Rogers Funeral Home.

MAGOFFIN COUNTY

Zenon Vincent Duchnowski, 66, of Salyersville, died Wednesday, November 3, at his residence. He is survived by his wife, Joyce Prater Duchnowski.

Funeral services were conducted Saturday, November 6, under the direction of Magoffin County Funeral Home.

Anthony Lee "Red" Sparks, 23, of Salyersville, died Saturday, December 11, at his residence. Funeral services were conducted Tuesday, December 14, under the direction of Magoffin County Funeral Home.

Gary Wayne Dudgeon, 48, of Salyersville, died Tuesday, December 21. He is survived by his wife, Sandra Howard Dudgeon. Funeral services were held Thursday, December 23, under the direction of Magoffin County Funeral Home.

Elmer "Russ" Watkins, 52, of Salyersville, died Tuesday, November 14, at Highlands Regional Medical Center. He is survived by his wife, Earnsteen Prater Watkins. Funeral services were conducted Friday, December 17, under the direction of Salyersville Funeral Home.

Kelly Rowe, 76, of Albion, Michigan, a Salyersville native, died Saturday, December 18, at his residence. Funeral services were conducted Wednesday, December 22, under the direction of Tidd-Williams Funeral Chapel.

Carl Jenkins, 73, of

Salyersville, died Tuesday, December 14, at Paul B. Hall Medical Center in Paintsville. He is survived by his wife, Blenda Poe Jenkins. Funeral services were conducted Friday, December 17, under the direction of Magoffin County Funeral Home.

KNOTT COUNTY

Ernway "Termite" Short, 73, of Mousie, died Tuesday, December 21, at Saint Joseph Hospital, Lexington. He is survived by his wife, Rosalee Hicks Short. Funeral services were conducted Saturday, December 25, under the direction of Nelson-Frazier Funeral Home, Hindman.

Faith

Continued from p5

warmth that night. God, the Creator of the Universe, shivered that night in the cold.

God became one of us that holy night 2,000 years ago, so that we may become more like God. God became a baby that distant night so that we may have life — eternal life. Christ, the light of God's compassion, love and forgiveness in our world, is born. The One that all creation has been waiting for is born. Because of the Child in the manger, all life has become sacred.

Rejoice, holy night, for to us who hunger to hear the words of hope — God came to us as a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes. Rejoice, O holy night, for to us who long for someone to understand our pains and our brokenness — God came to

us born a child in the manger. Rejoice, O holy night, for to us who are in need of a savior — Jesus came — the Christ-Child is born.

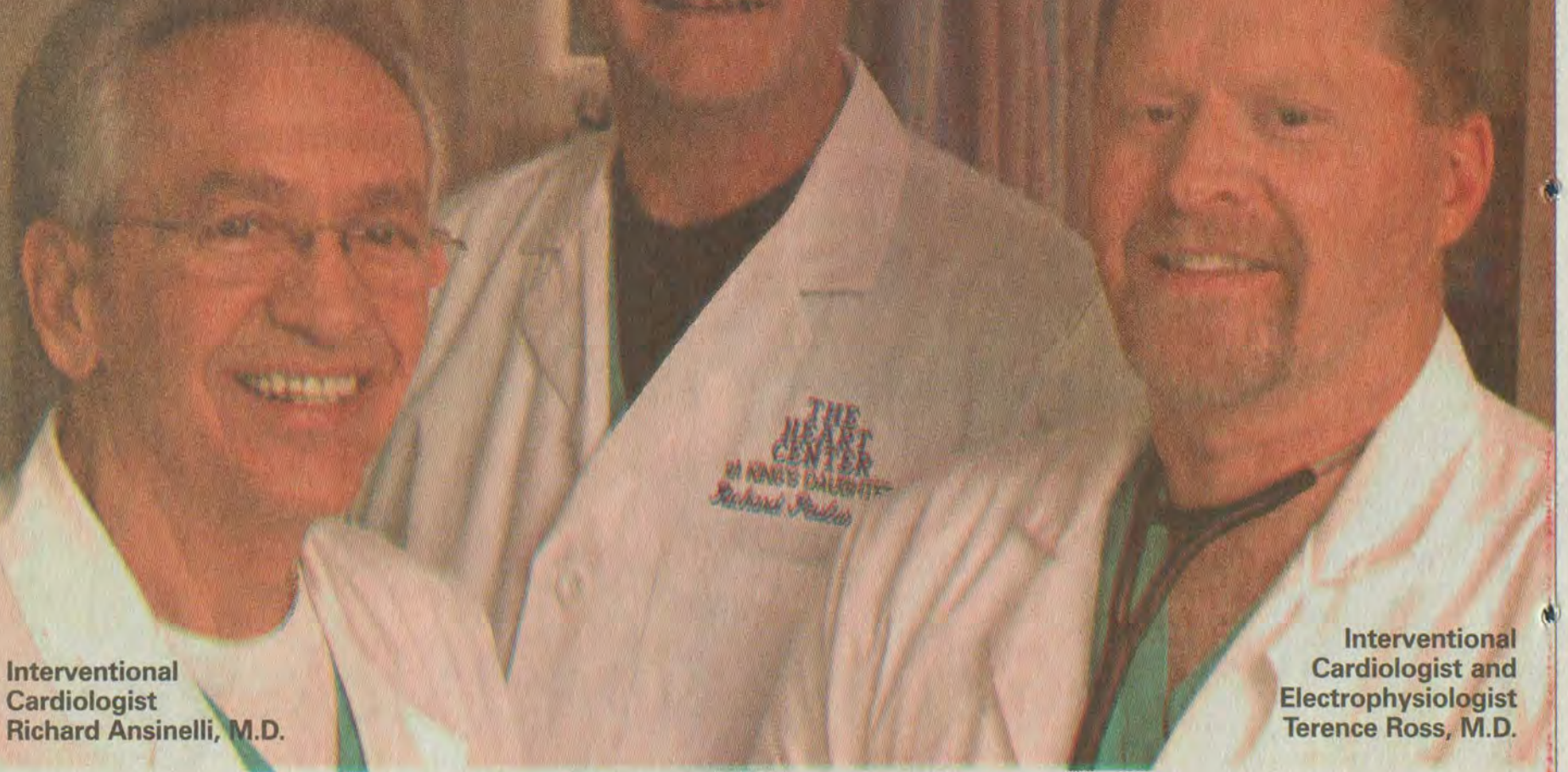
On a night, Christmas, a night of darkness and cold, long ago in a land far away, a child was born, a Light shattered the darkness of our world, a child was born — the Christ-Child was born and the world, our lives, were changed forever.

Let us rejoice — for unto us a child has been born, a child who will mend the brokenness of our lives, who fills our emptiness with love and gentleness. God has become one of us. God has entered into history in His Son Jesus. Today we give thanks for the greatest gift that God has given us — Jesus the Christ-Child, born on Christmas day.

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Sports Editor:
Steve LeMasterPhone Number:
Floyd CountyTimes:
(606) 886-8506
Fax: (606) 886-3603

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Regional
SPORTS

Sunday, December 26, 2004

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TIMES Email: sports@floydcountytimes.com

KHSAA issues penalties for sportsmanship violations

SPECIAL TO THE TIMES

LEXINGTON — Kentucky High School Athletic Association Commissioner Brigid DeVries has announced that boys' basketball players from Providence and Webster County High Schools have been penalized for violation of the Association's Sportsmanship Bylaw (Bylaw 11) following an incident during the December 14 contest at Webster County. In addition, both programs will be on probation for the remainder of the 2004-05 year and face other administrative sanctions.

The contest was ruled final with 2:55 left in the game and Webster County leading, 75-45, after an outbreak of multiple incidents on the floor involving players from both schools.

After detailed review of the incident and communication with administrators and coaches from both schools the Commissioner has issued a ruling. A total of four players from Providence will sit out a total of 19 games while three players from Webster County will miss a total of 12 games.

"Good Sportsmanship is at the heart of the mission of the Association," Commissioner DeVries said. "It is a key issue and the Association's charge to promote its practice. It is an issue with the KHSAA, the National Federation of High School Associations, the NCAA and other sports governing bodies at all levels of competition," DeVries said.

By NFHS playing rules, personnel that leave the bench area to participate in a fight are charged with a flagrant foul (disqualification). In addition per KHSAA Bylaws, schools and school representatives are subject to other penalties contained by Bylaw 33 including, but not limited to, a fine when a player or players leave the bench.

A rule change by the NFHS, effective for the 2004-05 season and discussed at required KHSAA basketball rules clinics attended by coaches and officials, emphasized that beginning in the 2004-05 season that bench personnel will be charged with a flagrant foul (disqualification) if they leave the confines of the bench when a fight may break out."

"This particular incident was preventable had the penalized students responded to attempts by adults to control the situation. When the students failed to respond, the situation escalated to a regrettable situation that cannot be tolerated. Penalizing our membership is never a pleasant thing and we hope lessons have been learned and incidents like this in the future will not occur.

"It is everyone's responsibility to ensure that a safe environment for athletic competition exists," DeVries continued.

Local talent named Trainer of the Year



Above: Area Rocky Mountain Horse owners, riders and association owners and officers were honored during the recent Christmas dinner and awards banquet.

Right: Josh Murdock was named the 2004 Rocky Mountain Horse Trainer of the Year.

TIMES STAFF REPORT

The Rocky Mountain Horse Association recently held its 2004 Christmas Dinner and Annual Awards Banquet in Georgetown at the Georgetown College Athletic Complex.

Rocky Mountain Horse owners, riders and association officers and directors were in attendance for the annual affair.

Each year the Association gathers its officers and members to celebrate the Christmas season and to recognize certain individuals that through out the year have distinguished themselves within the Association.

This year festivities started promptly at 4 pm with an opening welcome by the newly elected President Gary Gwisdalla — and he quickly moved into the awards presentations.

The local training facility Prince Albert Stables, its riders and horses were well represented as over 30 of the owners, riders and supporters were making the trip to Georgetown for the festivities.

The horses and riders are grouped into individual classes and age classification through out the yearly shows and performances. A record of the riders accomplishments and performances are kept by the Association and the winners of the categories are recognized for their performances at this banquet.

The local and talented young horseman Josh Murdock was awarded the coveted 2004 Rocky Mountain Horse

Trainer of the Year. Murdock is the 20-year-old son of Tim and Billie Tucker of Prestonsburg and is the youngest individual to every receive the honor.

The stables received an extended ovation when Whitney May repeated for 2004 Juvenile of the Year. She is the 12-year-old daughter of David and Ocie May of Allen. Whitney and her horse Kisses has dominated the 11 and under division to claim the Juvenile of the Year, as well as Youth 11-and-Under Saddle Champion for 2004.

The little Chocolate Stallion Nick of Time received the 2-Year Stallion High Point Award, with Murdock exhibitor. The very talented young mare Hershey's March Wind was awarded the 3-Year-Old Fillies Under Saddle with Wendell Wells as the exhibitor.

Sullivan Ballou, a velvet black very talented young stallion claimed the Open 4-Year-Old Horses, with Josh Murdock as the exhibitor.

The Open Mares was awarded for the third consecutive year to the outstanding Jane Whitson entry Miss Kits Amazing Grace with Murdock as the exhibitor.

After the Storm, the Robyn Brandenburg entry from Monroe,



Betsy Layne dominates Matewan

by STEVE LeMASTER
SPORTS EDITOR

BELFRY — Betsy Layne, after an opening round loss to Knott County Central, got back on the winning track Wednesday night in the Appalachian Wireless Mountain Schoolboy Classic. The Bobcats got out to an early lead and rolled over Matewan, W.Va., beating the Tigers 75-31.

Preston Simon led the Bobcats in scoring with a game-high 19 points. Trai Witt scored 12 and Brandon Kidd added 11. Shane McKinney pushed in 10 points for the Bobcat.

No Matewan played made it into double figures.

Betsy Layne, after a close first quarter, never showed any signs of surrendering a lead to the West Virginia team.

Derek Case chipped in nine points for Betsy Layne and Pat Stapleton added five.

Betsy Layne held Matewan to under 10 points in three of the four quarters.

The Bobcats led 14-12 at the end of the opening period before blowing the game wide-open.

Betsy Layne led 30-19 at halftime. The Bobcats, coached by Brent Rose, outscored Matewan 25-4 in the third quarter and 20-8 in the final period.

Knott County Central 77, Betsy Layne 68: Senior center Josh Stacy scored a game-high 22 points as the Patriots beat Betsy Layne Tuesday night at Belfry in the first round of the

(See Betsy Layne, page two)

Jenny Wiley Invitational slated for Monday

Strong field set for annual event

by JAMIE HOWELL
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

PRESTONSBURG — It seems like only yesterday that the Prestonsburg Blackcats were playing for the championship of last year's Jenny Wiley Invitational Tournament. But another year has come and gone and with it comes another Jenny Wiley Tournament. This year's field includes the host school Prestonsburg as well as three other 15th Region teams — Betsy Layne, South Floyd and Magoffin County.

Four other teams from throughout the state will converge on the Prestonsburg Fieldhouse for the three day event with those teams being Breathitt County, Greenup County, Campbell County and Western Hills.

Betsy Layne and Breathitt County will tip off the tournament at 4:30 p.m. on Monday with South Floyd and Greenup County to follow at 6 p.m. The host team, Prestonsburg, will take on Western Hills at 7:30 with Magoffin County taking on Campbell County at 9 p.m. Tuesday and Wednesday's game times will be the same as the opening round. Come out and support the local teams as they compete for the Jenny Wiley Invitational title.

Lady Blackcats finish third in Holiday Classic P'burg ends at 2-2 in tourney play

PAINTSVILLE — After opening the Country Music Highway Holiday Classic with back-to-back wins, the Prestonsburg Lady Blackcats dropped their final two games of the tournament to the host Johnson Central Lady Eagles and the Belfry Lady Pirates, Jan. 3 against the Piarist both 15th Region oppo-

nents. Prestonsburg finished the tournament with a 2-2 record and claimed third place in the event. Prestonsburg will take an overall 6-6 record into the holiday break and will return to action on Monday, Jan. 3 against the Piarist Lady Knights.



Prestonsburg Lady Blackcats, Country Music Highway Holiday Classic, Third-Place.

Earnhardt Jr. eyes back-to-back wins in 'Great American Race'

SPECIAL TO THE TIMES

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. — This is part one of a seven-part series previewing the exciting events surrounding Speedweeks 2005, which includes the 47th annual Daytona 500 — the "Great American Race." Future releases will profile Hershey's Take 5 300 Busch Series race, The Florida Dodge Dealers 250 Truck Series race and Crown Royal IROC, The Gatorade Duel, Budweiser Pole Day and the IPOWER DASH 150, The Budweiser Shootout and the Advance Discount Auto Parts 200 and The Rolex 24 At Daytona.

Dale Earnhardt Jr. achieved one of his career goals when he captured the 2004

(See JUNIOR page two)

Junior

Daytona 500, the biggest, richest and most prestigious race of the year.

On his fifth career start in "The Great American Race," Earnhardt Jr. slipped past Tony Stewart in the final laps of the race to claim victory in NASCAR's signature event.

Earnhardt Jr.'s victory was part of the historic day that featured NASCAR's first race with sponsor Nextel and a visit from President George W. Bush, who gave the starting command, "Drivers, start your engines."

"This has to be the greatest day of my life," Earnhardt Jr. said after the race, which was voted by fans as the most dramatic moment of the 2004 Nextel Cup Series season on www.nascar.com during the recent awards banquet in New York City.

Earnhardt Jr. will shoot for back-to-back victories in the 47th annual Daytona 500 on Feb. 20, 2005, at the historic Daytona International Speedway. It'll be the first Daytona 500 with the newly renovated infield, which includes new garages, new Gatorade Victory Lane and Daytona 500 Club, new massive Turn 1, waterfront specialty vehicle parking and an uniquely designed infield.

Earnhardt Jr.'s attempt at back-to-back Daytona 500 wins will not be an easy feat as only Richard Petty (1973-74), Cale Yarborough (1983-84) and Sterling Marlin (1994-95) have been able to pull off consecutive triumphs in "The Great American Race."

While he wouldn't mind a second Harley J. Earl trophy on his mantle, he's happy to have won his first Daytona 500 in the early stages of his career. His legendary father Dale Earnhardt needed 20 attempts to win his first Daytona 500 in 1998.

"I'm just real excited to have won this race," said Earnhardt Jr., whose winning No. 8 Budweiser Chevrolet has been on display for the past year at DAYTONA USA - "The Official Attraction of NASCAR." "It's really hard to win it. Some of our greatest competitors come in and out of this sport without taking this trophy home. I'm glad I can say I've accomplished it and I can put the ongoing strive to win it behind me because we really wanted to win it so bad."

Earnhardt Jr.'s Daytona 500 victory was part of a dominating performance from the North Carolina native during Speedweeks 2004. Other highlights include:

- Nearly winning the Rolex 24 At Daytona with co-drivers Andy Wallace and Tony Stewart.

- Finishing second to Dale Jarrett in The Budweiser Shootout, a non-points all-star event that features previous year's pole winners and past Budweiser Shootout champions.

- Winning both a Gatorade Duel and the Hershey's Take 5 300 NASCAR Busch Series race.

"I feel like we earned every victory and feel like we worked for it and just didn't come down here with a blistering fast car in every race and walk away from everybody," Earnhardt Jr. said. "We feel pretty good at what we achieved and the matter in which we did it and the manual labor involved in it."

The 47th annual Daytona 500 will also feature the final starts in "The Great American Race" for NASCAR veterans Rusty Wallace and Mark Martin. Wallace has made 22 starts in the "Great American Race" but is still winless with eight top-10 finishes. The 1989 NASCAR champion's only

victories at Daytona International Speedway are a Crown Royal IROC Series race in 1989 and the 1998 Budweiser Shootout.

Martin, who has 19 starts in the Daytona 500 without a victory, has four class victories in the Rolex 24 At Daytona as well as the 1999 Budweiser Shootout and a Crown Royal IROC race in 2003.

"I've got one more shot," Wallace said. "I've tried my whole life. I've told my crew when I get back [to Daytona] I better have the best car I've ever had in my life. We've tried but we're going to have to try harder than I've ever tried. We're going to have the best engine, the best car because I want to win it before it's all over."

"The Daytona 500 is still the granddaddy of them all. It's a race that I haven't won and I'm going to try my darndest to win that one."

While Wallace and Martin will be making their final Daytona 500 starts, the field will feature several up and coming rookies making their first starts such as 2004 Busch Series Raybestos Rookie of the Year Kyle Busch, 2004 Busch Series champion Martin Truex Jr. and 2003 Truck Series champion Travis Kvapil.

"I've always told myself that it would be great to be able to win the big race of the Nextel Cup Series," Busch said. "Even if I was never able to win a championship, you just want to say you won a big race and Daytona is one of those. To be able to participate for the first time this year is going to be great. I'm looking forward to it."

• Tickets for Speedweeks 2005 and the 47th annual Daytona 500 are available online at <http://www.daytonainternationalspeedway.com> or by calling 1-800-PITSHOP.

Continued from p1

Lexington Catholic claims Fifth Third title

SPECIAL TO THE TIMES

LEXINGTON - Nikki Davis scored 16 points and Anaris Sickles tossed in 11 as Lexington Catholic beat Louisville Christian 54-46 to win the Fifth Third Bank Holiday Classic title.

The Lady Centurions, coming off of an upset win over Sacred Heart, fell behind early, but took the lead in the third quarter and appeared to be

headed toward another upset.

But the Lady Knights made the plays down the stretch to win the title.

Catholic's big advantage in the game was at the free throw line, where they hit 16 of 22 for the game, compared to 5 of 9 for Louisville Christian.

Locally, Betsy Layne played and Pike County Central both represented the 15th Region in the Fifth Third Bank-sponsored event.

Sacred Heart's Kentucky win streak ends at 100

TIMES STAFF REPORT

LEXINGTON - One of the most storied high school basketball win streaks in Kentucky history came to an end this past week. Sacred Heart's streak of wins against Kentucky competition came to an end on Tuesday, as the Valkyries lost to Louisville Christian 54-46 in overtime at the Fifth Third Bank Holiday Classic in Lexington.

The Lady Centurions were able to shut down Carly Ormerod, holding the Miss Basketball can-

didate to only five points.

Louisville Christian hit 19 of 26 from the line for the game, including nine of 10 in the overtime period to seal the victory.

Sacred Heart's last loss to a Kentucky team came in this same event, almost three years to the day. On December 22, 2001, Covington Holmes beat the Valkyries 63-58.

Sacred Heart also saw its 42-game overall winning streak snapped with the loss.

Sacred Heart is coached by Donna Moir.

H.S. BASKETBALL SCOREBOARD

Wednesday's games

BOYS

- Barbourville 60, South Doyle, Tenn., 44
- Belfry 79, Knott Co. Central 75
- Betsy Layne 75, Matewan, W.Va., 31
- Bourbon Co. 68, Imhotep, Pa., 55
- Breathitt Co. 62, Lewis Co. 60
- Cumberland Gap, Tenn., 74, Taylor Co. 59
- East Carter 66, Russell 50
- East Carter 59, Lou. Southern 44
- Edmonson Co. 57, Dawson Springs 45
- Elliott Co. 74, Owsley Co. 65
- Hilton Head, S.C., 60, Lou. DuPont Manual 57
- Lawrence Co. 63, Beth Haven 54
- Lewis Co. 64, Boyd Co. 58
- Marshall Co. 73, Clinton Co. 63
- Metcalfe Co. 71, Pineville 63
- Pulaski Southwestern 104, Wayne Co. 84
- Rowan Co. 78, Johnson Central 69
- Somerset 86, Clinton, Tenn., 71
- Warren Central 74, West Jessamine 63
- Wolfe Co. 83, Russell Co. 71

GIRLS

- Adair Co. 44, Bowling Green 34
- Belfry 67, Beth Haven 28
- Edmonson Co. 53, Russellville 49
- Franklin Co. 47, Green Co. 39
- Hart Co. 58, Pendleton Co. 24
- Johnson Central 74, Prestonsburg 34
- Monticello 60, South Oldham 57
- Prestonsburg 64, Lawrence Co. 49
- Russell Co. 53, Garrard Co. 40
- Scott Co. 74, Stephenson, Ga., 56
- Shelby Co. 62, Scott 31
- Shelby Co. 64, St. Henry 28
- Whitley Co. 71, Jenkins 18

J'town wins King of the Bluegrass

TIMES STAFF REPORT

LOUISVILLE - Jeffersonton lived up to its lofty pre-season billing this past week, winning one of the state's top

boys' basketball tournaments.

Tournament MVP Dominic Tilford scored 25 points to lead Jeffersonton to a 64-57 victory over Trinity and the championship in the 2004 King of the

Bluegrass.

The Chargers faced double-digit deficits throughout the second and third quarters, but mounted a comeback to win their first KOB title.

Betsy Layne

Continued from p1

Appalachian Mountain Schoolboy Classic. Charles Pike added 13 points for Knott Central. Derrick Miller and Blake Williams each flipped in 12.

Knott Central led 19-10 at the end of the first quarter and led the Bobcats at the end of every period.

Brandon Kidd led Betsy Layne in scoring with 19 points. Preston Simon scored

13 and Derek Case netted 11. Brandon Thacker added nine points. Pat Stapleton had eight points and Nathan Lafferty chipped in six. Brennan Case rounded out the Betsy Layne scoring with two points.

BETSY LAYNE (68) -

- Simon 13,
- Lafferty 6,
- Kidd 19,
- D. Case 11,

Thacker 9, Stapleton 8, B. Case 2.

KNOTT CO. CENTRAL (77) -

- Stacy 22,
- Pike 13,
- Miller 12,
- Williams 12,
- Mosley 5,
- Amburgey 3,
- Bates 8,
- Sparkman 2.

Vick agrees to 10-year deal worth more than \$100 million

by GEORGE HENRY ASSOCIATED PRESS

FLOWERY BRANCH, Ga. - Michael Vick agreed to a 10-year contract worth more than \$100 million with the Atlanta Falcons that also guarantees the star quarterback an NFL-record \$37 million in bonuses, an official close to the negotiations said Thursday.

Vick's contract surpasses the \$98 million deal Indianapolis quarterback Peyton Manning signed in March. Manning was guaranteed \$34.5 million in bonuses.

The deal was first reported by the Atlanta Journal-Constitution on its Web site.

The official, who requested anonymity, said Vick reached incentives in his original con-

tract, a six-year, \$62 million deal, that would have allowed him to void the 2005 and 2006 seasons next month. Had he done so, the 24-year-old Vick would have become an unrestricted free agent on March 2.

"We've said on numerous occasions that this franchise is committed to bringing a world championship to the city of Atlanta, the state of Georgia, as well as to building a sustainable winning organization consistently in the hunt," Falcons owner Arthur Blank said in a statement. "Today's contract extension for Michael, in our opinion, moves us closer to achieving those goals."

Vick, the No. 1 overall draft pick of 2001, has a 24-12-1 career record. He is 14-4 since returning from a broken ankle

last year, and this season led the Falcons to just the third division title in franchise history.

Atlanta earned a first-round bye in the NFC playoffs with an overtime victory over Carolina last week. The Falcons (11-3) visit New Orleans on Sunday, but Vick missed his second straight practice Thursday because of an injured left shoulder.

Vick, chosen Wednesday to his second Pro Bowl, needs 80 yards to break the single-season record for rushing by a quarterback, set by Chicago's Bobby Douglass in 1972.

In a Week 8 victory at Denver, Vick became the first player in league history to rush for 100 yards and pass for 250 in a single game.

South Floyd 49, Allen Central 35

TIMES STAFF REPORT

In a middle school boys' basketball game, South Floyd topped rival Allen Central, winning 49-35.

Deven Adams led South Floyd in scoring with a game-high 13 points. Adams also pulled down nine rebounds.

Chad Patrick added 12 points. Brandon Tackett scored seven points and hauled down 12 rebounds. Adam Slone chipped in five points and dished out 12 assists.

Morgan Mullins and Raymond Jones each had four points for the Raiders. Matt Tackett and Kyle Howell

rounded out the South Floyd scoring with two points apiece.

Blake Meade led Allen Central in scoring with 12 points. Josh Shepherd scored nine points and Chad Nelson chipped in six. Chris Stumbo added five points for the Raiders and Brandon Salisbury netted three.

Marshall 74, High Point 73

SPECIAL TO THE TIMES

HUNTINGTON, W.Va. - Freshman guard Joe Miles (Forestville, Md.) scored 15 points and made the game-winning basket with five seconds remaining to lift the Thundering Herd to a 74-73 victory over High Point Tuesday evening in the Cam Henderson Center.

Marshall improves to 2-6, while the Panthers drop to 3-8.

Marshall trailed by seven with 4:42 to go, 68-61, but ended the game on a 13-5 run, with seven of those points coming from Miles down the stretch. The Herd took the lead at 70-69 on a Miles double-clutch lay-up, and for the next 2:33, the lead switched four times before Miles put Marshall up for good with the 17-foot jumper from the top of the key. High Point's Titus Byrd's last-second three-point attempt rimmed in and out, and the Herd came away with the victory.

"The ball came to my side on the play that coach called and I was to attack the basket," said Miles. "They didn't switch on the screen, I had an open look and I shot the ball."

Marshall trailed for most of

the game, as the athletic Panthers kept the Herd at bay with a strong inside game, both on the scoring and rebounding end. High Point out-rebounded Marshall, 47-40, on the night, but at one point the margin had ballooned to as many as 18. Panther big man Jerry Echenique handled the Herd's big men with a 21-point, 11-rebound performance to help lead the HPU inside attack.

High Point closed out the Herd with a 12-4 run in the last five minutes of the first half to take a 40-32 advantage into the halftime break.

The lead continued to hover around the ten-point margin until the Herd's end-of-game run.

"We chipped away, chipped away, and kept doing what was right," said Marshall guard Tre Whitted (Wilmington, N.C.), who finished the game with 16 points, six rebounds, two assists, one block, and one steal. "I think that's what the season's about, getting over that hump. You've got to just keep fighting."

Whitted led the Herd offensively with the 16 points, while Miles added nine rebounds to go with his 15 points. A.W. Hamilton (Georgetown) and Mark Patton

(Barboursville, W.Va.) each added 12 points for Marshall.

For the game, the Herd shot 36.4 percent from the floor, while the Panthers shot 41.5 percent from the field. Marshall turned the ball over only 11 times, eight below their season average, while High Point committed 20 turnovers. The Panthers were only 27.8 percent from three, compared to 41.2 percent for Marshall, but High Point shot 82.4 percent from the charity stripe, with Marshall shooting only 61.3 percent. The Herd had 14 more attempts from the free-throw line, but could not capitalize with the poor free-throw percentage.

"We were excited and relieved to get that win," said head coach Ron Jirsa. "It was not an easy win, and we had to stick together, and that's been our theme to our season so far. High Point played a very good game, but we believed in each other and stuck together to get the win."

Zione White led the Panthers with 22 points, Echenique added his 21 points, and Danny Gathings scored ten points for High Point.

Marshall's next game is at Wavver on Thursday at 7:30 p.m.

Bengals add FB Easlick to practice squad

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CINCINNATI - Fullback Doug Easlick joined the Cincinnati Bengals' practice squad on Wednesday, two

months after he was released by Miami.

Easlick signed with the Dolphins in the offseason as an undrafted free agent from Virginia Tech. He played in

Miami's first three games and had one catch for 4 yards.

The Dolphins waived him on Oct. 2, and he joined their practice squad three days later. Miami released him on Oct. 12.

No. 8 Kentucky 92, William & Mary 47

by MURRAY EVANS
ASSOCIATED PRESS

LEXINGTON — Kentucky coach Tubby Smith had a point of emphasis in recent practices: passing the basketball more effectively.

If Wednesday night is any indication, the Wildcats apparently have listened and learned. No. 8 Kentucky recorded assists on 27 of 37 baskets in a 92-47 romp over William & Mary at Rupp Arena. After the game, player after player spoke of Smith's passion for passing this week.

"We wanted to focus on passing," junior swingman Kelenna Azubuike said. "Everyone did well with assists, interior post passing and setting screens."

Added senior forward Chuck Hayes: "It is good to see us work together to look for the open shot."

In excelling in their area of focus, the Wildcats (8-1) avoided a potential letdown after an emotional 60-58 win at archrival Louisville on Saturday — a game in which Kentucky rallied from a 16-point deficit in the final 11 minutes.

Kentucky matched its highest point total and posted its most lopsided win of the season. The Wildcats' 45-point margin of victory was their largest since a 62-point romp over Vanderbilt

on March 5, 2003.

Hayes scored 18 points on 8-of-10 shooting and Azubuike added 17 points, leading the way as 13 of Kentucky's 15 players scored.

William & Mary (3-5) led once, at 3-2. Kentucky scored the next 11 points, and the rout was on.

Both teams substituted freely, as all but one player who dressed played in the first half.

"In a game like this, we had an opportunity to experiment with the substitution patterns," sophomore forward Bobby Perry said. "We have the ability to go with a small line-up and still be just as effective and we showed that tonight."

It didn't matter who was in the game — Kentucky simply dominated, as the Wildcats shot 48.7 percent from the field (including 11 dunks), outscored the Tribe 54-8 in the paint and outrebounded them 45-28.

When Smith sent his second string into the game for a 3 1/2-minute stretch of the first half, the subs scored 11 straight points to extend Kentucky's lead to 30-9. The starters returned and ran the margin to 42-13 before exiting again.

Kentucky led 44-19 at halftime. William & Mary came no closer than 21 points in the second half, and the Wildcats led

by as many as 48 points.

The Tribe, without a starter taller than 6-foot-6, didn't go inside much — their first seven shots came from 3-point range, and they didn't attempt a 2-pointer for the first 11 1/2 minutes. William & Mary had almost as many turnovers (16) as shots (19) in the half and didn't attempt a free throw.

William & Mary shot 37.2 percent from the field and finished with a season-high 32 turnovers. Reid Markham (a senior from Louisville) and Taylor Mokris each had seven points for William & Mary.

"The only thing that was disturbing and we have to correct somehow is that our mistakes are the same game after game," William & Mary coach Tony Shaver said. "It's the turnovers and the lack of rebounding that are hurting us."

Joe Crawford added 12 points for Kentucky, while 7-3 center Shagari Alleyne had six points and five blocked shots.

However, junior guard Patrick Sparks, who scored 25 points and hit three free throws with 0.6 of a second left against Louisville, went scoreless for the Wildcats on 0-of-6 shooting.

It was only the second time in Sparks' career — which included two seasons at Western Kentucky that he failed to score in a game. He did have a team-high seven assists.

William & Mary has lost 27 straight games to ranked teams since Dec. 7, 1977, when the Tribe upset North Carolina.



Chuck Hayes

No. 18 Louisville 77, Austin Peay 49

by CHRIS DUNCAN
ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOUISVILLE — Kentucky, of all teams, has taught Louisville a valuable lesson.

The No. 18 Cardinals struggled in the first half against Austin Peay on Wednesday night, then pulled away in the second half of a 77-49 victory in the championship game of the Billy Minardi Classic.

Taquan Dean scored 16 points to lead the Cardinals, who blew a 16-point halftime lead in a 60-58 loss to the archrival Wildcats on Saturday.

Dean said the stinging defeat was still fresh in the players' minds as they built a 30-22 halftime lead on Austin Peay.

"When we come into the second half now, it seems like we have a chip on our shoulder," Dean said. "We learned a great lesson losing to UK. We don't want to have that feeling again."

Louisville coach Rick Pitino called the loss to the Wildcats "devastating," but saw signs on Wednesday night that his team has put that setback behind them.

"They haven't let down emotionally all season," Pitino said. "They didn't hang their heads after a tremendous defeat. They said, 'OK, let's turn the page and move on.'"

Ellis Myles added 12 points and 12 rebounds for Louisville and Pitino, who was finally smiling Wednesday after a difficult week.

Since Dec. 15, he's dismissed and reinstated freshman

Terrance Farley, lost a heart-breaker to No. 8 Kentucky, his former team, and dealt with injuries to his two leading rebounders, Myles and Otis George.

"We've weathered a very difficult storm," Pitino said. "I'm really proud of our guys because they've hung in there through all of the tough breaks."

Myles, who turned 23 on Wednesday, sat out Tuesday's 80-60 win over IUPUI with a tight hamstring. Pitino said Monday that George will be out 2 to 4 weeks with a stress fracture in his right foot.

The Cardinals still had more than enough to rout the Governors.

Francisco Garcia and Larry O'Bannon each added 12 points for the Cardinals (8-2), who shot 52 percent (14-of-27) in the second half to pull away.

"All we have to do is run our offense," Myles said. "When we don't play selfishly, we're a good team."

Louisville outrebounded the Governors 43-22. The 6-foot-7 Garcia had seven rebounds, despite twisting his right ankle early in the second half.

Dean, who scored 20 points in Tuesday's win, was selected the tournament's most outstanding player.

Maurice Hampton and William Durden each scored eight points to lead Austin Peay (2-7), which shot 30 percent

(14-of-47) and lost to Louisville for the third straight season.

The Cardinals were shaky on offense in the first half, shooting 39 percent (9-of-23) and committing 12 turnovers.

Levi Carmichael's 3-pointer with 8:12 left in the opening half gave the Governors a 19-17 lead and prompted a timeout from Pitino.

The Cardinals responded with smothering defense, forcing five turnovers during a 13-0 run over the next 8 minutes.

"We just couldn't score," Austin Peay coach Dave Loos said of the drought. "They just wore us down, obviously."

Derek Wright stole a pass and banked in a 3-pointer at the halftime buzzer to close Austin Peay's deficit to 30-22.

Louisville opened the second half with an 11-3 run. The Governors twice cut the lead to 13, but O'Bannon hit a 3-pointer with 12:07 left to start a 9-1 burst that put Louisville up 54-34.

O'Bannon drew the loudest cheer of the night when he reverse-dunked an alley-oop pass from Myles with 8:53 remaining. Dean's 3-pointer with 8:21 put the Cardinals up 60-38, their largest lead to that point.

The usually packed Freedom Hall was only half-full after a storm dumped nearly 4 inches of snow earlier in the day. The crowd of 8,325 was the lowest since 7,146 attended a game against Charlotte in 1993.

IUPUI beat New Orleans 72-60 in the consolation game of the four-team tournament named after Pitino's brother-in-law, who died in the Sept. 11, 2001 attack on the World Trade Center.



Ellis Myles

BCS won't be destroyed by AP's decision

by RALPH D. RUSSO
ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — The Bowl Championship Series is ready to move on without The Associated Press college football poll.

"I wasn't surprised by the AP's decision," Big East commissioner Mike Tranghese said. "I don't think it's a negative issue. We're just going to have to put our heads together and come up with an alternative way of picking the teams for the 1-2 game."

The Associated Press told the BCS on Tuesday to stop using its poll to determine which teams play for a national title.

BCS coordinator and Big 12 commissioner Kevin Weiberg has said the BCS hopes to have a new formula ready by April.

"We're not heading toward a playoff," Tranghese said Wednesday.

So for the second straight season and the fifth time since the system was implemented in 1998, the BCS will change the way it computes its standings.

This season, the BCS streamlined its formula and put heavy emphasis on the AP and ESPN/USA Today coaches poll. The goal was to make it more likely that Nos. 1 and 2 in the polls played in the national title game, unlike last season when Southern California was a consensus No. 1 but left out of the BCS championship.

Without the AP poll, the BCS's current formula is left with the coaches poll and six

computer rankings.

The BCS could just stick with those two and change the weighting system. Or it could add more computers. Or maybe it could even revive the strength of schedule component, which was eliminated because it was deemed redundant.

"We certainly have other options on how to select and rank the teams," Pac-10 commissioner Tom Hansen said.

The BCS already was looking at the possibility of a selection committee picking the teams for the championship game, taking a page from the NCAA basketball tournaments.

But a committee probably wouldn't be the best way to fill the two at-large spots.

And starting with the 2006 season, the number of at-large teams is destined to go up as the BCS expands to five games to allow greater access to teams from outside the six conferences that now have automatic entry.

"Adding the fifth game is going to give us less pressure," Hansen said. "One of the problems has been good teams being left out. With one more game, that's less likely to happen."

The original BCS formula was comprised of an average of the two human polls, an average of three computer rankings, total losses and strength of schedule.

Since then the computers rankings have changed in number and name and other elements have come and gone. The polls have been a constant.

The coaches poll is not likely to follow the AP's path.

"We'll be a part of it if we are asked to be a part of it," said Grant Teaff, the president of the American Football Coaches Association, which oversees the poll.

The AP said in a statement that the BCS's unauthorized use of its poll has "harmed AP's reputation and interfered with AP's agreements with AP poll voters."

So losing the AP poll doesn't spell doom for the BCS and is not a step toward creating the playoff system the fans and a growing number of coaches want.

The university presidents have made it clear they won't sign off on a playoff system.

ABC, unhappy with the BCS's idea of adding another game with no championship ramifications, tried to push the BCS toward a playoff during contract negotiations for broadcast rights earlier this year. But the BCS simply found another suitor, happy to buy what it was selling.

The BCS signed a four-year deal worth \$320 million with Fox last month for the broadcast rights to the Fiesta, Orange and Sugar bowls from 2007-10 and the national title game from 2007-09.

"The BCS is here and it's going to continue," Tranghese said. "But the BCS is a target for all the playoff proponents. When something like this happens they jump on it. They look at something like this as a crack. They don't understand the strong position of our presidents."

Eagles lead Pro Bowl roster with nine

by BARRY WILNER
ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — Donovan McNabb and Terrell Owens were among nine Philadelphia Eagles voted to the Pro Bowl, the most representatives for a team since 1998.

The Eagles, who already clinched home-field advantage for the NFC playoffs with a 13-1 record, easily had the most Pro Bowlers in results announced Wednesday.

Joining quarterback McNabb and wide receiver Owens, who had ankle surgery Wednesday and is out for the rest of the regular season and perhaps the playoffs, were tackle Tra Thomas, linebacker Jeremiah Trotter, placekicker David Akers, special teamer Ike Reese, and three of four secondary starters: cornerback Lito Sheppard and safeties Michael Lewis and Brian Dawkins.

"You just try to encourage all the guys," McNabb said. "It's good to see that Lito, Mike and Ike have made it and get an opportunity to get over there and get a good feel of All-Star play and to say that they've been a Pro Bowler. It says a lot for this organization, it says a lot for those players and it says a lot for this team."

"We're going to continue this thing on and continue to open up eyes."

Pittsburgh, the league's other 13-1 team, had the next-most

selections in balloting by players, coaches and fans. The Steelers had six: linebackers Joey Porter and James Farrior, safety Troy Polamalu, center Jeff Hartings, guard Alan Faneca and wide receiver Hines Ward. That led the AFC, ahead of Baltimore and Kansas City with five each, while Indianapolis and New England had four apiece.

Green Bay, Atlanta and Dallas had four each in the NFC for the game in Honolulu on Feb. 13.

For only the third time, a set of brothers made the same Pro Bowl. Cornerback Ronde Barber of Tampa Bay and running back Tiki Barber of the Giants were selected — the first twins to make it.

The other brothers were Bruce and Clay Matthews in 1989 and 1990, Sterling and Shannon Sharpe from 1993-95.

Peyton Manning set a record in the fan voting and was a runaway choice for AFC quarterback, along with the Patriots' Tom Brady and the Chargers' Drew Brees.

"I certainly appreciate it," said Manning, who is one touchdown pass short of Dan Marino's record of 48 in a season. "I know it's voted on by my peers, by the coaches and the fans, and I'm proud to represent the Colts there."

The other Colts on the AFC roster were wide receiver Marvin Harrison, running back

Edgerrin James and defensive end Dwight Freeney, the league's sacks leader with 15.

On becoming first Colts defender since end John Dutton from 1975-77 to make it in two straight years, Freeney said, "You want to make it a consistent thing."

Two consistent Pro Bowlers, Vikings wideout Randy Moss and Bears linebacker Brian Urlacher, did not make it, mostly because of injuries.

Curtis Martin, the league's leading rusher with 1,511 yards, was one of three Jets chosen, joining defensive end John Abraham and center Kevin Mawae. Martin is having one of the best seasons of a 10-year career in which he has rushed for at least 1,000 yards each time.

"It feels good to do it in your 10th year, especially at the position like running back," he said. "There are so many other good talented running backs in the NFL, some of whom I feel have much more talent than I do. To be chosen over some of them, it feels good."

The other AFC running back was San Diego's LaDainian Tomlinson. The NFC runners were Shaun Alexander of Seattle and Ahman Green of Green Bay.

Joining McNabb as NFC quarterbacks were Michael Vick of Atlanta and Daunte Culpepper of Minnesota.

Western Kentucky 89, Kentucky St. 73

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BOWLING GREEN — Anthony Winchester scored 21 points and Elgrace Wilborn had a double-double as Western Kentucky routed Division II Kentucky State 89-73 Wednesday night.

In addition to Winchester, Antonio Haynes added 15 points for the Hilltoppers (8-1), while Wilborn scored 14 points and grabbed 10

rebounds. Ty Rogers came off the bench to score 14 points, while Josh Higgins added 11 in a reserve role.

Kyle Allen led Kentucky State (2-2) with 18 points. Gerald Kuhn added 12 points and Daniel Hawkins 10 points for the Thorobreds.

Western Kentucky took control of the game by closing the first half with a 16-0 run over a seven-minute

span that turned a 37-27 lead into a commanding 53-35 halftime lead.

The Hilltoppers shot a solid 51.2 percent from the floor in the first half, including making 7-of-11 (63.6 percent) 3-point shots.

The Hilltoppers continued to hold serve in the second half, extending their lead to as many as 25 points late in the game before finishing out with reserves.

Cook tabbed OVC Player of the Week

SPECIAL TO THE TIMES

RICHMOND — Eastern Kentucky University senior forward Candis Cook was tabbed Ohio Valley Conference Player of the Week, making her the first Lady Colonel to be so honored this season.

Cook led the Lady Colonels' efforts at the UNLV Duel in the Desert, averaging 15.5 points and 9.5 rebounds in the team's two contests in Las Vegas. Cook netted a career-high 24

points while grabbing eight boards and two steals against Iowa State. She was 9-for-16 in the contest, including 2-of-3 from behind the three-point arc.

Against Northern Arizona, Cook pulled down a team-high 11 rebounds, while scoring seven points and tallying a steal against the Lady Lumberjacks. For the week, the College Station, Texas, native shot 44.4 percent and was 3-of-4 from three-point range. Cook was the lone Lady

Colonel to be named to the Duel in the Desert All-Tournament team.

The Lady Colonels will go on a short holiday break before returning to action in Richmond for the Comfort Suites Classic on Dec. 29-30. The team takes on Southern A&M at 7:30 on the 29th before facing Longwood at 4 PM on the 30th. The games will mark the final non-conference contests for EKU before OVC play begins at UT Martin on Jan. 6.

'Down-to-earth' Sparks moving up in basketball world

by MURRAY EVANS
ASSOCIATED PRESS

LEXINGTON — He'd just made the game-winning free throws in one of the nation's fiercest basketball rivalries, and a horde of reporters wondered what Patrick Sparks thought of his heroics.

If they wanted flashy quote, they were disappointed. The Kentucky guard politely answered question after question, but declined to gush about his heroics.

"I'm more of a listener than a talker," Sparks said a few days later.

Sparks just doesn't like to talk about himself. Scoring 25 points and making three free throws with 0.6 of a second left in a nationally televised two-point win over Louisville? That's just another day at the gym — one of thousands he's spent in a career that's taken him from a small-town Kentucky high school to a mid-major NCAA Division I program to the upper echelons of college basketball as a starter for the Wildcats.

"He is the same guy that left here," said Sparks' father and high school coach, Steve Sparks. "That's why we love

him. He's just a down-to-earth Kentucky guy."

Sparks isn't the most famous name from Central City, Ky., population 5,000 — that title belongs to the Everly Brothers — but his roots in the town run as deep as the state's passion for hoops.

Sparks' great-grandfather, George Taylor, coached basketball at Central City High School from 1926 to 1942 and is a member of the Kentucky High School Athletic Association Hall of Fame. Sparks' grandfather, Jack Sparks, played on the Central City team that reached the state title game in 1945.

Steve Sparks also was a player and coach for Central City.

"Basketball is in the blood," Steve Sparks said. "He didn't have much of a choice."

Sparks is accustomed to spending long hours alone working on his game.

"It's just my time to get away from everything else going on and just work on my game," said Sparks, who's averaging 12.1 points and 5.0 assists per game for the eighth-ranked Wildcats (8-1). "I usually don't like to shoot with people a lot. I'm just in there by myself."

He led Muhlenberg North

High School to three straight state tournaments from 1998 to 2000. But few colleges came knocking, despite his gaudy scoring numbers — he led the state with a 31.4-point average as a senior.

But one did. Dennis Felton, then the coach at Western Kentucky, fell in love with Sparks the first time he saw him play, as a sophomore in the state tournament.

"The first time I ever saw him was the first time I knew I had to coach him," said Felton, now the coach at Georgia. "I just felt he was a great, great player in the making. From that day forward, we recruited him as if he were a senior, with that intensity."

"He had tremendous skills and a tremendous feel for the game. He played to win. It was easy to see."

Felton gave Sparks his best offer. Auburn considered offering him a scholarship, then backed away. Kentucky asked him to walk on. Louisville showed mild interest.

Sparks made an immediate impact with the Hilltoppers, breaking into the starting lineup as a freshman and helping them to two Sun Belt Conference

divisional titles and NCAA tournament berths. Western Kentucky went 52-13 during those two seasons.

Felton left Western Kentucky for Georgia in April 2003, and soon after, Sparks decided to leave the Hilltoppers. This time, the list of suitors was longer — and more impressive. Kentucky, Louisville, Oklahoma State, Kansas, Ohio State, Notre Dame, Stanford, Florida.

"I don't know if he had proved himself or people started realizing what he could bring to a team," Steve Sparks said.

Patrick Sparks and Kentucky coach Tubby Smith agreed that Sparks would pay his own way in school for one year, then receive a scholarship for his remaining two years. The timing was ideal for Smith, who had two senior guards — Cliff Hawkins and Gerald Fitch — on the team the season that Sparks redshirted.

"It doesn't get any bigger than UK, and being able to play on this level, you know that night in and night out, it's going to be a tough challenge for you," Sparks said. "These are where the best games are."

One of his new Kentucky

teammates, Chuck Hayes, took one look at Patrick Sparks and wasn't exactly overwhelmed.

"I didn't think the guy could play," Hayes said. "When you look at Sparks and the stuff he wears, he's got like camouflage hats and shirts. The guy's 5-11, 5-10, (has a) country accent and just from a looks standpoint, he don't look like he has a drop of athleticism in him at all."

Sparks quickly won over Hayes and his other teammates by displaying the work ethic he'd always had.

As a project, Sparks took gangly 7-3 freshman center Shagari Alleyne under his wing. The two spent hours working together in Memorial Coliseum, with Sparks lobbing the ball to Alleyne, helping the big man figure out how to best use his height. This season, that work has paid off, as Alleyne is a key contributor for the Wildcats.

"Patrick Sparks is a great team player," Alleyne said. "He just knows the game of basketball. People can underestimate Patrick because of his size, but when you see his skill out there on the court, you've got to respect him."

Smith continually has praised

Sparks' heads-up play, which was evident in the closing seconds against Louisville. First, Sparks called a time-out with 4.8 seconds left when he was pinned on the baseline by a defender.

Then, on the ensuing play, he pump-faked before shooting, drawing a foul from Louisville's Ellis Myles. That didn't surprise Felton at all, because he'd seen Sparks win a Sun Belt tournament game as a freshman in similar fashion, pump-faking two defenders before nailing a 3-pointer at the buzzer to beat New Mexico State.

"He made a poised play," Felton said.

Sparks play against Kentucky has made him a fan favorite. It doesn't hurt, either, that his heady play and free-throw shooting helped Kentucky beat Louisville.

"People around here, they see a kid and they realize the effort and work he's put in," Steve Sparks said. "He's that blue-collar kid that people can relate to very well. He is just going to come out and play hard and work hard. That's the way he is. That's the way he was here. People respect that."

3 Bengals make Pro Bowl for first time since '90

by JOE KAY
ASSOCIATED PRESS

CINCINNATI — For the first time in 14 years, the Cincinnati Bengals will be sending a contingent to the Pro Bowl.

Receiver Chad Johnson and right tackle Willie Anderson made the Pro Bowl roster Wednesday for the second consecutive year, joined by cornerback Tory James. It's the first time since 1990 that three Bengals were picked.

That year was also the last time that Cincinnati (6-8) had a winning record. A loss to Buffalo last Sunday stretched the NFL's most enduring streak of futility to 14 seasons.

Since 1991, the Bengals have had five years with only one player picked for the Pro Bowl and four years with no one going.

"I think it shows the respect around the league," said Anderson, who has played with torn cartilage in his knee. "In years past, there would be one guy around here. People around the league now respect the way we play."

No one gets more respect from opposing teams than Johnson, who led the AFC with a club-record 1,355 yards last year. He's second in the conference in catches and yards this season despite double coverage.

Johnson had a season-low two catches for 10 yards Sunday in a 33-17 loss to Buffalo, which geared its

defense to shut him down.

"When they take you out of the game like that and decide that you're just not going to get a chance to play today, it would probably be a lot like Barry Bonds up at bat," quarterback Jon Kitna said Wednesday. "What can you do if they don't pitch to you? You just stay patient and when your chance comes, you hit a home run, I guess."

"I think Chad has done a good job all year with that. It's unbelievable the year he has had, numbers-wise, even though teams are basing their whole game plan on him. That's been a testament to him."

Off the field, it's been an adventure.

Johnson has repeatedly aggravated head coach Marvin Lewis with his self-centered stunts — sending Pepto-Bismol to Browns defensive backs, promising fans a new touchdown celebration. At Lewis' urging, he has been low-key the last couple of weeks, saying very little about anything.

"I don't want him to say things and then have to take them back," Lewis said Wednesday. "I want him to think about what he's said and who's going to hear it."

Johnson had a little fun after learning he was picked for another Pro Bowl.

"It means a lot," Johnson said. "That's two down, 13 more to go. I feel really pleased."

Asked what he remembered most about his first Pro Bowl, he said, "The neatest thing? At the hotel, they had sharks in the water. I wasn't into the sightseeing thing. I was in the hotel the whole time. I didn't leave the room."

James was the biggest surprise of the three. He played so poorly that Lewis benched and lectured him during a 23-9 loss to Baltimore in the third game, telling him, "Look, you have the ability to do it," Lewis said.

"He's turned his season around and has proven he had the ability to do it," Lewis said. "Now you do it game after game, season after season."

James was one of Lewis' first free agent acquisitions. He led the team with four interceptions last season, and is second in the NFL with seven interceptions this season, one behind Baltimore's Ed Reed.

James was drafted in the second round by Denver in 1996 and tore a tendon in his knee a year later, forcing him to miss an entire season. He was with Denver for four years and with Oakland for three before moving to Cincinnati.

The ninth-year veteran was emotional after learning he was headed for his first Pro Bowl.

"I don't even know if I have the right words to say," he said. "It's just a real good feeling. It's been like a long road for me, being hurt early on in my career and having to fight back from that."

Randa agrees to deal with Reds

by LISA CORNWELL
ASSOCIATED PRESS

CINCINNATI — Third baseman Joe Randa agreed Tuesday to a \$2.15 million, one-year contract with the Reds, ending Cincinnati's plan to move right fielder Austin Kearns to the position next season.

Randa, 35, played the last six seasons with Kansas City, batting .287 with eight home runs and 56 RBIs last season. He has a .286 average in 10 major league seasons with 102 home runs and 643 RBIs.

Cincinnati intended to move Kearns to third base after the emergence of Wily Mo Pena gave the Reds four outfielders but no proven third baseman.

Reds general manager Dan O'Brien said Kearns was making progress but the club did not think he would be ready to take over the position next season.

"We just felt that that was, at this particular point in time, a risk that we didn't feel would be fair to either Austin or his teammates, to be in that particular position come opening day," O'Brien said.

He said club officials have talked to Kearns, who supported the signing of Randa.

Randa has played for Kansas City in eight of his 10 seasons. He also played one year for Pittsburgh and one for Detroit.

He tied a major league

record when he scored six runs in a game in a 26-5 win over Detroit last season. He became the first American League player with six hits and six runs in a nine-inning game.

O'Brien said Randa will be a good fit in lineup wherever manager Dave Miley puts him.

"He's a very intelligent player," O'Brien said. "He simply helps you win."

The Royals finished last season with a team record 104 losses and are expected to have a younger team next season.

Randa said he could see Kansas City was going in a different direction.

"I wanted to be in an organization that was making a push to win," he said.

Power preparing for first season

SPECIAL TO THE TIMES

CHARLESTON, W.Va. — The West Virginia Power, formerly known as the Charleston Alley Cats, recently unveiled their new identity program at the Charleston Town Center.

"The move to the new stadium, combined with a new ownership group, new management team, and new affiliation, provided a unique opportunity to re-brand professional baseball in the region," said General Manager Andy Milovich. "West Virginia is and will continue to be recognized as one of the leading energy providers for the country. The energy production from coal, natural gas, and hydroelectric sources, combined with the fact that Charleston serves as the center for the state's political and economic powers led us to the name of the team. We felt it was extremely important that the name reflect the entire region and are excited about the tremendous marketing

opportunities that will go along with the name." The club's new colors include Moss, a custom color not used by any other Minor League club, Gold, Yellow, and Cream.



The Power are working on the new franchise with Plan B Branding of San Diego. Plan B Branding is an ideas company that helps Minor League Baseball franchises increase their attendance and revenue.

Several of Plan B's clients set attendance and merchandise records during the 2004 season.

"After meeting with the staff in Charleston, we all agreed that this franchise must

become the pride of West Virginia," Plan B Branding partner Casey White said. "To meet this goal we needed to create a look not only unique to the state, but also unique to Minor League Baseball."

The team has temporarily relocated to the former Bob Evan's Restaurant at 450 Quarrier Street, next to the Town Center. It will have merchandise available by Thanksgiving and will introduce other ticket packages at that time as well. Mascots and uniforms will be unveiled in the coming weeks. Tickets and Power Merchandise will be available soon online at www.wvpower.com.

The Power opens the home portion of their schedule on Thursday, April 14th, when they host the Hagerstown Suns. The 2005 season will feature the franchise's new affiliation with the Milwaukee Brewers and the Inaugural Season in the new stadium in Charleston's East End.



photos by Jamie Howell

Prestonsburg freshman Rikki Hughes lofted a shot during Wednesday evening's game against Johnson Central.



Prestonsburg's Elizabeth Chaffin (23) tried to get position on a pair of Johnson Central players.

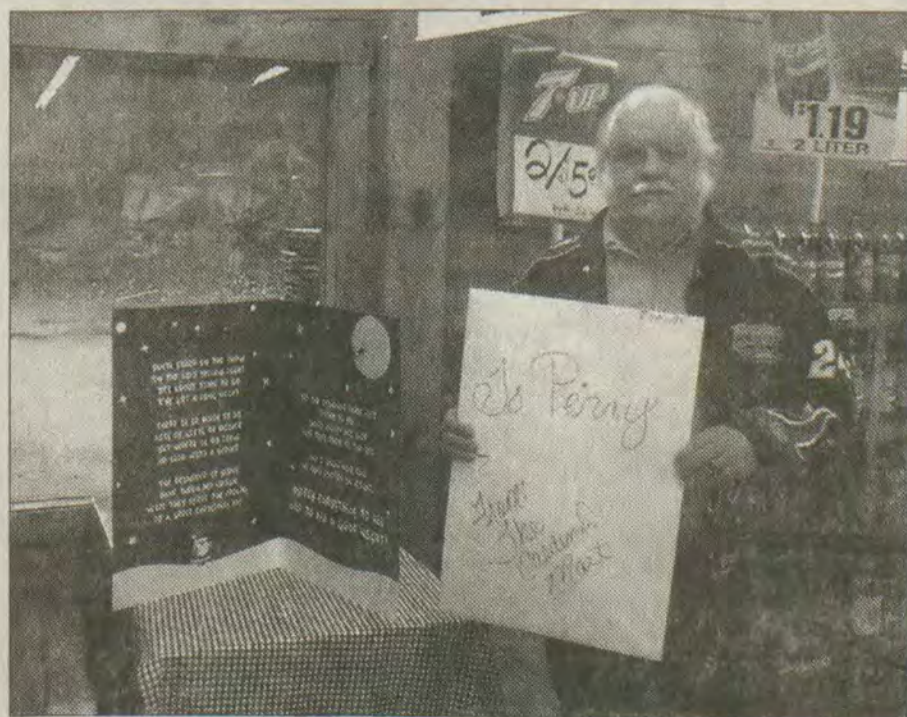


photo by Steve LeMaster

Longtime Eastern Kentucky sports fan and supporter Perry Jones received a Christmas card from the employees at Cardinal Country Store on Route 80. Jones has been to over 40 Boys' Sweet 16 State Basketball Tournaments.

Features Editor
 Kathy Prater
 Phone: (606) 886-8506
 Fax: (606) 886-3603

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FLOYD COUNTY Lifestyles



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This Town, That World

Editor's Note: For years, Floyd County Times founder and former publisher Norman Allen wrote a weekly column that looked at Floyd County through his eyes. His columns are being reprinted due to request.

1959... 1959... 1959... 1959... that should break that habit of writing 1958.

It's always a mistake for us to skip publication a week. The work just piles up when we do, and to return to the grind is that much harder. We think when we take these few days off that we will have a lot of fine ideas for news-stories, editorials and for this column. And, thus this column will bear witness, we wind up more bereft of ideas even than usual.



Norman Allen

The only satisfying thing about leaving off one week's publication is this: We know that, at least one week in the year, there is not a soul in the world who can take offense at what we didn't write for the paper.

Two things, we are told, are certain—death and taxes. If more people worried about the penalty connected with the former, rather than with the latter, they and the world would be better.

If any of you happen to come in possession of the new volume of humor published by The Reader's Digest, you might look on Page 150 for that item taken from this very column.

FEARLESS PREDICTIONS

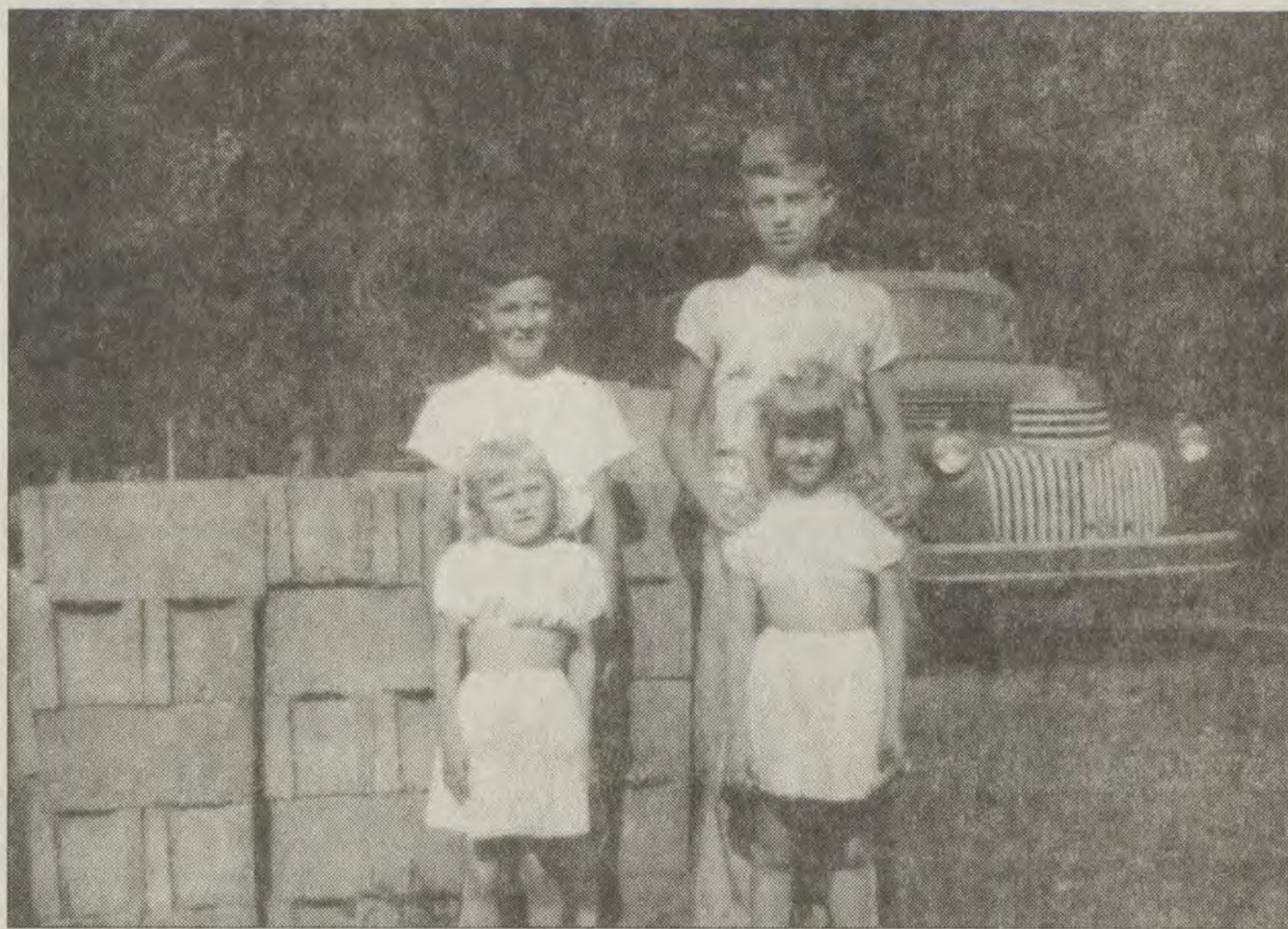
Now comes one who wants my opinion as to what 1959 holds for Floyd County, and I, as usual, plead ignorance, an honest plea too, of course, if I could be given as many guesses as the weatherman; I might score a bull's-eye eventually, even as the Weather Bureau does.

Despite my hesitancy about crawling out on the well-known limb, to make these fearless predictions and stand in little fear of becoming known as a false prophet:

1. All Floyd Countians, 60 years of age and over, will, for the next twelve months, continue to assure one and all that we don't have winters like we used to have.

2. My dog will be threatened with sudden extinction at least 365 times this year — unless the threatener decides before the year is up to take action.

(See THIS TOWN, page six)



Ralph, back row, right ("the tall one"), and brother Roger, who was nicknamed "Mutt," pose for a picture with their sisters, Wilma, front left, and Sylvia, right.

Why Daddy Sold Old Betsy

Chapter 4
 by Ralph Hall

School Days

I started school in the year 1942. My first day of school was a sad time, all I could think about was going home. I think that must have been the longest day in recorded history. It didn't take me very long, though, to love my teacher, Miss Tackett. She also loved me and a few years later, when she had a son of her own, she named him Ralph, after me.

Our school was a three-room building without bathrooms - we had outhouses instead. Out in the school yard stood an old hand pump, I drank many cups of water from this old pump. We didn't have Dixie cups back in those



SCHOOL DAYS
 1944-45

Ralph Hall, age 8. Hall now writes of school days gone by as he recollects the "good old days of 'readin', 'ritin', and 'rithmetic.'"

days, so we made small paper cups from our writing tablets. Many times I would see the ink from the tablet paper as it mixed with the water.

I loved school because I loved books. And our school had lots of books. We had primers from which our teachers taught us to read. These books had stories about Ben and Alice. The sentences from those books are still fresh in my mind: "See Ben run. See Alice run."

First and second grades were a lot of fun. The third grade, however, proved to be a little harder for me. Every Friday, the class had a program they called a "spelling bee." I hated Friday because I was a poor speller and always came in last in the spelling bees.

My cousin was in my class and most of the time she won the spelling bees. She would laugh at me for being the first person to lose. I never did like her very much back then.

It being Christmastime, I have memories of Christmases spent at school come to mind as I write. Every year, at least up to about the fifth grade or so, students and teachers from the Caney Creek Community College (now Alice Lloyd College) would visit our classrooms, bringing along all sorts of gaily wrapped presents for all the little girls and boys. Us boys most always got a "cap buster" pistol, or a toy car or train. The girls most always got a pretty doll. Spinning tops were a great present, too. Those Caney Creek folks sure did brighten up our Christmases for us and I'm sure that more people than me still remember, and appreciate, what they did.

My first three years of school were a lot of fun in many ways, but there is one story about third grade you must hear before we go on.

My brother, Mutt, and another boy were smoking out behind the boy's outhouse one day. They heard a cry coming from the girl's outhouse: "Help

me, please." Not knowing what to do, being boys and all, they just rushed into the girl's outhouse. Once there, they saw no one, but discovered that the voice was coming from the hole in the toilet. They looked down into the hole and found a little girl crying for someone to please get her out!

The boys ran as hard as they could back to class to get the teacher. The teacher got the little girl out, and boy, was she a mess as this happened on a warm day in early May.

The teacher tried to clean her up at the hand pump, but her efforts were to no avail. Finally, she had to send the little girl on her way walking home.

Third grade came to an end and the days of summer awaited. Three entire months to be spent at Grandma's house!

All summer long, I dreamed about the first day of school beginning again. I would be going to a new school and I wondered what it would be like and if the kids there would like me. The day after Labor Day, I caught the school bus and away I went to my new school. I couldn't wait to get there, and once I did, I was the first student off the bus.

Once off, the school bully met me and hit me square in the nose, causing my nose to bleed. No one had ever done that to me before and I spent the next three years being afraid of that boy. Us boys always called him "Aggie," because he was always "agging on," or starting, trouble.

I loved the new school and my new teachers. Most of the students I liked also, but not, of course, old Aggie. Recess wasn't a lot of fun at the new school, though, because the big boys in seventh and eighth grades gave us small boys a hard time. They would get hold of us out on the hillside and take off our pants and throw them in the trees. And, you may remember, I

(See BETSY, page six)

MOVIES FROM THE BLACK LAGOON

'Terror Train'

by TOM DOTY
 STAFF WRITER

In 1980, Jamie Lee Curtis was riding high on the success of "Halloween" and "The Fog" when she made this surprisingly strong effort. It didn't catch fire with audiences, though it is far superior to her other release that year ("Prom Night").

Here she is cast as the girlfriend of a frat boy and the intro sees her helping to set up a ghastly joke on a freshman that tragically backfires and sees the boy hospitalized in a mental institution after he is tricked into sharing a bed with a rotting corpse. Flash forward four years and those same frat boys are celebrating their graduation by renting a



Tom Doty
 Staff Writer

train for an all-night kegger-cum-cos-tume party. The passengers, of course, include the boy they played a joke on but which one of the partygoers is he? The train setting works well as the killer targets everyone who was in on the joke. After each victim is dispatched, the killer dons their costume and his identity isn't revealed until the ending and it's a whopper of a surprise of a gender-bending nature that totally predated "The Crying Game."

Alfred Hitchcock loved using trains in his films and likened them to life in that they move very fast and allow for little control over one's final destination. Here that theory gets good use, though some of the set ups are way obvious. When one character complains that the radio isn't fixed it's hard to stifle a groan especially when the same character whines about the trip being through the most remote area imaginable. Once the action starts, though, things never slow down.

The first killing is a great gag since it's the class clown and everybody writes it off as a joke. Eventually everyone catches on to what's happening and here is where the movie shows its strengths, as none of the characters do stupid things like walking off alone to call out the names of the missing. Instead they put their heads together and figure out who is doing the killing. The problem now becomes unmasking the killer.

It all leads to a showdown between Curtis and the bad guy which turns into a chilling scene where she passionately apologizes for the prank but learns that forgiveness is not forthcoming. The ending is satisfying in that there is very little doubt that the killer will ever make it back for a sequel. Most horror movies of the

(See LAGOON, page six)

Secret Santa

by TANJA CROUCH

"CHICKEN SOUP FOR THE SOUL — CHRISTMAS TREASURY"

Manuel and I work in the same building. I'm a music talent agent with a firm on the 18th floor. Manuel has his own space near the escalator from the garage to the lobby. He sells newspapers, magazines, gum and candy. I pass Manuel each day as I make my way from the underground parking to the lobby.

Hundreds of people working in the building pass by Manuel each day, and he seems to know everyone's name.

Each morning I stop to buy a newspaper, and Manuel greets me. "Good morning, Miss Tanja. How are you today?"

Last year I convinced him to stop calling me "Miss Crouch," but he refuses to drop the "Miss" in

front of my first name. Some mornings I stop to chat for a moment and marvel at the fact that he supports a wife, three boys and a daughter on his salary.

Prior to Christmas, my assistant learned that Manuel not only supports his own family but had recently taken in his widowed sister and her two children. Manuel's wife, Rosa, stays home to care for the six children while Manuel and his sister work to support the family. When my assistant heard about this, she decided that we needed to become secret Santas to Manuel's family.

Throughout the month of December, several of us made it our mission to learn all we could about Manuel and his family. We rejoiced as something new was discovered, such as Manuel's oldest son, Jose, was 10 years old. He loved baseball and hoped to one day play professionally. He would get a base-

ball, bat, glove and cap. Manuel's only daughter, Maria, was just learning to read, and she loved bears. A special teddy bear and books were selected.

We charted facts, listed gift ideas, then cross-referenced them with what had been purchased. One of the partners in the firm got into the spirit and bought a VCR, then charged a new TV set to another partner! Everyone was caught up telling stories of how Manuel had touched our lives with his warm spirit and the details we were learning about his life.

We arranged for UPS to deliver our gifts the day before Christmas. The return address was simply North Pole. We speculated at how surprised Manuel

would be and could hardly wait to return from the holidays to hear if he would mention it. We never in our wildest dreams anticipated what we would learn.

Manuel had packed up all the gifts and sent them away! The television and VCR went to a nursing home where Manuel's sister worked as a maid. Clothes were shipped to relatives in Mexico. Food was shared with the neighbors. On and on it went. Manuel considered his family so blessed that they had shared all the wonderful gifts they received with others less fortunate.

"We had the best Christmas ever. Miss Tanja!" Manuel beamed. "Me too," I smiled.



Jim Davidson

You may be seeing red!

Someone once said that danger is "the anger of a great man, the tumult of a mob, a widow that has been thrice married, a wind that comes in at a hole, a reconciled enemy." It took me a moment on that part that says, "a widow that has been thrice married," but I was swift as a deer that had been shot at and missed, when it came to that last part a reconciled enemy.



There is little doubt among the vast majority of our citizens that we do have a reconciled enemy. These are the people that we call "terrorists" and they would literally destroy us, if given the opportunity. For this reason, we must all be constantly vigilant to preempt

any terrorist act that would cause vast destruction and loss of life.

Soon after the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, our government was swift to set up a Department of Homeland Defense to coordinate all of our recourses to try to prevent this from ever happening again. I say "try" because there is no guarantee that anything can be done to prevent this type of thing from again visiting our shores.

Our nation's airports, government buildings, critical infrastructure such as nuclear plants and railroads, harbors, shopping malls and other locations where people

congregate are the most vulnerable. Those of us who love sports are also deeply concerned about football stadiums and basketball arenas filled to capacity and a terrorist cell deciding that's the target they want to hit. It would be more than tragic should this ever happen.

For the above stated reasons I want to share something with you that a reader sent me the other day. This was soon after Secretary of Homeland Security Tom Ridge had announced that our national alert was being raised from yellow to orange, which means from "Elevated" to "High."

This reader was not looking to see his name in print or receive any credit for his idea. He just wanted to share an idea that might make us more aware of a nation in peril and might just make a difference in the future. I might also point out that I would not waste

your time if I did not think the threat of "terrorism" was going to be with us for some time. We only have to look to the nation of Israel to see what is possible unless we are constantly on guard to prevent it.

This gentleman, whom I will call a patriot, begins by saying, "You will probably recall that there has been some national discussions concerning our ho-hum complacency in regard to our country's current status of alert. What do you think about making the following suggestion to our country through your column? Whenever the national alert is raised to orange, each of us would wear an article of orange colored clothing, not coordinated with the rest of our apparel. Women could wear an orange colored scarf, blouse, hat, etc. Men could wear an orange colored shirt, jacket or tie. If the alert is raised again to red, then we could all wear something red."

Of course this kind of dress would be so conspicuous that it would draw attention to the occa-

sion of Homeland Security, and remind us to be vigilantly alert. Now, that's his idea. Let me ask you what you think about it? Would you be willing to do it if you thought it would make us more aware of the dangers we face from terrorists?

Personally, I wish it had been some other color than orange. When I was in junior high school, my mother bought me an orange shirt and made me wear it. I hated it. However, since I've gotten older I have come to like the color orange and I know some of my friends in Texas and Tennessee love it, too. That's their school's color.

But seriously, at this point the idea of wearing a piece of orange or red colored clothing, depending on the alert status, may be far removed from your thinking, but it could be placed on the front burner in a hurry. All we would need is another major terrorist attack to make us realize how vulnerable we really are. After this column runs in several newspapers, I will send a copy to Secretary Ridge to get his thoughts, as well.

Obviously, my column only reaches a very small fraction of the American people, but all it would take is a few well chosen words from Tom Ridge during one of those high powered news conferences, to get the word out.

Personally, I would do everything I could to help save the lives of my fellow citizens and sometimes the timing of a good idea could bring that about. One thing for sure, none of us should be complacent, because we face a great danger. Here is another positive. Most men do not own anything to wear colored orange or red; therefore should this idea catch on, the purchase of special colored items of clothing would no doubt cause another positive spike in our economy. To me, this idea sounds far out, but we may be there someday. By then, we may all be seeing red.

Jim Davidson is a motivational speaker and syndicated columnist. You may contact him at 2 Bentley Drive, Conway, AR 72034.

Betsy

Continued from p5

was the boy who always had a hard time climbing trees.

One day, the big boys took my pants and threw them way up in a tree. Well, there I was with no pants on and the school bell was ringing. I looked up at my pants hanging there in the tree. I called to the boys to come back and help me get my pants down, but they just laughed at me and went on to class.

I did the only thing I could do - throw rocks at my pants until I knocked them down. Once they fell, I was trying to run to class and put my pants back on at the same time. When I finally got to class the teacher asked me, "Ralph, where have you been?"

I replied, "To the bathroom, Mrs. Skyles."

She said okay but told me to try to get to class on time from now on.

Those boys never threw my pants in a tree again because I never went around the hill to where they hung out again.

Our school had a small lunchroom where two women made our lunches. We had to go to a small window to pick up our lunch, and then eat it in the hallway. School lunches were very good in those days, too.

Well, finally, I made it to the fourth grade without Aggie beating me up again.

The year that I was in the fifth grade, my Uncle Bruce was my teacher. He was a big man but he had a heart as soft as melted butter. I learned more in the fifth grade than at any other time in my school life. Uncle Bruce loved basketball and spent a lot of time talking about the game. If this country only had more teachers like Uncle Bruce today, school would be a better place for our students.

Only once did I get into trouble in one of Uncle Bruce's classes. I had heated a bobby pin and given it to my cousin, the one I didn't like because of the spelling bees, and it burned her hand. Well, Uncle Bruce wasn't about to put up with such things, so he wore me out. Those old time teachers certainly knew how to keep things in control in their classrooms.

The fifth grade was a sad time for me because I came down with a fever and was very sick for a time. I was so weak that my mom and dad had to lift me with a sheet to turn me over in bed. Well, I lived through the fever and Uncle Bruce allowed me to pass on to the sixth grade. And, by the way, I really didn't dislike my cousin, I just stayed mad at her because she could do everything better than I could.

I fell in love for the first time when I was in the sixth grade. It lasted one whole afternoon. My class went on a picnic and I met a little girl. She and I spent the afternoon sliding down a hill in a pasteboard box. I fell in love with her. I thought she was the most beautiful girl I had ever

seen. Being in love was a good feeling, but the next morning I only remembered the good time I had the day before. It was hard to concentrate on school.

I will never forget the sixth grade. I can't remember who my teacher was, though, because it was the school that I loved so much. Later in life, I wrote a poem about this school, titled "The Old Empty Schoolhouse." This poem has been published and read by many people. I have always loved school and if there is a school in heaven, then I hope God will let me go every day.

My seventh grade teacher was Mrs. Meade. Some of the boys in my class would throw paper wads into the light fixtures in Mrs. Meade's room. The shades of the lights clipped directly onto the light fixtures. What us boys would do was to shoot the paper into the shades as if we were playing basketball. Every time Mrs. Meade would leave the room, it was time to fill the shades with paper wads! Once, she walked back into the room just as I was going up for a lay-in. She said, "Okay, Ralph! I caught you this time!"

She made me come to the chalkboard, then she drew a ring on the board and I had to stand on my tip-toes, with my nose in the ring, until I thought my head would drop off. After that day, I never threw any paper into the light fixtures again. But, I didn't get mad at Mrs. Meade. For she was so beautiful that no boy could stay mad at her for very long. We played lots of games in her classroom and I learned a lot that year.

I played on the basketball team when I was in school and our games were played on a dirt court. We played the other grades and I was on the seventh grade team. It was a lot of fun playing on a dirt court. I wasn't the best player on the team, but I was pretty good. I was always pretty good at about anything I did, just never the best.

If only school today was like school back in the 40s. Our school was just like the "Little House on the Prairie" school. Our school was some larger, but the same in nature. I didn't want the seventh grade to end because I was afraid the good times would be gone forever. I was afraid I would never get to see Mrs. Meade again.

When I grew up, I once taught in a one-room schoolhouse for two months. It was one of the last one-room schoolhouses in Kentucky. Gone are the days when we started school with a prayer and a pledge to Old Glory. Gone are the days when every day at school was a great adventure; where history and literature were my favorite subjects. To me, these are the two most important subjects in the world and the Holy Bible is the best book ever written.

Lagoon

Continued from p5

1980s tended to ape "Halloween" and feature endings that went on forever, with the killer always coming back for more.

"Train" works more as a straight thriller than a slasher film. Here the accent is more on suspense than gore.

The performances are also quite good, with Curtis scoring once again as a woman who can stand up to any masked killer. Veteran character actor Ben Johnson ("The Wild Bunch") lends a degree of maturity as the train's conductor, who is faced with the task of unmasking the killer as well as protecting the passengers. Hart Bochner is also well

cast as an evil and ultimately cowardly frat boy which is similar to the part he would later play in "Die Hard," where was the yuppie schmuck who outed the identity of John McClain. The only performance found wanting here is magician David Copperfield. Unlike his dazzling Vegas shows, he is haplessly miscast here as an illusionist who can't summon up an emotion to save his life.

All in all this is good stuff from an era in horror movies that didn't produce much more than riffs on the masked indestructible killer genre.

Best line: "I never saw anybody so dead as that." 1980, rated R.

This Town

Continued from p5

3. Lennie Moore will, within the next fortnight, tell at least one joke we haven't heard, and which, in all probability, we can't print.

4. I will catch more fish this year than I caught in '58. (And that is not boasting, come to look back on my 1958 record.)

As for the matter of business, let's all try to keep our hands and minds busy, our tongues a little less busy, and our noses out of other people's business. (Come to think of it, the last part of that suggestion would result in no newspapers.)

THE REJECTED INVITATION

Traveling over the state a bit between showers recently, I managed to see a few things of interest. Some funny, some very unfunny. The saddest sight I saw was just outside the village of Big Clifty where in a field, there stands a weatherbeaten, wooden sign. How many years ago, and with what high hopes it was erected I do not know, but I can imagine.

It reads: "FACTORY SITES"

The sign is faded. It droops. Age is exacting its toll. The one who had those high hopes may be dead now, for all I know. And there isn't a factory on the site,

or in sight.

When and if we decide in this section to erect any signs bearing such a hopeful legend, let us make them of concrete or, better, granite. For those signs of ours will have to stand a long time before their invitation is accepted.

WELCOME TO THE BROTHERHOOD!

I have on occasion, in my rush to get started fishing, forgotten everything but my boat. Now comes Montaine Clark, he of the Health Department, who joins the multitude of the Rushing and the Rushed.

Sometime during the holidays he got steamed up to go bird-hunting. And it was a full head of steam. Out came the hunting togs, then the gun and shells—all taken out to the truck—then the job of hurrying up Friend Wife.

In such a dither he drove into town and here he and the misuses decided to do a count-down on Project Bird-Hunt, "Suit?" Check. Heavy socks?—yes. Guns and ammunition?—check. Dog? "Good heavens!" yelled Clark. "I've left my dog at home!" And, still in a hurry, he drove the two miles back to get the dog.

Click and Clack Talk Cars

He's got a hunka-hunka burning car

by TOM and RAY MAGLIOZZI

Dear Tom and Ray: My beautiful 1993 Chevy Caprice Classic four-door sedan with only 28,000 miles on it — and no dents or scratches — is now a pile of junk. While parked in front of my home, the engine began to smolder, then it burst into flames. Within 10 minutes, the firefighters arrived. They could not open the hood, but boy did they wield their axes! They almost had fiendish looks in their eyes as they swung their axes and demolished the entire front half of my car. They finally pried open the hood and reached the fire. They said it must have been an electrical short. My tears didn't help put out the fire. Although I paid \$18,000 for the car, my insurance company paid me just over \$9,000. It said something about "book value." The Chevy garage blamed the fire on a short circuit, but had no other comment. Is there any warranty covering such an event, and do I have any recourse? — Harold



TOM: Your warranty, in this case, is called "fire insurance," Harold. Unfortunately, that's probably all the recourse you have.

RAY: And remember, you paid \$18,000 for the car BRAND NEW. So getting \$9,000 11 years later is like winning the lottery, Harold. I'd cash the check before the insurance company comes to its senses and asks for it back.

TOM: If you really want to pursue this, if you recently had some electrical work done to the car you might be able to make a strong circumstantial case that those mechanics were responsible. But without a direct link like that, it's not easy.

RAY: Once a car burns to the extent that yours did, unless you can get Lt. Columbo in there with the forensics squad, there's really no way to tell what started burning first. It could have been a fraying wire that was damaged during an unrelated repair. It could have been a wire that got pinched during a minor fender-bender.

TOM: It could have been your after-market, automatic butt massager gone haywire!

RAY: Whatever the cause, there was a large, unintended discharge of electricity from the battery, and that produced the heat that started the fire.

TOM: In terms of your settlement, you can look up the "Black Book" value yourself. There's a link to it from our Web site, cartalk.com. I think you'll see you're off the charts.

RAY: And, to confirm your observation, the firefighters probably did have a fiendish look in their eyes. After all, it's not often that they get to chop up a car with their bare hands. I've never tried it, but I plan to stop at the hardware store on my way home and buy an axe, and then head right to my brother's driveway!

Tips for getting out of a sinking car

Dear Tom and Ray: We recently had some major floods here, and several people were trapped and died in their cars. I'm guessing the electric windows were not functioning and the water pressure kept the doors from opening. If you do find yourself trapped in a car that's underwater or going to be underwater, what's the best way to get out? — Bill

TOM: Well, if you weren't forward-thinking enough to order the optional factory-installed snorkel, the best way to get out is through a window. Once the doors are submerged, the water pressure makes it nearly impossible to push the door open — as you pointed out, Bill. Most people don't realize that.

RAY: If you have old-style, roll-down windows, it's no problem. But if you have electric windows, you have to act quickly. Many cars allow electric windows to operate for a minute or so after the car has been turned off, so as soon as you find yourself in a situation like that, you want to get a window open. Or open a sunroof.

TOM: It's counterintuitive. But if there's any chance that you're going to end up underwater, it's the right thing to do.

RAY: Once you're stuck and underwater, and your window won't open — for whatever reason — there are still ways to get out. Some companies sell an emergency hammer that you keep in the glove box in order to break a window and escape. We've also seen a flashlight that's designed to double as a window-breaking tool. If you live in an area that's prone to flash floods, keeping one of these things in the car isn't a bad idea.

TOM: Without a usable tool, you'll probably have more luck kicking out the windshield than one of the side windows.

RAY: The side windows are very difficult to break. They're slotted into a channel on both sides, and locked into the weatherstripping on top. The windshield, on the other hand, is not really locked into anything. It's attached with an adhesive and should pop out if you push against it with both feet. It won't be easy, but since you can brace yourself against the driver's seat, that's probably your best bet, Bill.

TOM: Of course, you could also just buy the car that's designed to allow you to breathe underwater ... the Scubaru.

RAY: That is truly awful. I formally disown you.

Changing your oil regularly is the cheapest insurance you can buy for your car, but how often should you change it? Find out by ordering Tom and Ray's pamphlet "Ten Ways You May Be Ruining Your Car Without Even Knowing It!" Send \$4.50 (check or money order) to Ruin, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475.

Got a question about cars? Write to Click and Clack in care of this newspaper, or e-mail them by visiting the Car Talk Web site at www.cartalk.com.

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The FLOYD COUNTY TIMES does not knowingly accept false or misleading advertisements. Ads which request or require advance payment of fees for services or products should be scrutinized carefully.

AUTOMOTIVE

130-Cars

For Sale 1993 Ford Crown Victoria. 138,000 miles. \$1,200. call 606-874-0467

HICKS AUTO SALE 404 DAVID ROAD 01 Chevy Blazer LT 4 door 34,000 miles REDUCED \$9,500, 1998 Town and Country Chrysler all wheel drive loaded \$6,000 1998 Camry LE black loaded 95,000 miles \$6,200 1996 ED Explorer moon roof loaded, \$6,500 call Hicks Auto Sales at 606-886-2842 after hours 886-3451

For sale 1991 Toyota Corolla needs work \$800 firm call 606-886-8339 after 5 pm.

140-4X4's

FOR SALE: '03 Honda Foreman 450 4x4 ATV, electric shift, 26 inch mud lick tires, 481 miles, 5x8 dump trailer, has 30 month extended warranty. Asking \$4800. Call 285-9526

150-Miscellaneous

Will trade 4 wheel drive pick-up for a 4 wheel drive 4 wheeler call 606-874-2703

160-Motorcycles

For Sale 1988 Gold Wing Trike 1,500 Miles Maroon in color, loaded call 606-358-2000 asking \$19,995

For Sale 1998 YAMAHA YZ80 New tires, pro-circuit pipe. \$1600. Call 606-452-9599 for more info.

1995 Honda CVR 900RR Cobra and Yoshi pipes-slip on with 2 matching helmets. Runs great call 606-226-1577 or 606-889-9283

180-Trucks

Wanted used full size pick-ups 1998 thru 2003, will pay cash call 800-789-5301

EMPLOYMENT

When responding to Employment ads that have reference numbers, please indicate that entire reference number on the outside of your envelope. Reference numbers are used to help us direct your letter to the correct individual.

210-Job Listing

THE CITY OF PRESTONSBURG will be taking applications for the position of mechanic with the Public Works Department. Applications may be picked up at City Hall in the City Clerk's Office. The City of Prestonsburg is a equal opportunity employer.

MIDDLE SCHOOL LANGUAGE ARTS TEACHER Substitute teachers Ps-8th grade. Send resume to: Mountain Christian Academy, P.O. Box 1120, Martin, KY. 41649.

WELDING POSITIONS AVAILABLE Call for an application appointment between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Mon.-Fri. 606-285-9358

AVON Earn your own money, \$10.00 sign up fee. Free gift. Call Jancy at 886-2082.

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220-Help Wanted
POSITION AVAILABLE Seasonal receptionist for a major company. People skills a must. Call 886-3685

GET PAID TO SHOP! Mystery Shoppers needed to pose as customers in local establishments. Valid email required. PT/FT AVAILABLE. (800) 290-7955.

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MERCHANDISE

445-Furniture

ALMAR FURNITURE Big Selection of Living Room, Dining Room, Bedroom, Washers, Dryers and much more 606-874-0097

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480-Miscellaneous

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For Sale: 8 ft' deli cooler, \$950 and Gas convection oven, \$450. Call 606-886-2367.

Kay's Wallpaper 205 Depot Road Paintsville, Ky. Hundreds of Patterns of Wallpaper & Borders. All under \$10.00. Open Tues - Fri. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sat. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Closed Sun. & Mon. 606-789-8584.

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REAL ESTATE

530-Houses

HOME FOR SALE BY OWNER. 3 BR, 2 BA, Eagle Trace Subdivision, Harold, Ky. \$85,000 obo. Call 859-227-4688

PROPERTY FOR SALE: ON CALF BRANCH 4 house seats priced to sell. City eminities. Call 226-1262.

HOUSE FOR SALE Approx. 6 acres on Left Beaver Creek on Rt 122 Good location, asking \$42,500. Call 859-744-3426.

A foreclosure 3 bed 3 bath only \$29,000! for listings call 800-391-5228 extension. B 183

550-Land & Lots

For Sale 9 acres more or less on Samson fork at Dana, Ky. call 440-967-4088

LAND FOR SALE LOCATED AT WAYLAND, KY known as Glow Hill. Estate of the late Jack and May Ratliff. Some flat and some hillside property. Approx. 14 acres plus 606-422-9034 ask for Becky. Serious inquiries only

570-Mobile Homes

FOR SALE: 1994 14x70 Fleetwood, 3 BR, 1 BA, outbuildings, and 2 porches. Good condition. Prestonsburg area. Call 606-889-2033

FOR SALE: 98 14X70 Fleetwood mobile home. Simulated stone underpinning, 2 porches. Located at Bear Hollow. Asking \$12,000 Call 889-0414

For Sale 3 bed room 2 full bath, Double wide, 3 years old for more information call 606-889-0937 or 606-889-9654.

RENTALS

610-Apartments

FOR RENT: 1 BR apartment, \$400 mo, all utilities paid. 2 BR mobile home, \$250 mo. 4 miles from Prestonsburg. 886-6061.

FOR RENT: 1 BR furnished apartment- \$380 per month plus utilities. Security deposit required. Located on South Lake Dr., Prestonsburg, Ky. Call 886-8883 days and 889-9396 evenings.

FOR RENT: 1 2 BR, 2 BA apartment, eat in kitchen, all major appliances included, utilities included. \$695 per mo., plus dep. Call 606-478-5173. *

1 BR APT FOR RENT \$300 mo. plus dep. Located PCC and Highlands on Old 23. Call 886-9291.

FOR RENT: Two 2 BR apartments, \$400 per month each, garbage and water paid, 15 minutes from Prestonsburg. Call 606-946-2654

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1 BR APARTMENT in Harold. \$450 per month, utilities paid, references & deposit required, very nice. Call 437-1997

2 Bed room Apt. with central heat and air on U.S 23 1 mile west of Prestonsburg, No pets call 606-886-9747 or 606-886-9007

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Two-bedroom unfurnished Apartment for rent. Good neighborhood, Deposit and References Required. 1 year lease. Call: (606) 358-9123.

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620-Storage/Office

For Lease Finished Office Space for lease in prime location near BSCTC, (PCC) and the new Food City -- 2100 -- sq. ft. Ground floor location with up to five private offices, conference room, kitchen, bath, parking lot call Today 606-424-2690 or 226-2266

630-Houses

FOR RENT 3 BR 1 Bath house with large yard no pets 3 miles from Prestonsburg 889-9747 or 886-9007

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FOR RENT 2 bed room house quiet neighborhood central heat and air, located in Martin, Ky. furnished, excellent condition for appointment call 606-285-3025 or 606-285-9812

640-Land/Lots

For Rent : newly constructed Mobile Home Lots in new Allen, reference required call 606-874-2212

Trailer lot for rent on old U.S. 23 between Preston- sburg and Paintsville call 606-886-9007 or 889 9747

670-Comm. Property

For Rent: Beauty shop equipped with 3 stations, and tanning bed. located 1 mile south of Martin on Route. 122. or would consider remodeling for office space Call 606-285-4826 or 606-285-9112.

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