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Vol. 124, No. 18

Thursday, January 23, 2003

50 CENTS

Turner trial may run into next week, judge says

By EDWARD SHERIDAN
Staff Writer

Due to scheduling conflicts, the second trial of Angelita Turner will likely stretch into next week, according to Calloway County Circuit Judge Dennis Foust.

Jurors for the trial heard opening arguments from the defense and prosecution Wednesday morning. But after an extended lunch break, Foust dismissed the jurors just before 2 p.m., stating that the court would be in recess until 9 a.m. today.

"We have accomplished a great deal, believe it or not," Foust said. "We had some conflicts with witness scheduling. We have to deal with these things as best we

can." The inability to hear from witnesses yesterday now means that the trial will probably not be completed on Friday as originally scheduled. He said jurors will likely have to return on Tuesday, and possibly even Wednesday, to complete the trial.

Turner is standing trial on charges of either wanton or intentional murder for the death of her newborn infant daughter in March 2001. The case was originally heard in Calloway County Circuit Court last September, but ended in a mistrial when the jury could not reach a unanimous decision.

The longer lunch break came after public defender

Tom Glover made reference to Mark LeVaughn, the former director of the West Kentucky Regional Forensic Center in Madisonville who was fired from that position this fall.

Glover said he was not sure whether LeVaughn was going to testify during the trial, drawing an objection from Commonwealth Attorney Gale Cook. After Glover said the same thing about Kentucky Chief Medical Examiner Tracey Corey, Cook objected again and Foust called the attorneys into his chambers. Upon returning, Foust dismissed the jury for the long lunch break.

During her opening remarks, Cook said the prosecution will attempt to

prove that the infant girl who Turner delivered in her Murray State University dormitory room on March 27, 2001, was alive before it was wrapped in a towel and placed inside a garbage bag.

"The defendant intended for that child to die," Cook said. "Had she not gone to Henry County Medical Center (the next day), she would have picked up that plastic bag and thrown that baby out, and no one would have ever known that it was born and that it had died."

However Glover, citing a prosecution-ordered DNA test performed on the towel that the baby was wrapped in, said significant medical evidence exists that Turner's baby was stillborn.

He said the results of the

test showed only Turner's blood on the towel. If the baby's heart had been pumping blood when she was wrapped in the towel, Glover said that the towel would have also contained a significant amount of the baby's blood on it, as well.

"It's fatal to (the prosecution's) case," he said of the test. "If the baby was born alive, I was expecting that towel to be covered with the baby's blood. If there is no blood on the towel, that baby was never alive."

Foust told the jury to expect to hear testimony today from both prosecution and defense witnesses.



JOHN WRIGHT/Ledger & Times photo
OPENING REMARKS ... Angelita Turner's defense lawyer Tom Glover addresses the jury during yesterday's portion of Turner's murder trial. Seated in the background are Turner, left, and attorney Carol Connolly.

The Big Chill

Region gets another cold gift from Old Man Winter

By BRANDI WILLIAMS
Staff Writer

Local law enforcement officials and the county road department have been logging in quite a bit of overtime these past few weeks dealing with all the wintery weather.

Road crews for the county left at daybreak this morning to start clearing roads following yesterday's snowy bag that was dumped on the area.

"It's not as bad as we think it is," Road Supervisor Warren Hale said around 5:30 this morning. "It's not as slick as it was last week. I'm more concerned about curves and hills."

Hale said when the snow comes in slow, like this one did, the department has more of a chance to work on their game plan. He said the first area of attack is hills, curves and dead end streets, where travelers only have one way of exiting an area.

"We also look at emergency calls," he said. "We have to make sure the ambulance and police can get there."

The county is divided into four districts with trucks distributed among those districts to hit the more dangerous areas first. But Hale said he does not instruct his workers to be out after dark, because of the danger.

"Safety is the main focus," Hale said.

The Murray Police department



JOHN WRIGHT/Ledger & Times photo
COLD MAN WALKING ... Snow once again blanketed the area last night coupled with bone-chilling temperatures as this person walks through the quad at Murray State.

only reported one accident Calloway County Sheriff's Department, reported no accidents overnight. Meanwhile, Steve Harper, a dispatcher at the

"It's been a very quiet night," he said. "Everyone's staying in and enjoying this weather."

Wicked weather wears on agencies

By BRANDI WILLIAMS
Staff Writer

Oh, the weather outside is frightful, and when it gets this bad, many families find themselves in need of the basic necessities. That's why the United Way of Murray-Calloway County and its agencies have been working to make sure those in need are warm, safe and well fed.

Tonia Casey, director of Need Line, said she has had several families come in for assistance with utilities and food. "In the last four months, we've seen an increase of 85 families — and that was before the snow. We saw 23 clients Friday in the matter of five hours."

She said the snow became an even bigger inconvenience when the pipes at the Need Line

offices froze. But luckily the agency was able to help all the families in need because of generous donations made at Christmas.

"We have been blessed through the holidays," Casey said. "Our pantry was full."

Currently, the agency is helping a single parent family with seven children who lost all their possessions in a fire Saturday morning in Hazel.

"They lost everything. They are going to need everything," Casey said. "They only got out with their pajamas. I do feel like it would be our job to help them get what they need."

Fire possibilities have been a concern for many agencies, including the Calloway County Chapter of the American Red Cross.

"The only thing that the cold weather has done for us is (it has) increased urgency in the

case of a fire," said Holly Webb, local Red Cross director. Webb said the chapter has contributed to the same family Need Line is assisting.

"The Red Cross primarily deals with disaster-type situations, such as if the snow or ice knocked out the electricity to a large part of the local area," she said. An example was when an ice storm struck last month, the Red Cross set up a temporary shelter for families who did not have electricity.

The United Way is currently in the midst of their fund-raising campaign, and have set this year's goal at \$305,000.

"It looks like that goal is in sight," said Tab

■ See Page 2

Hospital learns of land offer

By BRANDI WILLIAMS
Staff Writer

The Murray-Calloway County Hospital Board of Commissioners kicked off their first meeting of the year with introductions, appointments and a proposition that is almost too good to be true.

Judge-Executive Larry Elkins told the board yesterday he was approached by a landowner in the county who said he would donate the land if the hospital would build a new facility, instead of expanding the current one. Elkins said the property owner did not want his name revealed.

"I think it is an intriguing offer," said Board Chairman Scott Seiber.

The hospital is looking at a proposed expansion at its current location. The price tag is approximately \$40 million for new and renovated space totalling around 165,000 square feet.

Hospital CEO/President Isaac Coe said he was open to any possibility that could save the hospital money, while getting all the amenities necessary. "I think it's an inter-

esting idea," he said.

In other business, the board approved three capital budget items.

Coe said he signed on the contingency of board approval to purchase a piece of property on Poplar Street across from the Center for Health and Wellness for \$60,000. They also approved the purchase of a dictation system for \$101,000 and a Portable Vascular Ultrasound machine for \$110,000.

"The current (ultrasound) machine is 10 years old and is no longer producing adequate pictures," said Mark Thompson, Vice President of Professional Services.

Vice President of Patient Care Services Sally Davenport reported that the Long Term Care Unit was investigated by State Licensure Surveyors on Dec. 26 because of a complaint that was received. She said the inspectors reviewed all areas and spoke with residents and staff.

"They notified us that the complaint was unsubstantiated," she

■ See Page 2

MSU alumnus serving to protect homeland

Special to the Ledger

As Super Bowl Sunday and the President's address to the nation approaches, Lt. Col. Joseph A. Rose, a Murray State University alumnus, will be behind the scenes as the deputy commander and operations officer of the Chemical Biological Rapid Response Team, (CB-RRT), to assist the country with a specially trained team should these and other events be targets of terrorists.

The CB-RRT, located at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Edgewood, Md., is composed of members of the Armed Forces and Department of Defense employees who have specialized expertise in the fields of chemical, biological, medical, communications and explosive ordnance disposal.

Rose, recently promoted to his

current rank, is directly responsible for the men and women who provide the vast experience within the CB-RRT. Their areas of specialized training include explosive ordnance disposal, chemical defense, emergency operations, microbiology, industrial hygiene, patient treatment, and medical effects of chemical and biological agents.

The CB-RRT, established in 1997 to assist the Department of Defense and civilian authorities, is continuously on a short notice alert. "We are a very small team that works with federal agencies during events that are potentially believed to be a mass destruction event. We stay prepared to be deployed very quickly," Rose said.

If this specialty team is sent to a

■ See Page 2

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INDEX
ONE SECTION — 12 PAGES

- Arts8
- Classifieds9, 10
- Comics11
- Community5
- Crossword11
- Dear Abby11
- Deaths3
- Forum4
- Horoscope10
- Sports6, 7

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Tourism down in 2002, national parks regions show gains

FRANKFORT, Ky. (AP) — Preliminary figures for Kentucky tourism last year show a decline of 2 percent to 4 percent from 2001, while the two regions of the state with national parks showed some gains in the second and third quarters.

Tourism in Kentucky's third largest industry at \$8.7 billion a year, behind automobile manufacturing and other transportation equipment, and health services.

Final state figures for 2002 won't be available until May, but the state Department of Travel said early data showed small increases for the areas around Mammoth Cave and Cumberland Gap national parks.

"I think there were a couple of factors at work," said Barbara Atwood, assistant director of the department's Division of Marketing and Advertising. "There was that patriotic feeling that people wanted to go and visit things that repre-

sented our country, and obviously a national park is one of the things that come to mind.

"On another level, it was more of nostalgia. We were hit really hard in 2001" because of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, she said.

Nationwide, leisure travel increased 2 percent during the first half of last year, and Americans took more trips closer to home, the Washington-based Travel Industry Association of America said.

Alumnus ...

From Front

national event, the CB-RRT has the opportunity to work with the FBI, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Secret Service to provide technical expertise and contingency development analysis options during times of crisis.

This unit provides the Department of Defense and other federal agencies with a unique, immediate response capability, known to team members as "real-time reach back", for any type of incident.

"In addition, our trained team brings together some of the nation's leading chemical and biological technical experts without the need for the experts to be deployed to an incident site," Rose said. "We bring expertise into the fields of nuclear weapons chemical biological and nuclear related materials."

The CB-RRT's mission is to deploy and establish a robust and integrated capability, coordinate, synchronize and manage

Department of Defense technical Chemical and Biological assistance in both crisis and consequence management.

The anthrax scare in 2001 was the most recent event in which the CB-RRT provided support. "We sent people to the Pentagon to work through the events. The FBI actually identified the evidence and we supported their efforts," he said.

"We are always on alert for anything. We support all major events and missions in the United States."

Rose said as the country prepares to move forward in its fight against terrorism all citizens, need to be vigilant.

"I believe that we are all in some way responsible for our homeland safety and security and I personally don't think this is just going to go away. I know the CB-RRT is prepared," he said.

Rose has received the Bronze Star Medal for his performance in the Gulf War, four Meritorious Service Medals and a National Defense Service medal.

Commissioned in 1985, he



PROMOTION ... Maj. General John C. Doesburg, commander of Solider and Biological Chemical Command's (SBCCOM), Rose and wife, Kim, during his promotion as Lt. Colonel.

entered active service in June 1985 and served in Fort Campbell's 101st Airborne Division as the Division Artillery Chemical Officer and then as the assistant division chemical officer. Other assignments include serving as a battalion chemical offi-

cer in Schweinfurt, Germany, and Chemical Company Commander on Johnston Island.

Rose, the son of Joe and Barbara Rose of Murray, and his wife, Kimberly, have four children.

Sheriff's FireLog

Marshall County Sheriff's Office

• Claude Johnson, 32, Dexter, was driving north on U.S. 641 North Jan. 18 at approximately 2:41 a.m. when his vehicle left the right side of the roadway and struck an embankment. The vehicle then overturned several times and came to rest on its side in the roadway. Johnson was transported by Marshall County EMS to the Marshall County Hospital. An investigation into the accident is continuing, and charges may be pending.

Murray Fire Department

• Two trucks and five firefighters responded to a false call at 1203 Vine St. Tuesday at 6:07 p.m. Children at the residence saw the pilot light in the floor furnace and became scared and called 911. Firefighters explained what the light was, and no action was taken.

— Information gathered from reports, logs and citations from respective agencies

Patton asks AG for opinions of budget

FRANKFORT, Ky. (AP) — In a letter dripping with sarcasm, Gov. Paul Patton says Attorney General



Chandler



Patton

Chandler must have a unique plan for balancing a budget without raising taxes. "I insist that you share it with us," Patton's letter said.

Chandler, who is running to succeed Patton as governor, sued last week in an attempt to stop an early release of state prisoners. Patton has freed 900 low-level felons to keep the Department of Corrections within

budget. Chandler accused Patton of "abusing his executive power by seeking to 'balance the budget' on the back of the safety of the people."

As a candidate, Chandler has said he "will not rely on higher taxes to address Kentucky's needs."

Patton's letter, sent Wednesday, said Chandler must have insights that escaped him and his staff. "I request that you share that plan with me and the legislature. In fact, I insist that you share it with us," Patton said. He asked to hear from Chandler by Jan. 31.

Chandler said in a statement that he was undeterred and that Patton's letter "in no way changes my opinion that endangering public safety through the early release of criminals is bad public policy."

He said Patton should "fulfill his own obligations rather than (write) letters and press releases asking me to solve the budget problems that have arisen on his watch."

Dexter man dies in Wed. crash

Staff Report

Murray Ledger & Times BENTON, Ky. — Michael Fichter, a 53-year-old Dexter man, died in a one-vehicle accident Wednesday morning near Hardin.

According to preliminary information from the Marshall County Sheriff's Office, the accident happened on KY 402 at the Jonathan Creek Bridge, approximately four miles east of Hardin, at around 8:20 a.m. Fichter was pronounced dead at the scene by Marshall County Coroner Mitchell Lee.

(See obituary on Page 3). Three Marshall deputies, Aurora Ross Fire Department and Marshall County EMS responded to the accident scene. The accident is being reconstructed by Deputy Mark Balentine as an investigation is continuing.

Agencies ...

From Front

Brockman, chairman of the United Way board.

United Way director Peg Billington said it has been a wonderful year for fund-raising, despite her previous worries that the poor economy would increase the need and decrease the assistance.

"It's just been unbelievable," Billington said. "People in Murray and Calloway County are always to giving. The need is there and the community is in support of us."

The United Way will wrap up fund-raising at the end of the month and host a celebration on Jan. 31 at 7:30 a.m. at the Senior Citizens Center behind St. Leo's Catholic Church.

Hospital ...

From Front

The board also approved a compensation recommendation for the CEO/President for 2002-2003.

Board member Dr. Don Chamberlain said there was an evaluation made on all areas of Coe's performance and it was favorable.

The recommendation calls to provide Coe with a five percent increase in base salary for the new contract year and increase in deferred compensation allotment from five percent to seven and a half percent of base salary and a two year contract.

The recommendation passed on a vote of six to one, with Elkins casting the only no vote.

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Forum

Thursday, January 23, 2003

Bush's 'Grand Purposes'

By RON FOURNIER
AP White House Correspondent
WASHINGTON (AP) — President Bush, making plans for next week's State of the Union address, hopes to justify potential war with Iraq while describing a domestic agenda geared toward reelection.

The Jan. 28 address to Congress will include a fairly even mix of foreign and domestic policies, aides said in previewing a speech that will tie the two themes together with a pledge to accomplish "the grand purposes" of a nation at war, its economy stalled.

"The president believes that State of the Unions should be about big things," White House press secretary Ari Fleischer said.

"This State of the Union will describe his vision of what role the United States should play in the world, how to bring help to the American people who need help and compassion, and how to strengthen the economy," Fleischer said.

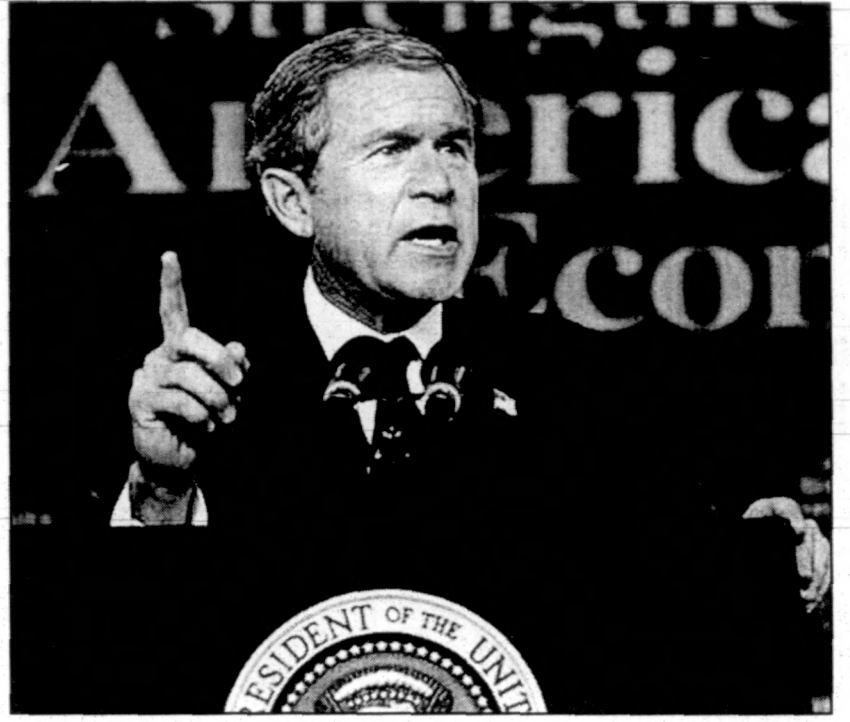
Bush began work on the address in December, when he met with speechwriters to review themes and construction. After one or two more sessions this month, the speechwriting team finished its first draft last week and had it delivered to Bush at the Camp David presidential retreat in Maryland, where he spent Saturday and Sunday reviewing the document.

Aides said the president intends to promote his proposed 10-year, \$640 billion tax package along with other domestic policies: Medicare reform; prescription drug coverage, health care for the uninsured, Social Security and legal reform and a new set of initiatives designed to get religious groups more access to federal community services money.

White House political advisers see the faith-based programs as a way to bolster his support among minority leaders, because churches in their communities would benefit from federal money.

Bush's plans to court minorities for his 2004 re-election bid have been hampered by his stance against affirmative action at the University of Michigan, his conservative judicial picks and last month's comments by Sen. Trent Lott, R-Miss., that suggested support for Strom Thurmond's 1948 segregationist presidential ticket.

While the domestic agenda is



AP File Photo

geared toward American voters, the world will be listening for clues about Bush's intentions in Iraq.

The State of the Union address comes one day after U.N. inspectors report their initial finding from Iraq. The Bush administration considers that a crucial milestone as the president tries to rally allies against Saddam and brace the public for war that could begin within weeks.

Polls show that public support for war against Iraq is soft and very conditional, with Americans eager to see Bush take action jointly with allies and show proof that Saddam has weapons of mass destruction.

With few exceptions, U.S. allies also are reluctant to wage war. Many are urging Bush to give inspectors more time to seek weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.

Senior White House officials said Bush's remarks on Iraq will be largely shaped by his reaction to the inspectors' report and any last-minute developments in Baghdad. The situation is fluid as evidenced by the discovery last week of 12 empty chemical warheads in Iraq and the assertion by Saddam's government that it had found more over the weekend.

"A lot of history has to be made in the next few days," Fleischer said.

But the core of Bush's argument is already outlined in the early draft: Saddam is hiding weapons of mass destruction, has ties to terrorist groups and is an imminent threat to

the United States.

Bush also will try to explain why he is preparing for war against a dictator who may not have a nuclear weapon while sticking to diplomacy with North Korea, which has at least one nuclear bomb and could soon make more.

He won't use the speech to declare war or issue Saddam any deadlines, officials said. That would come in a later speech, and only if he decides to wage war, they said.

On domestic policy, White House officials say Bush will not go into great detail over any one proposal. Some were unveiled in advance of the speech, such as his tax plan, proposed changes in welfare laws and an initiative to curb malpractice lawsuits. Other policies will be given more attention later.

His plans to overhaul Medicare by allowing for more private competition will be unveiled Jan. 29 during a trip to the Midwest, aides said. Bush also will ask Congress to pass a GOP-backed prescription drug program for the elderly.

Bush is expected to propose allowing small businesses to pool together and offer health insurance for employees under federal law, skirting state regulations.

He also will tout his initiative allowing Americans to invest portions of their Social Security taxes, though aides say the Medicare plan will be on a faster legislative track.



EVAN VUCCI/AP Photo

PRESIDENTIAL HOPEFULS ... Democratic presidential hopefuls take part in the National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League reception and dinner, marking the 30th anniversary of the Supreme Court's Roe vs. Wade decision, at a hotel in Washington Tuesday. From left: Sen. John Kerry, D-Mass., Vermont, Gov. Howard Dean, Rep. Richard Gephardt, D-Mo., Sen. Joseph Lieberman, D-Conn., and Sen. John Edwards, D-N.C.

Politicking already

By MIKE GLOVER
Associated Press Writer

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — Even at this early date, Democratic contenders for the presidential nomination are beginning to work the state in preparation for next year's precinct caucuses that will test their strength.

For now at least, no one has the hearts and minds of Iowa's Democrats.

"It's wide open, that's for sure," said Iowa Democratic Chairman Gordon Fischer. "My own feeling not only is there is not a dominant candidate, there is not anyone who is ahead by a nose."

Iowa's precinct caucuses next January for those hoping to run against President Bush will be followed in rapid succession by primaries in New Hampshire and South Carolina.

A precise date for the caucuses hasn't been firmly set, since the process starts the quadrennial wrestling match between states eagerly seeking early attention. Jan. 19 has been mentioned as one potential date, but that's far from settled.

Unlike a traditional election, Iowa's caucuses require activists to show up for an entire evening for a

neighborhood meeting where they will publicly declare their preference.

That requires a level of commitment far beyond a traditional election, and dictates that candidates must assemble backers one at a time in living room and coffee table meetings around the state. Fewer than 100,000 activists are likely to actually show up.

For the candidates, the precinct caucuses have less to do with results, and more to do with media perception — the expectations game. Candidates who do better than expected get heavy media attention moving into the early tests, and campaign money follows that attention.

And so the candidates are coming.

Missouri Rep. Richard Gephardt, North Carolina Sen. John Edwards, Massachusetts Sen. John Kerry, former Vermont Sen. Howard Dean and Connecticut Sen. Joseph Lieberman have all sent signals they will seek the nomination.

Edwards, who donated \$160,000 in computer gear to the state Democratic Party in the last campaign, is moving to put campaign staff in place in Iowa.

Kerry got high marks when he

signed up former Iowa Democratic Chairman John Norris as his Iowa campaign manager.

Gephardt has moved aggressively to begin solidifying his organization, signing up Gov. Tom Vilsack's former campaign manager, John Lapp, to run his Iowa campaign.

Dean has not lagged in organization either, hiring Jeanie Murray to run his Iowa effort. She's a former executive director of the Iowa Democratic Party.

The pace quickened perceptibly since the mid-term election, and Dean, Kerry and Gephardt were scheduled to appear jointly at the season's first "cattle call," a county fund-raiser in Marion last Saturday night.

Kerry courts activists earlier in the day at a breakfast in Des Moines, while Gephardt and Dean are speaking at a meeting of the Iowa Democratic Party's Central Committee.

Others are just beginning to sniff around.

Florida Sen. Bob Graham has sent word he's interested, and even former Colorado Sen. Gary Hart has scheduled an appearance in Iowa next week, saying he's weary of not being part of the political debate.

OurReadersWrite

Dear Editor,

As a mother and taxpayer in Kentucky, I am deeply concerned about our state's budget, especially since our state government is turning criminals lose and threatening our state's education system.

I have been calling and e-mailing Frankfort for the past two weeks and have recently learned that in the last three fiscal years our state spent approximately \$579,000,000 dollars on Personal Service Contracts! That's \$579 MILLION for those who were as shocked as I was to see that many zeros.

I have asked repeatedly for a detailed list of expenditures to show exactly where all this money has gone. I have yet to receive it. I have found that PSC's are a subject that no one wants to discuss.

Would we be releasing prisoners and threatening our education system if we had half of that money? Will someone in Frankfort please let us, the taxpayers, know where our money is going?

Sincerely,
Paula Harrington
Calvert City, Ky.

Got Something To Say? Write a Letter to the Editor

Send your letter to P.O. Box 1040, Murray KY 42071 or fax to 270-753-1927. Please include address and telephone number and all letters MUST BE SIGNED! Letters should be between 250-350 words in length and we require letters be typed.

MURRAY LEDGER & TIMES

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Publisher

ERIC WALKER
Managing Editor

WALTER L. APPERSON
Publisher Emeritus

"Where there is no vision, the people perish."

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Another Opinion

The following is an editorial published by newspapers in Kentucky and provided by the Associated Press. This editorial is not to be mistaken as representing a position taken by The Associated Press or the Murray Ledger & Times:

— Kentucky New Era, Hopkinsville

We sometimes become jaded to individual acts of crime in this violent time. But a recent incident rates some commentary because of factors that in many ways are greater than the crime itself.

A 44-year-old man was arrested after a high-speed chase and charged with assault, resisting arrest, drunken driving and driving with a suspended license. During the arrest, the suspect allegedly struck an officer and tried to flee the scene where he crashed his stolen vehicle.

Hardly a routine arrest, but one of the distinguishing characteristics is that the driver was one of the 567 inmates released Dec. 18 from state custody on orders of Gov. Paul Patton to help relieve a multimillion-dollar shortfall in the state budget and the state Justice Cabinet.

The inmates had been housed in various state facilities and county jails across the commonwealth, with the state footing the bills for their incarceration.

He now will be housed in the Christian County Jail, with his room and board paid for, not by the state, but by the Christian County taxpayers.

Another released inmate was recently arrested in Owensboro on bank robbery charges.

Someone needs to refresh our minds on the wisdom and real economics of that inmate release.

County jailers expressed deep concerns when the program was proposed and were quick to point out that any of the furloughed prisoners who were returned to custody — and a certain predictable percentage would return — would no longer be charges of the state, but rather charges of the county where they were arrested.

The jailers obviously knew what they were talking about.

If the whole release program was a thinly veiled ruse to shift the cost of incarceration from the state to the county, Gov. Patton and the Justice Cabinet deserve every word of criticism leveled at them before and after the jail doors were opened.

If the whole release program was simply a case of faulty judgment — and failure to listen to people in the know — then both Gov. Patton and the Justice Cabinet rightly deserve the same rebuke.

We expressed fears then that the release program was a dramatization calculated to focus attention on the severity of budget woes wrought by state agencies and a legislature adrift and in disarray.

We just didn't think the dramatization would unravel this soon.

— Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro

One year ago, President Bush signed into law the "No Child Left Behind Act," landmark federal legislation that aims to ensure every child is given equal opportunity to learn.

Though it lacked a catchy slogan, Kentucky sought to reach similar goals 12 years earlier with the passage of its 1990 Kentucky Education Reform Act.

Both were long-overdue measures that put some substance behind repeated claims that the future of this state, this nation for that matter, will only be as bright as the education level of its citizenry.

Yet if Kentucky is truly interested in ensuring no child is left behind, it will finally pass a law increasing the state's legal dropout age from 16 to 18.

Rep. Brent Yonts, a Greenville Democrat, is once again taking up his fight on the

issue. Since 1998, Yonts has worked unsuccessfully for a bill that would keep kids in school. He has prefiled a bill for the General Assembly that would raise the compulsory school attendance age to 17 until 2006, when it would then be raised to 18.

It's hard to imagine any reason a state committed to education would have for not wanting to keep kids in school — particularly those considered "at risk" — for as long as possible. There simply aren't many opportunities for people who drop out to compete in what is becoming an increasingly knowledge-based economy.

The reason that some give, however, is mind-boggling. Wayne Young, executive director of the Kentucky Association of School Administrators, says money is behind the state's reluctance to increase the dropout age. Since the state pays schools on a per-student basis, such an increase would cost about \$75 million a year.

Maybe Kentucky's phrase can be "No Child Left Behind, Except Those We Can't Afford to Educate."

The refusal to address the dropout age is hypocritical on the state's part. When Kentucky unveiled its Commonwealth Accountability Testing System in 1998, one of the revisions was a requirement that schools lower their dropout rates in order to qualify for rewards money. The state will penalize schools for not meeting certain standards, but it won't pass legislation that would significantly aid in this effort.

Some argue that those who drop out of school are disinterested in learning, are a disruption, and their being in school takes away from those serious about education.

Letting struggling students drop out, however, is simply the easy way out, and one that society will pay for down the road.

Arts

Thursday, January 23, 2003

Switch hit on Campus Lights tonight

The 66th production of Campus Lights is proud to present an original script and lyrics by Scott Hamrick with original music by Joseph Klotz. "Not Far from Here" will be presented in Lovett Auditorium on the campus of Murray State University, Jan. 23-26.

Show times are 8 p.m., Thursday, Jan. 23 through Saturday, Jan. 25. Campus Lights will conclude with a matinee performance Sunday, Jan. 26 at 2 p.m.

Witty and smart, this romantic comedy gets the nod from promoters as sure to please. The story opens in St. Louis in 1946 as the soldiers of WWII are returning home from the field. One soldier in particular, Lucas Riley, looks forward to returning home and proposing marriage to his childhood sweetheart and longtime girlfriend, Virginia Bannister. In the five years that Lucas has been absent, Virginia, however, has become an enterprising businesswoman in her own right and has been wooed heavily by a minstrel named Cooper who travels the Mississippi with his entourage. When both men hit town at the same time, neither expecting the other and each with a pack of cronies in tow, confusion and comedic sparks begin to fly. It's up to Virginia to juggle job and both men's advances while making up her own mind about how she really feels.

This year's production of Campus Lights involves a cast of around 30 members and an orchestra selected from Murray State students. Directing the show is Chris



ORIGINALITY ... Murray State University's 66th production of Campus Lights will begin tonight with an original musical entitled "Not Far From Here." Pictured is a scene from the production.

Thornton, a music education major from Herrin, Ill. Aaron Lundy, a vocal education major from Owensboro is serving as music director. Orchestra director will be Mike DiPasquale, an instrumental education major from Madisonville.

Widely known as the oldest student-run musical in the south,

Campus Lights is an entirely student-run and produced show featuring the talents of MSU students. In conjunction with the department of music, Phi Mu Alpha and Sigma Alpha Iota (the two music fraternities on campus), present a show every year to help raise funds for a four-year, full-tuition scholarship

awarded to an entering freshman.

Tickets for "Not Far from Here" are \$7 for adults and \$5 for students, children and senior citizens. Tickets may be purchased at the door or reserved in advance. Call the department of music at (270) 762-4288 for more information or to reserve tickets.

Playwriting workshop starts Monday

A mini-workshop kicks off the 14th season of the West Kentucky Playwrights, 7 p.m. Monday, Jan. 27, at the Calloway County Library on Main Street in Murray.

The session will meet in the Arts Annex, adjacent to the library.

Constance Alexander, award-winning playwright and artistic director of the West Kentucky Playwrights' Festival, will lead the 2-hour session.

"We'll be doing some writing and some improvisation," she said. "The purpose is to get the pump primed and get people started on plays for the festival in September."

Sponsored by Murray's Playhouse in the Park, the playwrights' festival has brought nearly 70 new works to the stage since it started in 1989. Festival plays have been performed in community, university and professional theaters around the country and in the British Isles.

"Writers of all ages and all levels of experience have penned plays for the festival," Ms. Alexander remarked. "Our

youngest playwright was in middle school. Our oldest, well ... it's safe to say that we've included ages from adolescents to elders and every stage in between."

The purpose of the festival is to create new work for the theater. Topics of local, regional and national significance have been explored in the work of West Kentucky playwrights.

The 13th annual festival featured themes that included the aftermath of Sept. 11th, the French Revolution, Alzheimer's Disease, and that nature of good and evil.

The playwrights' group is a workshop setting. Participants bring their work-in-progress so it can be read and discussed.

The group will meet on the third Monday of each month, 7 to 9 p.m., from February to August. Most meetings will be at Murray's Playhouse in the Park.

The playwrights' festival, a series of staged readings, is scheduled for Sept. 19-20, 2003.

For additional information, contact Constance Alexander at 270-753-9279, or e-mail her at cacalexander@hotmail.com.

MurrayArtGuildNews



WORKSHOP PREPARATION... Mary Cates, left, a fiber artist from Puryear, Tenn., and long time member of the Murray Art Guild, demonstrates a weaving technique on one of her hand-crafted looms to Guild executive director Laura Miller.

Guild announces weaving workshop

The Murray Art Guild will be hosting a four-session (24 hours total) weaving workshop, instructed by local fiber artist Mary Cates.

The workshop will be conducted on Jan. 30-31, Feb. 6-7 from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. The class fee includes materials and use of equipment. Advanced registration is required as the number of participants will be limited.

For further information, please call 753-4059.

Fox draws record ratings with premiere of second "American Idol"

NEW YORK (AP) — Whether to watch Simon Cowell's withering put-downs or discover the next potential star, a record-setting 26.5 million viewers tuned in for Tuesday night's return of "American Idol" on Fox. Even for what is turning out to be the winter of reality TV on the broadcast networks, these were stunning numbers.

Excluding sporting events, it was the most-watched night ever for the Fox network, which began airing prime-time shows in 1987. It eclipsed the 22.8 million people who watched Kelly Clarkson win the first "American Idol" competition in September.

"We're having a very happy day at Fox," said Entertainment President Gail Berman. "We certainly didn't expect to come close to the finale's numbers, and to exceed them by 16 percent is a dream come true."

The conventional wisdom was that "American Idol," a classic summertime diversion, would have trouble drawing an audience during the winter when faced with tougher competition.

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1-Thomasville Iron Queen Bed	\$1,800	\$899
1-Kincaid Table & 4 Chairs - Cherry	\$3,780	\$2,269
1-Kincaid China Cabinet - Cherry	\$3,389	\$1,999
1-Kincaid Queen Bed, Dresser, Mirror & Nightstand - Oak	\$4,860	\$2,399
1-Broyhill King Bed, Chest, Dresser & Mirror, Nightstand - Oak	\$4,755	\$3,169
1-Broyhill Sofa - Red Plaid	\$1,245	\$799
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1-Broyhill Ent. Unit W/Side Pcs. - Oak	\$3,375	\$2,549
1-Thomasville Crown Computer Armoire - Oak	\$903	\$499
1-Serta King Mattress & Box Springs	\$1,820	\$699
1-Simmons Olympic Queen Mattress/Box Springs	\$2,799	\$979
2-Broyhill Console Curio & Mirror	\$803	\$399
2-La Z-Boy Web TV Recliner - Blue or Green (1 of each)	\$1,749	\$599
2-Pulaski Small White Wash Curio	\$885	\$439
2-Broyhill Cocktail Table - Solid Cherry	\$399	\$199
2-Broyhill Verdi Arm Chair - Green	\$349	\$175
2-Broyhill Twin Sleigh Bed - Oak	\$1,095	\$549
2-Ashley Loveseat - Off White Tone On Tone	\$1,559	\$779
2-Ashley Large Computer Desk & Hutch - Oak	\$881	\$439
2-Aspen Ent. Center for 27" TV - Oak Finish	\$569	\$284
2-Best Glider Ottoman - Dark Blue & Oak	\$237	\$99
2-Broyhill Sofa - Eggplant Color	\$1,095	\$547
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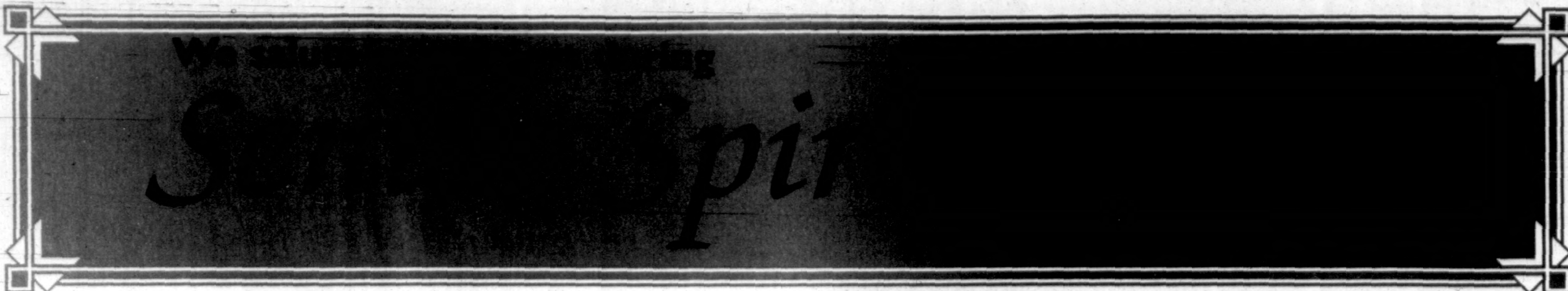
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Residents of Glendale Place (L-R foreground) Hattie Glenn, Mildred Wilkins and Marie Nanny at New Year's Party.



New Orleans Cajun Christmas! Nineteen Good Life Members enjoyed a trip to New Orleans December 3-6, 2002. They are pictured at the Hotel St. Marie in the French Quarter! They enjoyed a Jazz Brunch at Court of Two Sisters, Candlelight tour of Nottoway and Laura Plantations and many other activities. If you would like to be a part of the Good Life at The Murray Bank. Call Patti Thomas and become a member, 753-5626.

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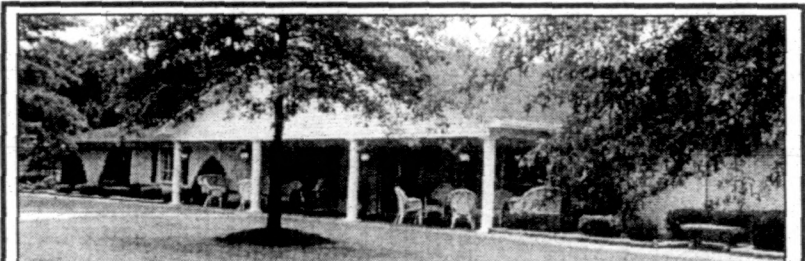
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