

# Mount Vernon Signal

Serving Rockcastle County Since 1887

Mount Vernon, Kentucky 40456 - Volume 113 - Number 41 Ph. (606) 256-2244 - 50¢ a copy - Thursday, July 13, 2000



100 Mile Ride - Pg. A-6



Korean War soldier James T. "Jimmy" Higgins will be buried in Arlington National Cemetery on August 11. His remains were identified after 50 years by the use of DNA.

## Fallen soldier will be buried at Arlington National Cemetery

By: Richard Anderkin

It has been 50 years since the United States became involved in a civil war half way around the world.

It also has been over 50 years since a local family lost someone in that war.

But not until a few weeks ago, did they ever really know where his body had lain since 1950.

On August 11, Mrs. Betty Bruce of Mt. Vernon, and other family members, will finally get to give Corporal James T. "Jimmy" Higgins, a casualty in the Korean War, a proper burial.

Jimmy, the younger brother of Mrs. Bruce, will take his place in Arlington National Cemetery, along-

side the thousands of other men and women who have died while serving their country.

Mrs. Bruce has met with Army officials and finalized the ceremony that will be held in Washington.

Visitation will be held at the Arlington Funeral Home on Thursday, August 10, from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Funeral services are scheduled for Friday at 1 p.m. at the Fort Meyers Chapel in the Arlington National Cemetery.

Mrs. Bruce who is married to longtime Rockcastle County Baptist Minister Bro. Jack Bruce, said this week that she and other family members, are thankful to be able to give

her brother the type of burial he so deserves.

But had it not been for advances in genetic science and the discovery of DNA, Jimmy Higgins would still be one of the 8,174 soldiers still listed as missing in action in Korea and his family would have never been able to give him the proper burial they have talked about so much throughout the years.

The eventual positive identification of Jimmy Higgins, who was only twenty when he was killed in battle, began with improved relations between United States and North Korea.

The North Korean government

allowed American anthropologists to unearth remains from two sites in North Korea where battles were fought early in the war.

Jimmy Higgins' body was found in a trench, along with three other soldiers.

Among the four skeletons, a forensic anthropologist found a jawbone with information identifying Jimmy Higgins and his hometown of Benham in Harlan Co.

A few calls were made to Benham and a lady there remembered that Mrs. Bruce was Jimmy Higgins' sister.

After Mrs. Bruce was contacted by Army personnel, two of her brothers, David and Leon, gave blood samples which were used to compare. Cont. to A-10

## Local Korean War Veteran served as Medic

By: Richard Anderkin

Many Americans take the freedoms we enjoy in this country for granted and do not realize the sacrifices that so many Americans have made throughout history.

One Rockcastle County Baptist Minister knows only too well the horrors of war, and the nightmares that have followed.

Bro. Carl D. Sears, 71, of Copper Creek, was a Medic in Korea in 1950 and, although many Americans refer to the conflict between North and South Korea as the Forgotten War, Bro. Sears will never forget the images of the soldiers lying on the battle field begging for help.

In July of 1950, only a month after the conflict began, 21-year-old Carl Denton Sears arrived in Korea. He had already served a tour of duty in Japan and Guam after entering the service in 1948, but he admits he wasn't prepared for what he was about to experience.

As a medic who served soldiers on the front line, Bro. Carl Sears watched men die from the wounds of battle and heard the cries of others who asked him, "please do not let me die in this place."

"It really tears me up to talk about this, I rarely do," Bro. Sears said as he became emotional during Tuesday's interview.

"So many people today don't realize what sacrifices have been made

by so many families in this country," he said. "They have no idea of the horrors of war and what brave men and women have gone through so they can enjoy their freedoms."

Because Bro. Sears was captured during the Korean War he spent only 33 days in North East Asia on Korean soil.

Bro. Sears laughed Tuesday when he recalled a conversation between himself and another man, who asked Bro. Sears how he figured a way to spend only 33 days in Korea.

"I told him I figured out a way to get myself captured and then I figured out a way to escape with the wounded men," he said with a chuckle.

But what Bro. Sears was referring to was no laughing matter. Around the first day of September of 1950, Sears was captured, along with 22 wounded soldiers, one of whom was unconscious.

"I didn't have to be captured that day, but I couldn't leave those wounded soldiers," he said.

"Because the men were wounded, the North Koreans didn't pay a lot of attention to us, especially when they were eating," Bro. Sears said.

"I thought there were American soldiers on the other side of this hill where they were holding us and I thought we could get away if I timed it just right," he said.

Cont. to A-10



An Ohio family, who was headed on vacation didn't quite make their destination after they were involved in a single vehicle accident on I-75 Friday morning. According to eyewitnesses, the above Mercury Mountaineer, which was traveling south, hit a construction barrier and then overturned at least five times before coming to rest on its top in a grassy area next to the emergency lane. All three children in the Mountaineer were ejected from the vehicle. The mother, who was riding in the passenger seat, was hanging upside down in her seat thanks to her seat belt, when the Mountaineer stopped. The father, who was driving, received head injuries in the crash. Eyewitnesses said a little boy was thrown onto I-75 when the Mountaineer flipped the first time and his two sisters were thrown from the vehicle sometime during the other flips. Miraculously none of the five were seriously injured, although all were treated at the Rockcastle Hospital.



## County among sixty sued by "watchdog" organization

Rockcastle County Judge-Executive Buzz Carlolitis announced Wednesday that the county has been named in yet another lawsuit.

This time the suit involves the county's care or lack of care for stray animals.

Carlolitis said Rockcastle was apparently one of about sixty counties sued by the Trixie Foundation, which is a state watchdog for the care of such stray animals.

The Trixie Foundation has complained in the past that the county has no dog kennel and does not properly treat stray animals.

Carlolitis was quick to point out that the county has a dog warden and that the Rockcastle County Adoption Agency for Pets is a non-profit group, which looks after the well being of animals in the county.

Carlolitis said that he had not seen the lawsuit, but that he would bring it to the fiscal court's attention at the next monthly meeting.

## Mills chosen for Governor School of Arts

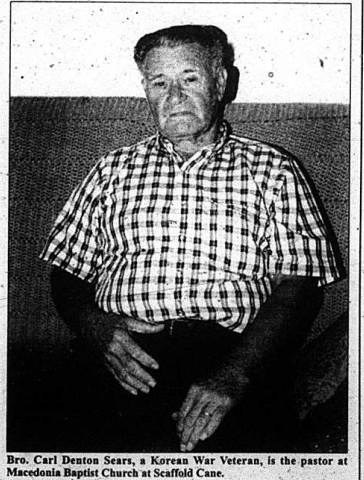
Rockcastle County High School Senior Tom Mills Jr., is currently finishing up a three week course at Governor's School for the Arts, which has been held at Transylvania University in Lexington.

The highly selective program selected only 200 students from across the state to study creative writing, dance, music, theater and other arts.

Students from 50 counties were chosen from 1,300 applicants to spend three weeks in seminars, classes and performances.

The school creates a community of artists, allowing the students to spend time with others like themselves and to study in one specific

Cont. to A-10



Bro. Carl Denton Sears, a Korean War Veteran, is the pastor at Macedonia Baptist Church at Scaffold Cane.

## Court tables request for garbage permit

The Rockcastle County Fiscal Court denied a request for a permit to haul commercial garbage at Tuesday's regular meeting of the Rockcastle Fiscal Court.

Joe McWilliams, a representative of Republic Services of Kentucky, who asked for the permit, told the fiscal court that his company was based in Florida, but had offices in Lexington and Nicholasville.

"There isn't a lot of competition here in the dumpster business," McWilliams told the court.

McWilliams also said that he had talked with several business owners who had expressed interest in his company.

McWilliams also told the court that his company charged \$100 a month for an eight yard dumpster which is the biggest his company carries.

One visitor said his business paid Be Garbage \$145 a month for an eight yard dumpster and magistrate Bill McKinney, who owns McKinney Tire said he paid \$77.00 per month to Be Garbage for the same size dumpster. McKinney said he thought

the difference in price was because his dumpster is never more than half full.

The court did agree to table the permit issue until the next court meeting and McWilliams told the court he would provide information packets on his company.

Rockcastle County Solid Waste Coordinator Scotty Bierman had recommended that the court approve a permit for Republic Services, because they had met the requirements set forth by the court.

In other business, Executive Director of the Rockcastle County Development Board, Bige Towery Jr., presented the court with his annual report.

Towery told the court that the board had been very busy in the past year working on three separate projects.

Those projects included the Community Development Initiative, Renaissance Kentucky and the new Technology Center, which is housed in the Rockcastle Courthouse.

All three projects are still in

progress and the Technology Center is scheduled to open around September 1.

Towery was praised for the board's efforts and the court passed a resolution in support of the board for another year.

At the request of Jailer James Miller, the court gave raises to all Detention Center employees.

Chief Deputies went from \$8.13

per hour to \$8.50. Regular deputies went to \$7.00 from \$6.25 per hour and the billing coordinator went from \$6.25 to \$8.00.

Part time deputies went from \$6.25 to \$7.00 and cooks went from \$6.25 to \$7.00.

The fiscal court also gave all other county employees a 5% across the board raise.

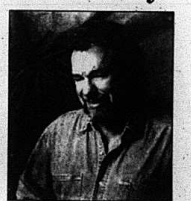
## Gene Watson here Saturday

Gene Watson is a singer's singer if ever one breathed. Just ask Clint Black, Randy Travis, Marty Stuart, Martina McBride or any number of other stars who have been influenced by his songs.

"I never did go lookin' for music," says Watson, "music found me."

In 1974 the steamy single "Love in the Hot Afternoon" was picked up by Capitol records and the rest as they say, is history.

You can hear Gene Watson in concert when he appears at Renfro



Gene Watson

Cont. to A-10