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Carloftis denounces Robinson

Race for Senate seat heating up

By Richard Anderkin
No doubt half of the eligible voters in Rockcastle County do not even know who their State Senator is or even which senate district they live in.

Republican Albert Robinson, of London, is the State Senator for Rockcastle, Laurel, Knox and Jackson Counties, which comprises the 21st Senate District.

Robinson has represented Rockcastle in the Senate in Frankfort for the past six years, which has included three sessions of the Kentucky General Assembly.

But this year the veteran legislator is facing some very tough opposition from Democrat Lawrence Kuhl, a well respected retired London businessman.

Although Republicans outnumber Democrats in the district over three to one, state Republican leaders are calling the race one of the six hottest across the state.

Senate President David Williams of Burkesville has been in the district stumping for Robinson and U.S. Congressman Harold Rogers of Somerset, the state's highest ranking Republican in the U.S. House of Representatives, has through his support behind Robinson.

According to published reports Democrats in the district think they have a chance to unseat Robinson because of some of his actions and votes, particularly during the last legislative session.

Those include sponsoring an amendment in the final hours of the legislative session this year designed to give Robinson and other lawmakers a big pension increase and pushing for state money for a road project that could benefit him.

As for the pension, Robinson said that his actions were actually a bipartisan effort and that the money was already set aside for the cost of living raise and "did not cost the taxpayers one red cent," he said.

"Our's was the only retirement system without a cost of living clause," Robinson said.

However the Senator came under more harsh criticism when it was learned that he had bragged about slipping the legislation passed the press.

After the session Robinson told reporter Al Cross of the Courier-Journal that, "We had no obligation to say, 'Hey Press, look what we slipped on you,'" Cross wrote in a Courier Journal story.

Robinson was further criticized for making his legislation retroactive to 1982.

Governor Paul Patton said after the bill was passed by the legislature that he would probably veto it, but he didn't.

As for the road, which is located near the new Wal-Mart in London, Robinson said that he was able to attain \$300,000 in funding that would have gone elsewhere.

Three years ago when all this happened - they were applauding my efforts because of the improvements it made to the city and county," Robinson said.

At issue is a 22-acre plot of land owned by Bacho Development of Wise, VA, located on the 192 bypass next to Wal-Mart Supercenter. Robinson is the real estate agent contracted by Bacho to sell off the land, and has been working for the developers for over three years on the project.

Within those three years, Robinson was able to secure the \$300,000 in state money to construct a road on the property.

Robinson has said that he will not make any commission on the sell of the land until Bacho recoups its \$5 million invested in the property.

But some question whether it's appropriate for Robinson to get the \$300,000 street for his district, then sell property along it.

"For a legislator to use his clout to get state money for a project in which he has a personal financial stake - even if he has reduced his ability to profit - sounds wrong," said George

Barker, a former Chairman of the Legislative Ethics Commission.

Robinson said in an interview with *Herald-Leader* reporter Bill Estep that the key issue in the Senate race is whether the GOP holds its 20-18 edge in the Senate.

Even if Kuhl casts conservative votes, putting him in office would help Democrats win control, giving a leg up to liberals who don't oppose abortion and higher taxes as the Republicans do, Robinson said.

Robinson is also reminding voters that the last time legislative boundaries were drawn, the Democrats carved up some Republican strongholds and he says the same would happen this time.

Kuhl, however, said character and ability - his and Robinson's - are the issues, not party affiliation.

"It is more important to elect a capable, trustworthy candidate than to toe the party line, Kuhl said.

Robinson, a real-estate broker, auctioneer and developer, first took office as state representative in 1972 and served a total of 14 years before

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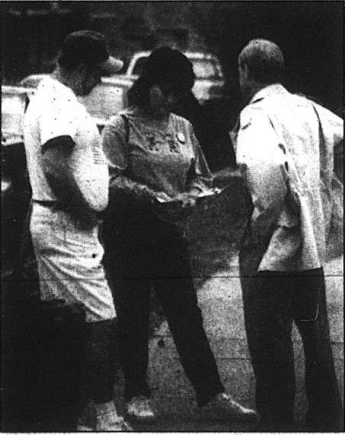
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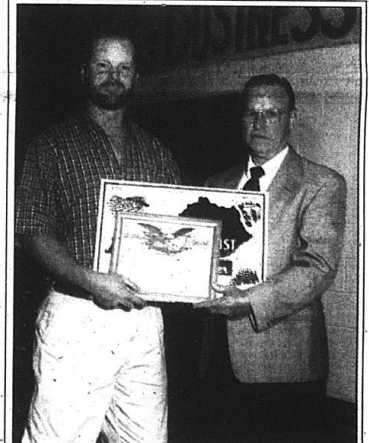
A small crowd turned out for a Republican Rally on the Rockcastle Courthouse steps on Saturday. Above, former County Chairman Alonzo McCollum and former Circuit Clerk Denver Miller look over a ballot. Republican State Senator Albert Robinson is also in the photo. At left, Family Court Circuit Judge candidate Debra Lambert, centers, talks with Ballard Rader, left and her husband Kentucky Supreme Court Chief Justice Joseph Lambert. (Photos by Richard Anderkin)



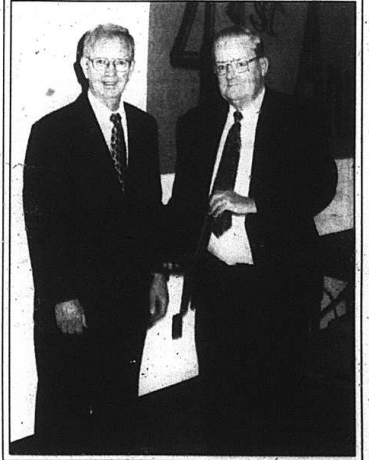
Lawrence Kuhl



Albert Robinson



The 41st annual Farmers-Business banquet was held Friday at the Rockcastle Middle School. Above, Lloyd Cain, right presents Harold Ray Whitaker with the Master Conservationist Award and below, Cleidith Thacker, right, presents Billy Hiatt, owner Hiatt's 5&10 in Mt. Vernon, with the Outstanding Business Award. Kentucky House Speaker Jody Richards was the guest speaker. (Photos by Jim Cox)



Halcomb East Road residents to get water

There is good news this week for residents along Halcomb East Road in Brush Creek.

The Rockcastle County Fiscal Court and the City of Mt. Vernon have reached an agreement to lay a water line that will provide water to some 28 residents along the road.

Rockcastle County Judge-Executive Buzz Carloftis said that he and Mt. Vernon Mayor Karen King had agreed on the project, which calls for the county to dig the ditch for the water line and for the city to provide the water line and maintain it.

Carloftis said that the county would do the work according to all

city specifications.

During last week's Rockcastle Fiscal Court meeting Carloftis told members of the fiscal court that the county would do such work for any of the water associations in the county where feasible.

When Magistrate Bill McKinney

Cont. to A-10

Local police get drug money

The Mt. Vernon Police Department was awarded \$8,790.60 in Federal Forfeiture funds at a meeting held at Lexington last Thursday. The meeting was sponsored by the United States Attorneys Office Eastern District.

The forfeiture of the funds was awarded because of the cooperation of the Mt. Vernon Police Department with F.B.I., D.E.A. State and local police agencies in the recent drug arrests and convictions of persons

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Set clocks back Sunday

The Kentucky State Police at London would like to remind everyone that Daylight Saving Time ends Sunday at 2 a.m.

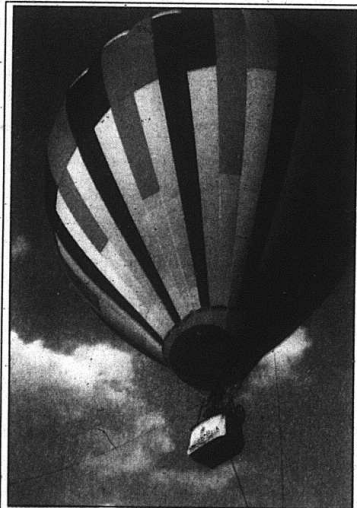
Remember when you set your clocks to "fall back" an hour on October 29th, take a minute to make a few other pedestrian safety adjust-

Cont. to A-10

Trick or Treat Night is Tuesday

Officials have announced that next Tuesday will be "Trick or Treat" night in Rockcastle County.

The annual candy gathering event will take place from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.



A large crowd attended the Open House at Citizens Bank's new building in Mt. Vernon on Friday. Several people got their first ever ride in a hot air balloon, which was provided courtesy of the bank. The new bank is located on Hwy. 150. (Photo by Richard Graham)