

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2010

# Extent of alleged fraud detailed

WITNESS SAYS CLAY CIRCUIT JUDGE BOUGHT VOTES

By Bill Estep

bestep@herald-leader.com

FRANKFORT — The current circuit judge in Clay County put up cash to buy votes for his wife in Manchester city council races, a federal witness testified Monday.

Oscar Gayle House, who was district judge at the time but has since become circuit judge, gave \$2,000 in 2002 to buy votes for Sherry House, Vernon Hacker said.

The judge also gave money to buy votes for his wife in 2004,

Hacker said, but he did not specify an amount.

Hacker, a former council member and director of the city-county 911 system, testified in a federal trial in Frankfort involving eight Clay County residents, several of them current or former public officials, charged with buying votes.

Witnesses have testified about alleged vote-buying by those

charged.

But there also has been testimony about alleged illegal activity by a number of people not charged in the case, as prosecutors try to show the background and reach of the alleged vote-fraud conspiracy at issue in the trial.

House and his wife, for in-

See CLAY, A8

## Chicken offered as reward for bust's return

**Berea:** A bronze bust of Col. Harland Sanders was stolen from the KFC on Chestnut Street in Berea on Jan. 24. Four young men had been the only customers during the time frame in which the bust disappeared.

After they left, an employee "discovered that the colonel had left also," said Capt. Ken Clark of the Berea Police Department.

Restaurant manager Cassie Tipton said the bust was present in the lobby when an employee was cleaning that area that Sunday afternoon. She left the lobby, and when she came back, the bust, valued at about \$1,200, was missing, Tipton said.

The four young men were high school or college age and left in a silver passenger car. Anyone with information should contact Berea police at (859)986-8456.

## Everest attempt canceled

**Jackson:** Knee problems have forced a Breathitt County man to cancel his plan to climb Mount Everest in April.

Martin Douthitt of Jackson said arthritis in his left knee developed after he climbed Denali in Alaska last July.

The pain worsened while Douthitt trained for Everest during the past few months, finally forcing him to cancel his planned assault on the world's highest mountain.

Now, Douthitt, 64, is hoping that a medical procedure in Germany will solve the knee problem so he can tackle Everest next year.

Douthitt said doctors in Dusseldorf will remove some of his white blood cells next month, treat them with proteins and inject them into his knee. The procedure is not approved in the United States. But if it works, Douthitt's knee should grow new cartilage.

"I've got my fingers crossed," he said. "Cancelling out on Everest was hard, but I got to where I could barely walk. I stopped training for a month, hoping it would get better, but it didn't."

## Hangar bill signed

**Frankfort:** Gov. Steve Beshear held a bill signing ceremony Monday for a measure to authorize the sale of \$4 million in bonds to build a hangar at Bluegrass Station in Fayette County.

The construction, to begin March 1 and expected to end in August, will create 105 jobs, Beshear said at the ceremony, which featured Lexington Mayor Jim Newberry, Adj. Gen. Edward W. Tonini and several legislators.

The bill's lead sponsor, Rep. Don Pasley, D-Winchester, says the project must begin in early March to comply with time lines set by the U.S. Department of Defense.

Bluegrass Station is a former Army depot now used by military contractors. It has a payroll of \$100 million and employs about 2,700.

No state money will be used to pay for construction, Beshear said. Money from a lease by the U.S. Department of Defense will be used to repay the debt.

## Mattea to sing at rally

**Frankfort:** Grammy-winning country music singer Kathy Mattea is scheduled to appear at the "I Love Mountains Rally" on the front steps of the Capitol on Thursday.

The event, sponsored by Kentuckians for the Commonwealth, is designed to urge legislators to protect the environment. The rally, which starts at 12:20 p.m. with speakers and musicians, is expected to run about an hour.

Mattea, a native of South Charleston, W.Va., has recorded 17 albums and has had more than 30 singles on the Billboard country chart.

They include No. 1 hits *Going' Gone*, *Eighteen Wheels* and *A Dozen Roses*, *Come From the Heart* and *Burnin' Old Memories*.

## Guilty plea in wife's death

**Lexington:** A Georgetown man has pleaded guilty to manslaughter in the death of his wife.

Larry Wayne Slucher II was the driver in a collision that killed Angela Lee Clark Slucher, 24, in October 2008.

Slucher was driving more than 90 mph when he hit a tree and a rock embankment on the off-ramp of Interstate 75 at Newtown Pike in Lexington, according to court records. His blood alcohol level was 0.2, records indicated.

Slucher pleaded guilty Friday to manslaughter and driving under the influence. He is scheduled to be sentenced at 8:30 a.m. March 11.

## 3 cows die, 1 hurt in shooting

**Clark County:** A Clark County man says someone shot four of his cows with a high-powered rifle over the weekend, killing three of them.

Marshall Watts said he co-owns about 100 cattle that he keeps on a rented farm on Waterworks Road, and they had bedded down near the road Saturday night. He said he received a call from the sheriff's office about midnight, alerting him that the four heifers had been shot.

Watts said a neighbor called the sheriff after hearing gunshots. One of the cattle was shot in the head; another in the neck; the third cow that was killed was found in a pond. The injured heifer was shot in the leg. "I'll probably take it to the slaughterhouse," Watts said. He said a reward is being offered for information in the case.

## Unemployment fix to Senate

**Frankfort:** The Kentucky House on Monday voted 97-0 to pass a bill aimed at shoring up the state's Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund, which pays benefits to jobless Kentuckians. The trust fund has been under increasing pressure recently. The bill now goes to the Senate.

Under the bill, Kentucky employers would gradually pay more in taxes to fix the trust fund. Jobless workers generally would receive slightly less in weekly benefits and would have to wait a short time before receiving the assistance, starting in 2012.

STAFF, WIRE REPORTS

## PROGRESS ON NEWTOWN PIKE EXTENSION

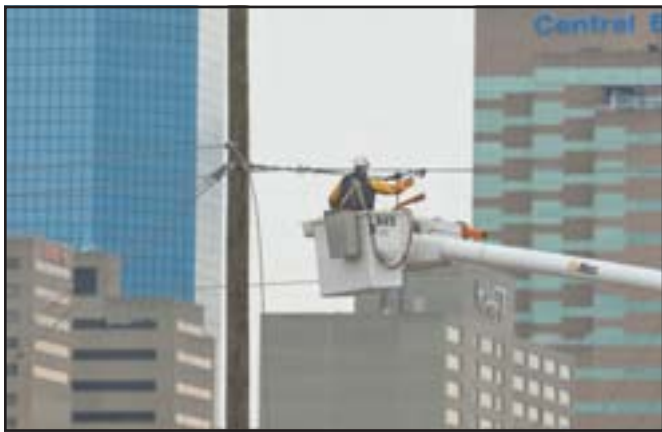


PHOTOS BY CHARLES BERTRAM | cbertram@herald-leader.com

Work on the Newtown Pike extension is on schedule to be completed by Sept. 25 for the start of the Alltech FEI World Equestrian Games. This view of the construction shows work on Monday at Manchester and Cox streets south of West Main Street.

## A LANE OF MANCHESTER TO CLOSE THIS WEEK

A lane of Manchester Street between Pine and Cox streets will be closed from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. daily through Friday as work continues on the Newtown Pike extension. "At this point, all work is on schedule," said Natasha Lacey, spokeswoman for District 7 of the state Transportation Cabinet. The project, estimated by state officials to cost \$90 million, will extend Newtown Pike from West Main Street to South Limestone at Scott Street — 1.5 miles. The extension is scheduled for completion by the start of the Alltech FEI World Equestrian Games, which start Sept. 25 at the Kentucky Horse Park.



Kentucky Utilities employee Mike Lincavage removed part of an old power line near downtown Monday as part of the Newtown Pike extension project.



MARK ARNOLD

A photo illustration depicts the Ribbons art project proposed for the Newtown Pike corridor from Interstate 75, background, to West Main Street.

## Public art project flagged for 3-mile stretch of road

By Beverly Fortune

bfortune@herald-leader.com

A major public art project has been proposed to brighten 3 miles of Newtown Pike with more than 250,000 small green and blue utility flags set out in a pattern of long ribbons curling along the road.

The Ribbons project would swing back and forth across Newtown Pike, starting at Interstate 75 and ending at West Main Street.

The art project would be installed a few days before the start of the 2010

Alltech FEI World Equestrian Games on Sept. 25 and be taken down soon after the games end Oct. 10.

Landscape architect Mark Arnold said the idea grew out of temporary projects by artists Christo and Jeane-Claude, who are known for their large-scale temporary projects like surrounding 11 islands in Miami's Biscayne Bay with more than 500,000 square yards of floating pink polypropylene fabric. Another time the duo

See ART, A4

## Lexington businesses pitching in to make waterways cleaner

PET WASTE TO BE AMONG WORKSHOP TOPICS

By Andy Mead

amead@herald-leader.com

"Now, I've got to tell you that when I was thinking about running for mayor in 2005, I didn't think I would be spending my Monday mornings talking about pet waste," Lexington Mayor Jim Newberry said.

He wasn't talking about pet waste that ends up on the soles of your shoes, although that topic certainly produces strong opinions.

No, Newberry was talking

Monday about pet waste and water quality.

He was at a news conference at Lansdowne Veterinary Clinic and Dental Center to announce a workshop to help businesses and apartment complexes protect streams from a number of pollutants.

"Stool from dogs and cats — dogs in particular — is frequently contaminated with bacterial pathogens ... as well as a variety of parasites," said Dr. Stephen Pinkston, a veterinarian.

If waste is not picked up and disposed of properly (in a trash can or toilet), those things can make other dogs sick if they come into contact with the pet waste, Pinkston said. Humans, especially children, can pick up hookworms or roundworms, he said. As the waste breaks down, it can contaminate surface water and groundwater.

A dispenser for biodegradable pet waste bags has been placed next to a trash can just outside the veterinary office, near the creek that runs be-

See WORKSHOP, A8



Dr. Stephen Pinkston talked about pet waste and the environment during a news conference at his clinic Monday with Mayor Jim Newberry.

CHARLES BERTRAM  
cbertram@herald-leader.com

"Now, I've got to tell you that when I was thinking about running for mayor in 2005, I didn't think I would be spending my Monday mornings talking about pet waste."

Lexington Mayor Jim Newberry