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# Mt. Vernon Signal

Mt. Vernon, Kentucky 40456

Volume 105 - Number 52

Thursday, October 1, 1992

## Livingston report calls water plant condition deplorable

A scathing report by two former licensed operators of the Livingston Water Plant requested by Livingston Mayor Faye Baker has been forwarded to the Signal.

Boyd L. Eversole and Danny R. Bullock made the report.

Earlier the State Division of Water threatened Livingston with a fine for contaminating Roundstone Creek.

The report from Eversole and Bullock has been sent to the Commissioner, Division of Water, Frankfort, and Edgar Hayden, inspector, Division of Water Quality, at London.

The report reads:

"When entering the water treatment plant on Saturday morning, September 19, 1992 at the request of the mayor of Livingston, we observed the following:

General condition of the plant inside was deplorable! The floor of the plant was wet and matted with empty and spilled chemical containers including sodium fluoride, aluminum sulfate, and soda ash.

The lower pump gallery was flooded with at least 6" of water, the floor drain was stopped up, and naked wires were exposed just above water.

The sodium fluoride feeder container was not pumping and was leaking out the side of the tank onto the floor of the plant.

A check valve was also gone from the end of the suction line.

The clear well was clouded over to the extent of approximately 12" visibility and very nasty with material floating on the surface. Later, checks showed 14 units turbidity in clear well effluent even after proper treatment had been started. Two other areas within the community also showed no chlorine in water supply.

The chlorine room adjacent to the plant was also wet on the floor with

spilled bags of aluminum sulfate all over the floor.

There were numerous leaks in the chlorine feed system which was not calibrated to operate correctly. Feed system was installed with feed line across the front of door. Also, improperly sized chlorinator is extremely difficult to calibrate for this small treatment plant.

We found no visible Monthly Operators Reports to see latest methods or amounts of treatment.

There are no valve box wrenches on hand in case of a line being damaged.

Bulk water hauling was observed being loaded from a water hydrant with a fire hose, unsupervised by anyone.

There is only one raw water pump in service... this pump is in a flood prone pit, and the flood case is removed.

There is also only one high service pump operable in the plant.

Eight HTH swimming pool chlorine capsules were found in the settling basin troughs.

The sewage treatment plant has no chlorination equipment at the plant.

The lift station at the north end of the community is out of service and flowing north of the water intake structure.

The water intake itself is in a bad state of repair.

The water line system has known leaks and has not been repaired.

There are numerous customers complaints of their water meters not being read for long periods of time.

The system has been depleted more than once this year of their total water supply and fire protection.

It is common knowledge in this community that some customers buy

Bill Estep is covering the trial for the Lexington Herald-Leader.

Bowling wanted to control "whether or not these men continued to breathe," Commonwealth's Attorney Tom Handy told jurors.

"Murder, the intentional taking of a life, was the reason Ronnie Bowling went in to each one to shoot them five times in the head, and robbery was secondary," Handy said.

But Jim Cox, who represents Bowling, said Bowling is a quiet, shy man, not the kind of person who wanted control badly enough to kill someone. Bowling also did not need to steal because he had money from a lawsuit settlement, Cox told jurors.

"The evidence will show that he did not commit these acts," Cox said.

Bowling, 23, of Clay County, is charged with killing Ronald L. Smith and the Rev. Marvin Hensley. He

also is charged with two counts of robbery and two of burglary.

Handy is seeking the death penalty.

An assailant shot Smith, 28, six times Jan. 20, 1989, including five times in the head. Hensley, 48, was shot five times in the head Feb. 22 at his service station north of London.

The killer took money at both stations but also left cash behind.

State police arrested Bowling on Feb. 25, 1989, after a shooting at a Mt. Vernon service station.

Station owner Ricky Smith told police that a man asking about a job pulled a pistol and shot at him. Smith said he dived behind a wall and shot back, slightly wounding the gunman and causing him to flee.

Smith called police with a description of the car and state police began chasing the suspect minutes later on U.S. 25 south toward London. The chase led 26 miles to Bowling's home, where police arrested him.

Bowling did not have a gun with him, but police found one lying beside U.S. 25 between Mt. Vernon and the spot where police first saw Bowling.

There were no witnesses to the killings, so the case depends in part on physical evidence, ballistics tests and a lesson in how lead bullets are made.

Tests by the FBI crime laboratory show that at least some of the lead bullets that killed Smith and Hensley were from the same batch as

38-caliber bullets police found in Bowling's trailer, Handy said.

Handy said tests show that the shots that killed the two men came from the gun found beside the road.

Bowling told police he had never owned a gun, but his ex-wife will testify she was with him when he bought that gun, Handy said.

Handy said police found a pair of gloves they say Bowling threw out during the chase. The gloves had lead residue on them, indicating they were used to fire a gun, he said.

Cox, however, said that Bowling's fingerprints were not on the gun or at the crime scenes and that there was no gunpowder residue on his hands. Bowling did not own the bullets police found at his home, Cox said.

(Cont. to A8)



Dennis McClure, left, takes over as Superintendent of water, sewer, streets in Mt. Vernon from Matt Powell Jr.

## Bowling trial begins in London

Ronnie Lee Bowling robbed two Laurel County service-station attendants he killed in 1989, but his main motive was murder, not money, a prosecutor said Monday as Bowling's trial began.

Bill Estep is covering the trial for the Lexington Herald-Leader.

Bowling wanted to control "whether or not these men continued to breathe," Commonwealth's Attorney Tom Handy told jurors.

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## Childress critical

Willis Childress, 75, of Pur Rigby Road, is in critical condition in U.K. Medical Center following a two car wreck Tuesday on Pur Rigby Road.

The two cars were involved in a head-on collision, according to State Trooper Gary Land.

## Damrell found not guilty of charges

Elthor Damrell, 51, of Buffalo Hollow Road, was found not guilty in Circuit Court last week of three charges including the death of Roy Lee Roberts III.

The Rockcastle grand jury charged Damrell in 1991 of manslaughter in the second degree by wantonly causing the death of Roberts by giving him morphine tablets.

Damrell was also found not guilty of trafficking in a controlled substance (morphine).

In a third count, trafficking in a controlled substance by giving three morphine tablets to Maria DeShannon of Berea, he was also found not guilty.

A fourth count, an unlawful transaction with a minor, Damrell was

also found not guilty.

Roberts was found dead in a heavily wooded area in Buffalo Hollow in Northern Rockcastle.

Roberts had been dead for about three days and had been the focal point of a search.

Deputy Rockcastle Coroner Roy Martin ruled Roberts died of morphine plus alcohol abuse.

Theresa Manis is in charge of arrangements of the festival.

## The annual parade will be at 9:30

Entertainment begins at 11 a.m. There will be a Mother Goose Parade for children at 3 p.m.

Booths are from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Council for the Arts will have a skit at 6 p.m. Also Different Way gospel group will have a concert at 2 p.m., the Danners gospel group at 2 p.m., the Hilltop Stompers will entertain at 11 a.m. and Bittersweet Cloggers at noon.

## Trick or Treat night

Trick or Treat will be Friday night, Oct. 30 from 6 to 8 p.m.

Please wear light clothes that can be easily seen.

## Wrecks clog I-75

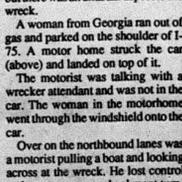
A pile-up of cars on I-75 Sunday backed traffic from Berea to the Ky. 1505 overpass at Conway.

No local residents were involved, but there was an unusual aspect to the wreck.

A woman from Georgia ran out of gas and parked on the shoulder of I-75. A motor home struck the car (above) and landed on top of it.

The motorist was talking with a wrecker attendant and was not in the car. The woman in the motorhome went through the windshield onto the car.

Over on the northbound lanes was a motorist pulling a boat and looking across at the wreck. He lost control and went over an embankment turning the boat over and damaging his truck, and the boat.



The remains of a car involved in an accident on I-75 Sunday. Looking it over are Gary Brewitt, left and Ellis Lackey.

## Powell retires; McClure in charge

After 35 years worrying about Mt. Vernon water, sewer and streets, Matt Powell Jr. is retiring.

He was treated to a luncheon Wednesday by the city.

Junior, as most know him, became a city employee in 1957 during the administration of Roy Cummins. At the time, Henry Cox was superintendent of water and streets, followed later by Jack Craig.

Junior took over his job as superintendent on March 1, 1974. He had 480 water customers.

His worst problem came in 1976 when there was a water line break at Exit 62 at Renfro Valley. The city water crew worked non-stop for 44 hours to repair the break.

Junior is married to the former Ruby McFerron in 1954. They have two children Melvin and Linda Neal.

He will be replaced by Dennis McClure who has been a city employee since 1982.

McClure will take over Oct. 1.

(Cont. to A8)

## Fall is here

It was a cold Wednesday morning and it brought Mt. Vernon the first frost of the season.

A low of 35 degrees was recorded at Cox Funeral Home weather station. Some areas may have had lower.

It was also the low temperature for the month. The high was 87 on Sept. 10.

For the records, a total of 1.89 inches of rain fell during September. That compares to 1.50 in September 1991.

## It's Lasses Makin' time

Renfro Valley's usually biggest weekend of the year begins today with the Lasses Makin' Festival.

There'll be booths, entertainment and food and molasses-making among other events.

## Notice

The City of Livingston is still under a **Boil Water Advisory** due to construction and breaking of lines, according to Mayor Faye Baker.

The city will be inconvenienced with interference in water service probably until the end of the week, Baker said.

## "Rose" retiring after 22 years at post office

By: George Ferrell

Rose Taylor, a local postal worker for the past 22 years, will be taking early retirement with her last day on the job coming Friday.

Taylor started in Renfro Valley and worked there for two years before moving to Mt. Vernon and spending 20 years in the postal service.

"I've seen a lot of people go and come, too," she said.

"Seen a lot of changes and a lot of people."

Taylor chats with many of her customers and is a friendly face when she clerks.

She said the new post office is a big convenience but that computers have made the most difference over the

years.

"It was kind of hard to adjust to them because I'd been here several years," she said.

Taylor says she is looking forward to her retirement.

"I just hope to really enjoy my retirement," she said. "I have a new grandbaby that's coming along -- I have six already and I'm expecting one in December."

Who Taylor started James O. Smith was the postmaster.

"I've met a lot of nice people," she said. "I've had a lot of nice coworkers."

One thing Taylor has witnessed during the past 22 years is growth.

The post office went from 300 boxes to about 1,200.

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