

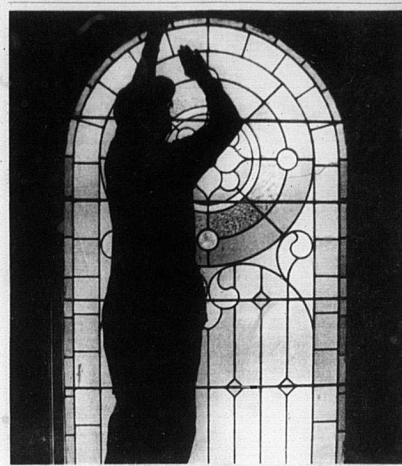
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Window work

Sunlight passing through a stained glass window created a striking silhouette of Curtis Lewis Monday afternoon, as work continued on the new Shrine of Our Lady in Carlisle. — Mercury photo.

NCHS students spend day on the judge's bench

A couple of juniors and seniors at Nicholas County High School will be heading into court every Monday morning for the rest of the school year. The trips won't last their records, however. They'll be sitting on the bench. Under a program initiated by District Judge Jack Arnold Monday, juniors and seniors will get a first-hand chance to observe district court proceedings by sitting right beside the judge during court. While school is in session, Arnold will be hosting two NCHS students in Nicholas District Court each week. He said Monday he hopes the program will expose the students to district court proceedings and provide an educational experience for them. Arnold said he began the program because "I found when I was campaigning that there is a lack of understanding about the judicial process among young people. I want students in high school throughout the district to have the opportunity to observe our system of justice on a weekly basis," he said. "I think the experience will give them a realistic and eye-opening understanding of the court system." Under Arnold's program, students will be able to sit in on all court proceedings except juvenile court, which is closed to the public. NCHS students Toni Sexton and Jackie Kouri were on hand Monday for the first day of the program. Both said they were learning a lot. "I didn't know all this went on your criminal record," Kouri said Monday. "They're been watching everything very closely, and asking lots of questions," Arnold said. Students participating in the program are selected by the school administrators. Arnold said he hopes all juniors and seniors at NCHS will have a chance to participate. Arnold has already begun the program in Harrison County and plans to implement it in the other two counties in the 10th Judicial District, Robertson and Pendleton. Arnold said the other 10th district judge, G.A. Flanders, has had students too. "I hope the students will go back and communicate what they've seen with their peers," added Judge Arnold.



NCHS students Jackie Kouri (left) and Toni Sexton got a firsthand view of Nicholas District Court Monday, as they joined Judge Jack Arnold on the bench. Arnold has initiated a new judicial education program for NCHS students. Also pictured is court clerk Debbie France (standing). — Mercury photo.

Contract dispute slows city progress on gas line project

A contractual problem with the consulting firm the city council authorized to begin working on a replacement project for the city's crumbling gas lines surfaced in a special called meeting of the council last Tuesday night. The problem area involves the fee charged by the Lexington consulting firm, Gas Management Associates. The city's attorney, Stockton Wood, told the council that "the contract, as it is now, is not acceptable." Wood said that he and an outside engineer had gone over the document "at length" and that he felt the city could be dealt with a bill—that is too high if the project falls after preliminary plans are drawn up. Wood told the council that the contract called for the consultant to be paid 30 percent of their fee (which is eight percent of the total project cost) if the project falls through after the preliminary study. Based on a projected cost of \$600,000 to \$700,000 for the project mentioned at a meeting last month, Wood said that "they would be entitled to around \$130,000 just to tell us the cost and draw up a basic design." "I'm not saying they are not a reputable firm," Wood said. "Basically it's a good contract. But I don't think you want to contractually obligate the city to pay \$130,000 just for the preliminary work." Wood said the overall fee was in line with standard rates charged for engineering work on similar projects. However, the Mayor's attorney advised the council to re-negotiate the fee for the preliminary study. He also wanted to make sure that the city received credit for the amount paid on the preliminary study against the fee for the total project. "If nothing goes wrong, this contract is fine," Wood told the council, "but the city needs to be protected if something does go wrong." Councilman Clarence Cord reminded Wood that CMA had told the council at last month's meeting that an hourly rate could be worked out for the time spent in doing. After a lengthy discussion, the council authorized Mayor Frankie Hughes to enter into a contract for the preliminary study, provided he and Wood could work out a suitable fee with CMA. Hughes said Monday, after meeting with state officials in Frankfort about a possible grant for the project, that a suitable agreement had not yet been reached. Councilman Clifton Waugh, who voted against the authorization for CMA to begin looking into the project at last month's meeting, said that he was upset with the public's perception of his stand on the issue. "Everybody's saying 'He's against the gas line,'" Waugh said. "I'm not opposed to the gas line. I'm opposed to them (CMA) getting in here and ripping us off." At last month's meeting in which the council authorized the preliminary work, CMA's Harry Acker told the council that he had and unaccounted for gas from the city's system had risen 15 percent over the last year. "If current rates, Acker said the council, the city is losing over \$130,000." — See Contract dispute, page 11

Council insures city against future suits

Last month the fiscal court insured county officials and employees against possible lawsuits. Last Tuesday the city council followed suit. A result of action taken at a special called meeting of the council last week, the city has taken out an insurance policy that will, among other things, insure the city for up to one million dollars against lawsuits arising out of "errors and omissions" of public officials. The decision to take out the insurance came after extensive debate by the council over whether or not it was legal to spend city funds in excess of \$5,000 without first advertising for bids. The insurance package carries a \$6.04 annual premium. Stockton Wood, the city's attorney, told the council that he didn't think insurance was subject to the law requiring the acceptance of bids for expenditures over \$5,000. He said that insurance falls under the category of "professional services," and is therefore not subject to the bidding requirement. The council wanted Wood to check into the matter further, and he did at the meeting. Instead, they authorized Mayor Frankie Hughes to contract for the insurance after Wood had investigated the legality of the transaction further. Hughes said Monday that Wood had advised him that insurance does indeed fall under the category of "professional services." Hughes has authorized the coverage. The policy package was taken out with the Kentucky Local Government Plan (the same company that insures the fiscal court), and will be written through local insurance agent Custer Blair. The entire package contains policies covering "comprehensive general" liability and "law enforcement liability" in addition to the "errors and omissions" coverage. "That 'errors and omissions' policy insures city officials and employees for up to one million dollars in the event they are sued for action they take (or fail to take) in their official capacity. The policy carries a \$1,000 deductible stipulation, but will cover up to one year before the policy will be written. The "comprehensive general" policy covers all city boards, commissions and employees for up to one million dollars in liability. The "law enforcement liability" policy covers up to \$200,000 for suits arising from the actions of law enforcement officers. The policy covers suits for personal injury (even those that are the result of "intentional acts"), assault and battery, civil rights violations, and other areas. That policy also carries \$100,000 worth of accidental insurance for city employees with arresting power. — See City insured, page 11

Jerry's completes recent expansion with grand opening

Jerry's IRA supermarket kicked off several weeks of grand opening festivities with an open house at the Main Street grocery Sunday afternoon. The grand opening was part of a major expansion project just completed at the local store. "The biggest thing is the deli," Houser said Monday morning of the expanded facilities at his store. The deli, which offers hot and cold prepared foods, has received a "very good" reception, Houser said. Houser said the produce department features items brought in twice each week directly from the Cincinnati market. He said he hopes he can provide "as wide a variety as anyone can find anywhere." In addition, he said that "if we don't have it, we can get it—provided it is in season. Anyone just needs to let us know four days in advance." Houser has also added a "complete line of generics," or "no name" items. "We carry three full price levels," Houser said. "We have the no name, the IRA brand, and the national brands." He said the generic items have also been "very well accepted" in the local market. Highlighting his grand opening celebration, Houser will be giving away a total of \$2,000 worth of groceries at his two stores (he also owns a JKA in Pennsylvania). He said he will give away \$1,000 worth at each store. — See Jerry's, page 11



Jerry Houser

Fund established for local woman

A special fund has been established for a country woman who is set to undergo brain surgery in Lexington today. According to Stanley Storey and his daughter Paula—lifetime friends of the young woman—an account has been opened at the Deposit Bank for Mr. and Mrs. Roger Livingston, in order to help offset the cost of the expensive medical services. Mrs. Livingston will submit to surgery at Central Baptist Hospital. The Livingstons have two preschool age children. Contributions to the fund may be made in person or by mail at the Deposit Bank.

Jackets ready for district play

The Nicholas County Bluejacket basketball team was scheduled to begin district tournament competition Wednesday night in a semifinal game against Harrison County at the Bourbon County gymnasium. The game was set to begin at 7:30 p.m. NCHS Principal David McMillen said Tuesday morning that two pep buses would take children to the contest. He also said that Wednesday. — See Jackets, page 11