GENERAL NEWS

Free self defense class planned

The month of March is set aside to recognize the impact of sexual assault on the person, the family and the community. Sexual assault is committed anytime a person forces or manipulates another person into any unwanted or harmful sexual activity.

A basic self-defense class for persons over the age of 18 years will be sponsored by Dawn Curran Letcher, Nicholas County Attorney and Renee France, Victim's Advocate on March 21 from 5:30 p.m. until 6:30 p.m. at Carlisle United Methodist Church Fellowship Hall. This program is free of charge but pre-registration before March 20 is required. Please call the Nicholas County Attorney's office at 859-289-3745 to pre-register.

Statistics show that one in six women and one in 33 men have been the victim of a completed or attempted sexual assault in her/his lifetime with only approximately 20 percent of these violations are reported to the police. In Nicholas County, this could translate into 703 cases of sexual assault over the lifetime of its residents or nine cases per year.

During the calendar year 2005, at least six cases of sexual assault against Nicholas Countians were reported to the victim's advocate. Most sexual assaults are committed in the victim's home by someone known to the victim.

Sexual assaults have a tremendous impact on the community in which a victim lives. Despite the obvious impact to the victim, there is the loss of productivity and costs for prosecution. Sexual assaults increase the need for treatment for unwanted pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases, and psychological services.

Factors that can increase a persons vulnerability for victimization include a prior history of sexual violence, gender, age, drug-alcohol use, high-risk sexual behavior, poverty and culture.

Factors within the community that can increase the probability for sexual assaults include lack of employment opportunities, lack of support for the courts and law enforcement and tolerance of crime, specifically sexual assaults, within the community.

Some measures to help protect yourself from sexual assault include having a good relationship with friends/schools/businesses, strong feelings of self worth and being aware of your environment. Also knowing basic self-defense techniques will provide you with another level of protection if you should be a potential victim of sexual assault.

Junior Lady Jackets softball team makes ready for season

After putting in more than a month of hard work on the practice field, the Nicholas County Middle School softball team is ready for some real competition. They'll get it Monday, March 19 when the Lady Jackets begin their regular season at home against Richmond Model.

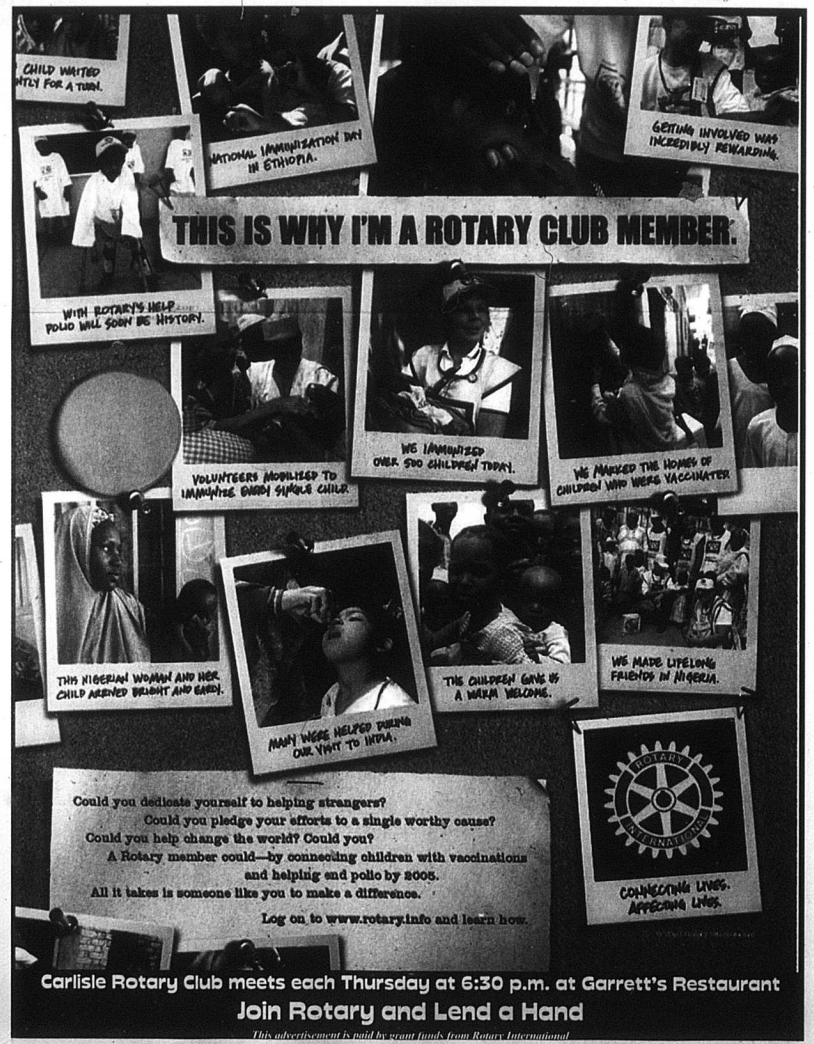
"We're ready and very anxious to go," said Nicholas County head coach Benny Buckler.

The Lady Jackets will have more incentives to play well this season as the newest member of the Bluegrass Middle School Softball Conference. Richmond Model is one of the Lady Jackets' new rivals in the East Division, which also includes Powell County, Estill County, Clark Moore, McNabb, and Madison County middle schools.

Buckler, who is in his first season as head coach of the Middle School Lady Jackets, said the effort has been very good this pre-season and it shows in the improvements the team has made.

"The improvement has been tremendous. Hitting, fielding, and defense, it's all improved," he said. "No coach can ask for a better effort than these girls have given this pre-season."

"You never know what's going to happen, but I believe with the amount of effort these girls are giving, combined with their dedication and heart, we've got a very good chance to have a successful season," he said.

After the opener, the Lady Jackets will then host Madison Middle on March 21 and Clark Moore Middle on March 23. Nicholas County's first away game will be Saturday, March 24 at 1 p.m. at Anderson County Middle School.

Members of the team include Samantha Davis, Adrienne Letcher, Lauren 'Pooh' Johnson, Brandi Evans, Shila Roberts, Kenlie Caswell, Haylie Myers, Shelby Wade, Reesa Martin, Elizabeth Johnson, Robin Colhorn, Morgan Padgett, McKenzie Hopkins, Emily Curran, Jania Waggbner, MiKayla Mynear, Hannah Coldiron, Hannah Mills, Anna Mattox, Mandi McLean and Alison King.