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Two students named Governor's Scholars

By Charles Mattox
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Two Nicholas County juniors have been awarded Governor's Scholars Scholarships and will spend five weeks in Frankfort later this summer participating in the prestigious educational program.

Chad Ockerman, 17-year-old son of Michael and Stephanie Sowell, and Jessica Gilkerson, 17-year-old daughter of Chris and Peggy Gilkerson, received the news last week.

Both said they were honored to be in the program. Both also have a strong desire to excel in education and life.

"I want to be a pharmacist," Ockerman said while explaining his goals. "I want to go to the University of Kentucky." "I want to be involved with molecular genetics and work toward finding cures for diseases," said Gilkerson. "I want to go to the Ohio State University."

Both expressed appreciation for family and friends that pushed them to succeed and both expressed a keen desire to help people obtain a higher quality of life.

"They are two outstanding students," NCHS Principal Joe Orman said of Gilkerson and Ockerman. "I'm very proud of them, and they are

both very deserving of this."

The two outstanding juniors are at the top of their class with a 4.0 grade point average. Both say they are looking forward to the scholarship program, and expressed praise for all the teachers and staff within the school system that had provided guidance and inspired them thus far.

"I really enjoy math and algebra," Gilkerson said. "Mrs. Melanie Sanders has taught me a lot. She inspires me." Ockerman said he became inspired during an earlier kids college program.

"Mrs. Phyllis Guthrie has helped me a lot and she has pushed me to do better. She helped organize a trip to Italy a few years ago and I thought that was pretty special."

Ockerman and Gilkerson are both accomplished pianists and have a deep love of music.

Gilkerson said she enjoys all kinds of music, ranging from Rap, to Country, to Rock.

"I like a lot of different groups," she said. "Some of my favorites are Def Leppard, Chris Brown and Three Days Grace."

Ockerman said he preferred Hard Rock music and Heavy Metal and enjoyed listening to Marilyn Manson, Nine Inch Nails and the earlier classic rock groups like Lynyrd Skynyrd and Led

Zepplin.

Though some might consider his music as "liberal," Ockerman was quick to point out that he was a conservative at heart and closely followed the Republican Party politics.

Gilkerson quickly agreed and also said she followed the more conservative views adhered to by the Republican Party.

Both said they strongly support John McCain during the presidential election.

Gilkerson said she enjoyed a lot of activities in her spare time.

"Everything from shopping to fishing and yes... I have my own book," she said with a broad smile.

Ockerman said he enjoyed everything about computers and was an avid car stereo junkie.

"I belong to the Carlisle Acoustics," he said. "It's a club that designs and installs car stereo systems and enters competitions with other similar clubs to see who can create the best sound."

Ockerman thanked Jeremy McGee for all of his assistance with computer subjects.

"We're good friends," he said.

Ockerman and Gilkerson are both accomplished athletes.

The accomplishments however did not come without a price for Ockerman.

"A 90-pound linebacker pulled me down," Ockerman said as he shook his head and pointed to his right knee, which still sports a brace. "I felt the tension and I went to take a step and my knee didn't work. My football days

are pretty much over, I believe. I still enjoy tennis and golf and I like weight lifting. I really liked football."

Gilkerson is a member of the Girls Softball Team that did well in state competition last year and hopes to repeat

and improve this year. "I like all sports," she said. "Any kind of sport."

The Mercury congratulates these two fine young adults and wishes them much success in all of their future endeavors.

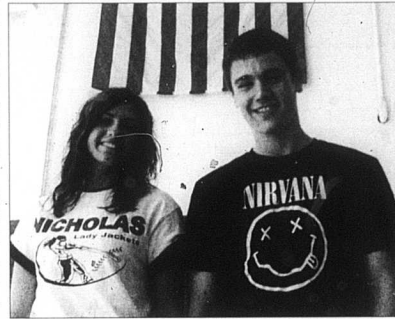


Photo by Charles Mattox
Juniors Jessica Gilkerson and Chad Ockerman will participate in the Governor's Scholars Program this summer at one of these college campuses. It is an intense five week learning community experience that allows students to discover their full potential.

Apr
30
2008

White enters not guilty plea in District Court

By Charles Mattox
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Mary White, 61, formerly of South Walnut Street, Carlisle, appeared before the Honorable Judge William Probas in Nicholas District Court April 23 with Cynthia attorney Jeremy Mattox, and entered pleas of not guilty to the charges of falsely reporting and incident and facilitation arson, second degree.

Police, firefighters and Nicholas County EMS personnel, were called to White's South Walnut Street home on the night of Feb. 26 where they found the home engulfed in flames and White suffering from a gunshot wound to the abdomen.

Carlisle Firemen were joined by firefighters with the Nicholas County Fire Department at the scene and fought the dangerous blaze for several hours.

White told Kentucky State Police Dry Ridge Post Detective, Clinton Graves, that two unidentified men

forced entry into her residence during the late evening hours of Feb. 25 and that one of the perpetrators had shot her, according to court documents, which also state that White reported the theft of \$800 from her purse.

Detective Graves and other lawmen began a dragnet of the area and White later stated to Graves that she was actually aware of the identity of the two perpetrators and positively identified them to Graves, according to court documents.

Graves however, later discovered that one of the alleged perpetrators was incarcerated in the Montgomery County Detention Center, and had been so since Feb. 12. Graves also later confirmed the alibi of the other alleged perpetrator.

According to White's arrest warrant, she then told Graves "she actually shot herself."

White's arrest warrant also states that after her house was on fire she "waited 30 minutes before call-

ing for assistance stating to herself, 'what the hell, let it burn!'"

The warrant also states that White contacted her property casualty insurance company earlier on the day of the fire to confirm the extent of her coverage.

Graves arrested White April 7, and charged her with falsely reporting an incident and facilitation arson, second degree. White was transported to the Montgomery County Jail where she posted \$15,000 cash bond and was released.

She remains free on bond and is scheduled to appear back in Nicholas District Court on April 30 for a preliminary hearing to determine if her charges will be bound over to a future Nicholas County Grand Jury.

Detective Graves is scheduled to testify at White's preliminary hearing to answer questions asked of him by County Attorney Dawn Letcher and White's attorney Jeremy Mattox, regarding the criminal investigation

E911 controversy brews at City Council meeting

By Charles Mattox
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Who will pay for the upkeep and maintenance of the life-saving E911 communications system soon to be implemented?

An audacious advice from City Attorney Stanley "Skip" Watson, the Carlisle City Council members

City Council members passed a resolution authorizing Carlisle Mayor Ronnie Clark to execute a letter of intent and service application to implement the E911 system through BellSouth Telecommunications.

The resolution will effectively set into motion a chain of events to bring the life-saving technological communications system to Carlisle. But that technology will come with a price city officials were warned by Watson to proceed with caution.

"You need to make sure you know what you're getting into," Watson said emphatically, several times to council members during discussion of the subject at the regular monthly meeting of the Carlisle City Council members, which was held April 14 in City Hall.

Council member Sandy Ritchie expressed concern over the cost and personnel management aspect of the E911 dispatch to Clark, who assured her that he and Nicholas County Judge-Executive Larry Tischer had met and discussed the topic for "an hour and half" recently.

"Who will manage the money?" Ritchie asked.

Clark explained that it was his understanding that it was the E911 board, consisting of himself, Tischer, Carlisle Chief of Police William Denton and others, including Nicholas County Sheriff Dick Garrett, would serve on the board.

Watson continued to express concern several minutes into the discussion expounding on the belief that the E911 technology and the personnel that operated it would come with a hefty price tag.

He expressed a belief that the only way to fund the project would be through the county implementing an excise tax on phone payments.

"When it comes to levying taxes there will be funding," Clark said.

"We need to iron these things out now and make sure you know what you're getting

into," Watson said again after pointing out to the city council members that the fiscal council members might, or might not, decide to levy such a tax.

In other business the members of the council:

Passed a resolution to accept a bid of \$113,000 from Emergence Public Safety Software for the upgrade of the E911 system.

Passed a joint ordinance between the city of Carlisle and Nicholas County to authorize the placement of the mayor and judge-executive to serve on the Carlisle-Nicholas County Industrial Development Authority Board.

Passed an ordinance annexing the property of David Hopkins into the city limits of Carlisle.

Passed a resolution for a Highway Safety Grant and a Kentucky Grant for the Carlisle Police Department for the purchase of radar equipment, cameras and overtime pay.

Discussed increasing monetary deposits of the city's utilities to new city customers. "I don't mind paying for mine, but I hate paying for someone else's," Mayor Clark said after reiterating that the

city had lost several thousand dollars to customers who ran up utility deposits and then simply moved away and did not pay their bill.

Council member Betty Jo Both was absent.

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