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The Carlisle Mercury

Vol. 142 No. 1 The Nicholas County News Since 1867 Wednesday, January 2, 2008

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2008

Cemetery damage: two arrested



Photos by Charles Mattox
Above, Carlisle Police Sgt. Darrell Layne and Deputy Sheriff Bennie Buckler arrested Jesse James Robinson, 19, of Carlisle, Friday in connection with the cemetery vandalism. Above left, KSP Detective Jeremy Murrell and Carlisle Chief of Police William Denton examine destruction to the cemetery also shown below.

By Charles Mattox
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One is a 17-year-old juvenile. One is an adult. Jesse James Robinson, 19, of Carlisle, was arrested by Carlisle Police Sgt. Darrell Layne and Nicholas County Deputy Sheriff Bennie Buckler Friday afternoon Dec. 28.

When asked why he did it, as he was being led into the Carlisle Police Department office Friday, Robinson dropped his gaze to the ground, shook his head once to the side, but uttered no sound.

Local and state law enforcement officers worked closely together, and in conjunction with County Attorney Dawn Letcher and her staff, to solve the crimes, noted Carlisle Police Chief William Denton.

Letcher, who drafted the

arrest warrants, said Robinson and the juvenile were both facing five counts of criminal mischief, third degree and 55 class D felony counts of violating graves.

"I'm very impressed with the thoroughness of the investigation and the tireless efforts of the officers and agencies involved in this investigation," Letcher said Friday afternoon as she consulted with Sgt. Layne. "I'll have to say I was surprised an adult was involved in this activity."

Layne was quick to praise the efforts of fellow city, county and state law enforcement officers who pooled their resources and knowledge to quickly crack the case.

This was a great cooperative effort among Carlisle police officers, Deputy Sheriff Bennie Buckler and detectives and troopers with the Kentucky State Police," Layne said. (Sheriff Dick Garrett was out of town during the incident and investigation. "We are all also appreciative of assistance and cooperation we received from several fine individuals of the community.")

Layne said he did not believe that either alcohol or drugs played a role in the destructive behavior.

"I simply do not know what the motivation was for this act," he said as he shook his head.

Cemetery officials were similarly shocked at the destructive vandalism, and they say several of the monuments may be damaged beyond repair.

"I can't believe that anyone would be this low down," said Evertt Ritchie, groundskeeper of the cemetery as he assessed the damage Wednesday morning. Ritchie had closed and secured the cemetery gate during the evening hours of Christmas, Tuesday, and made the unpleasant discovery Wednesday morning, barely 12 hours later, after opening the gate.

Ritchie could do little more than shake his head in disgust as he walked among the tumbled monuments.

"I believe there had to be

more than one person involved in this," he said. "I just don't understand this at all. They even kicked over and broke some of the smaller monuments."

Ritchie and others, including Carlisle Police officers and Kentucky State Police detectives and troopers, noted that several of the taller monuments that had been toppled over would have required the vandals to climb several feet atop the monument to reach the upper section of some of the older monuments that were affected.

"Some of these are beyond repair," Bobby Snapp, Chairman of the Cemetery Board, said of the older and larger monuments. "I hope whoever did this is caught. I sure would like to know why they did this."

The vandals concentrated their destructive efforts in a near straight line that stretched from one side of the cemetery to the other extending from the far right end to the far left end.

"This is sure pretty sad," KSP Detective Jeremy Murrell said as he, KSP Trooper Nathan Moore and Carlisle Chief Denton began fingerprinting the toppled and smashed stones and gathering other evidence Wednesday. "This is senseless."

Chief Denton was visibly upset.

"Our officers are working with Sheriff Garrett's office and Deputy Buckler and officers with the Kentucky State Police," he said. "We want to catch whoever did this as quickly as possible."

Veteran KSP Detective Clinton Graves met with Nicholas County Attorney Dawn Letcher late on the morning of Dec. 26.

"This is a very unfortunate situation," Graves said of the vandalism. "We will be working diligently with the other law enforcement officers to solve this as quickly as possible."

Other smaller acts of vandalism were noted throughout the city with police sources stating that there was a strong likelihood of

Fund begun for Bowles

Employees at Shell Food Mart in Carlisle are asking for the community to help Debbie Bowles and her family, following the loss of her husband, Gary.

The family did not have life insurance and is in need of donations.

You can make a donation at the Deposit Bank in Carlisle or see store manager Paula Watson at Shell. Any and all donations will be appreciated.

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Looking Back at 2007

Here is a glance at some of the year's top stories. A select portion will be included next week.

JANUARY

After nearly half a century Bath Co. News-Outlook sold

Nicholas Countyman in March of 2007 and combined the publications. The papers now operate under the flag of The Carlisle Mercury, which began publication in 1867.

The News-Outlook was purchased by Russ and Margaret Metz in 1960. Russ served as publisher and operated the paper until his death, at which time Ken and his mother Margaret continued to operate the family-owned publication. Ken's wife Gloria was also involved in the paper's operation and ownership for many years.

In recent years Ken Metz has operated the newspaper as president and publisher of the century-old newspaper, which serves as Bath County's legal publication.

Ronnie Clark is sworn in for a four-year term as the new Mayor of Carlisle.

Fire Chief Mark Hughes is appointed another four-year term as Nicholas County Volunteer Fire Dept. Fire Chief. Hughes has served with the firefighters for three decades and served as the fire chief for 22 years.

The newly elected Honorable Judge Jay Delaney begins duties as the District Judge for Nicholas, Robertson, Harrison and Pendleton counties. Judge Delaney replaces retired Judge William Probus.

The Mini Magic Cheerleaders were named Grand Champions in the Regional Youth Division. The team is coached by Susan Flowers. The team also won a Jan. 13 competition at Lexington, defeating over 50 other teams and won a Jan. 20 competition in Richmond.

Governor Ernie Fletcher's Office honored Carlisle Police Sgt. Darrell Layne for having the top DUI arrests in Nicholas County for 2006. Layne, who has been a city police officer since 1998,

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