

Streamers and confetti hailed from the rafters, blanketing the team and the record number of 5,122 screaming spectators at E.A. Diddle Arena in Bowling Green, KY.

Their victory was the first championship title for coach Chrysti Noble in her 21 seasons at Rockcastle High School. It also made the Lady Rockets the first team not from Lexington or Louisville to win the girls' basketball State championship in more than a decade.

The students and faculty of Rockcastle High School, the community of Mount Vernon and the entire Commonwealth couldn't be more proud of this talented, winning team. The Sunday after winning the championship, the equivalent of one-fifth of the population of Mount Vernon turned out to wish the Lady Rockets well as the team members rode through town atop three fire engines, a convoy of honking vehicles and jubilant fans following behind. Their hard work, dedication and respect for one another undoubtedly makes them a team that will be remembered for years to come.

Mr. President, the Louisville Courier-Journal recently published an article about the Rockcastle High School Lady Rockets' history-making season and what the championship meant to the team, the school and the Commonwealth. I ask unanimous consent that the full article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Courier-Journal, Mar. 13, 2011]

GIRLS' SWEET 16 ROCKCASTLE COUNTY BEATS MANUAL 62-60 FOR TITLE ON LAST-SECOND SHOT

(By Jason Frakes)

BOWLING GREEN, KY—The knock all season on the Rockcastle County High School girls' basketball team was that it's a one-woman squad, led by McDonald's All American Sara Hammond.

The Lady Rockets now have a state championship trophy to prove that never was the case.

Angie Lawrence nailed a jumper in the lane with 1 second left in overtime to give Rockcastle County a 62-60 victory over Manual in the final of the Houchens/KHSAA Sweet 16.

A state final-record crowd of 5,122 at E.A. Diddle Arena saw Rockcastle County capture its first state championship and end a 10-year reign of title winners from either Louisville or Lexington. West Carter (2000) was the last school not from either of Kentucky's largest cities to win the crown.

"This is the best feeling ever," said Hammond, a University of Louisville signee who was named the Sweet 16 MVP. "I knew we were going to get it done tonight."

The 6-foot-2 Hammond posted 26 points and 11 rebounds to lead the Lady Rockets (36-1), who finished the season with a 27-game winning streak and lost only to Mount Juliet (Tenn.) 60-47 on Dec. 30.

Lawrence, a 5-5 senior who has signed with Georgetown College, added 18 points.

LeAsia Wright had 19 points and Kara Wright 12 for Manual (33-5), which was No. 1 in the state in The Courier-Journal's Litkenhous Ratings all season.

"Our best wasn't good enough to win the game, but it's good enough for me," Lady

Crimsons coach Stacy Pendleton said. "They just beat us. We played as hard as we could."

Manual led 37-28 early in the third quarter, but Rockcastle County charged back and eventually tied it at 47 on a Lawrence three-pointer with 5:07 left in the fourth.

Hammond scored 19 points in the first half, but it was Lawrence who carried the Lady Rockets late with 15 points after the break.

"Their other kids really stepped up in the second half," Pendleton said. "But if it wasn't for (Hammond) in the first half, I think we could have blown them out."

Lawrence sank two free throws with 27.5 seconds left for a 55-53 lead, but Kayla Styles' basket with 2 seconds left tied it and forced overtime.

The Lady Rockets never trailed in the extra period and led 60-58 after Michaela Hunter's free throw with 1:22 left. Kara Wright tied it at 60 on a jumper with 56 seconds left, and Rockcastle County held for the final shot.

Lady Rockets coach Chrysti Noble chose not to call a timeout.

"They're experienced, and they've been here," she said. "I was like, 'No, let them go. Let them determine the outcome of the ballgame.' They did."

Lawrence drove to the lane and nailed her jumper from the right elbow.

"I was feeling it," Lawrence said. "It was a terrible-looking shot, but I had faith in myself. I knew I would hit it."

Hammond said there was a bit of confusion in the final minute.

"I kept asking, 'What offense are you running? What offense are you running?'" Hammond said. "(Lawrence) had that look in her eye that she was taking it to the hole. She's done that over and over again. We knew it was in her heart, and we trusted her for that shot."

Manual called a timeout with 0.5 second left but couldn't get a final shot.

Pendleton was left to wonder what might have been with junior guard April Wilson out since the regional final with a broken hand. He also had two seniors foul out in the final—Raven Hester with 1:29 left in regulation and Michael Guess at the 2:49 mark of overtime.

"To do all of this without April is amazing," Pendleton said. "That shows you how great this team is. . . . Michael fouling out was a huge problem, huge. You take away our No. 1 scoring punch and rebounding. That was a huge blow."

For Rockcastle County it was a huge win and gave the 12th Region its first state champion since Laurel County in 1991.

Noble, in her 21st season at Rockcastle County, said the victory was important for the school of 910 students and the community of Mount Vernon.

"It's so good to know there's something good from Rockcastle County instead of hearing all the bad stuff," she said. "There are a lot of good things that happen in our community. . . ."

"When you come through Rockcastle you'll get to see a sign up, I hope, that says, 'Welcome to Rockcastle County, 2011 state champions of girls' basketball.'"

SAM HOUSTON'S WALKING STICK

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, on Friday, I spoke at the Ladies Hermitage Association's Annual banquet in Nashville. This extraordinary organization, for 122 years, has preserved the home of President Andrew Jackson. No former President's home has more historical objects from a President's life than does the Hermitage. I ask unani-

mous consent that my remarks be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

I am honored to accept the Lewis R. Donelson III award, but in truth, the only appropriate person to receive the award is Lewis R. Donelson himself. Lewie is a remarkable individual. He will be 94 years of age in October. Two years ago, he shot a hole in one and he regularly shoots his age in golf. His doctor can find nothing physically wrong with him and he takes no medicine. I am convinced the only appropriate next step for Lewie is to put him into the Smithsonian.

No other family's thread runs so proudly through Tennessee's history, from John Donelson's river trip to Nashville in 1779 to Andrew Jackson's marriage to John's daughter, Rachel, to Lewie's life of distinguished public service. Thank you to the Ladies Hermitage Association for your remarkable work preserving Andrew Jackson's home.

I was sworn in as Governor of Tennessee three days early, on January 17, 1979. I did this at the request of the U.S. Attorney in order to prevent the incumbent governor from issuing pardons to prisoners whom the FBI believed had paid cash for their release. Lewis Donelson offered the prayer at that surprise inauguration ceremony. One of my first acts as governor was to direct Lewie to take charge of, and secure, the state capitol. Someone said, "Lewie has been waiting his whole life for someone to ask him to do that."

Lewis Donelson was my first appointee because I knew that if he agreed to be the chief operating officer of state government, it would help to recruit others during a time of a crisis in confidence.

Lewie's negotiating style became well known around the Capitol. He would knock you to the floor with his first offer. By the time you had gotten halfway back up you would have agreed with him and considered that a success.

About the only thing I was ever able to tell Lewie to do was to stop driving his car to the Capitol while reading a newspaper, and he only stopped that after he ran into the back of another car.

Alex Haley once told me, "Lamar, if you would say, 'let me tell you a story' instead of making a speech, people might actually listen to what you have to say." So, tonight, let me tell you the story of Andrew Jackson and Sam Houston's Walking Stick.

The setting for this story is the first half of the 19th century. Tennessee was then the fifth most populous state. This was the West. There were three Tennessee presidents—Jackson, Polk and Johnson—and two who aspired to be President: Davy Crockett and Sam Houston.

The political competition was intense. In 1834, Andrew Jackson's forces defeated the young congressman from West Tennessee, David Crockett, who then rode his horse to the courthouse steps and said to the assembled crowd what defeated politicians have always wanted to say to such voters, "I'm going to Texas and you can go to hell."

The two-party competition of that era produced strong leaders just as the reemergence of a two party system during the last half-century has sent Tennesseans to national positions from Vice President and Senate Majority Leader to Cabinet membership. There have, as yet, been no more presidents, although there have been regular attempts.

In 1807, when Thomas Jefferson was president, the widow Elizabeth Paxson Houston, aged 50, loaded six sons and three daughters into two wagons and moved from Virginia to

a 419-acre farm near Maryville, Tennessee, that her husband had purchased before his death. Of her fifth son Sam, who was then 14 years old, the widow Houston said, "I had no hope for him. He was so wild."

The Houston farm lay on the border of the Cherokee Nation. Sam found the life of a young Indian man more appealing than working in the family store, so at 16 he ran away from home to live with the Indians and became known by a Cherokee name, Raven.

By 1813, the War of 1812 was in full swing. In Maryville, Sam took a silver dollar from the recruiter's drumhead and enlisted. In February of 1814, his regiment received a call to go to the aid of General Andrew Jackson at Horseshoe bend in Alabama. For the next 31 years, Sam Houston was a friend and protégé of Andrew Jackson.

Jackson taught Houston how to fight a duel. In 1823, he helped Houston be elected to the U.S. House of Representatives. The next year Houston helped Jackson in his unsuccessful bid for the presidency. With Jackson's help Houston became governor of Tennessee in 1827.

With Houston's help, Jackson was elected president in 1828. One biographer of Houston said that for Houston "to be governor of Tennessee with Old Hickory in the White House was as close to being the Prince of Wales as American blood could approach. Houston was the all-but-anointed heir of the most popular president since Washington himself."

A local judge wrote at the time "Houston stood six-foot-six in his socks, was of fine contour, a remarkable well-proportioned man, and of commanding and gallant bearing. He enjoyed unbounded popularity among the men and was a great favorite with the ladies."

As governor, Houston often visited the Hermitage, sometimes picking flowers in Rachel Jackson's garden. He was chief pallbearer when Rachel died on Christmas Eve of 1828, just after Jackson's election to the Presidency. The next month Governor Houston, then 36 years of age, married Eliza Allen of Gallatin, who was 18. In March, Jackson became President. A month later, on April 16, 1829, distraught over some still unexplained trouble with Eliza, Houston resigned the governorship and went to live with his old friends, the Indians who by then had moved west. He married again and made his way to Texas in 1832.

We all know that the great story of Sam Houston and Texas. But the story I would like to complete here tonight is of Sam Houston's walking stick and Andrew Jackson's death.

In March of 1845, President Tyler dispatched Andrew Jackson Donelson to Texas to try to persuade Sam Houston to support the annexation of Texas by the United States. Donelson was the nephew of Rachel Donelson. He had served as President Jackson's private secretary and in 1856 was nominated to run for the vice presidency of the United States. He lived in the plantation near the Hermitage, called Tulip Grove.

Upon reaching Texas, Andrew Jackson Donelson wrote, "Tell Uncle that Houston has disappointed me and not given the annexation question the support I expected." Houston had kept people guessing about whether he favored allowing Texas to remain an independent country, as British emissaries were arguing. According to one officer of the Texas Navy, "When [Houston] was sober he was for annexation but when he was drunk he would express himself strongly against the measure."

The next month, in April of 1845, Houston, his wife Margaret, and their two-year-old son Sam began a trip from Texas to New Orleans and up the Mississippi River to see 78-year-old Andrew Jackson, who was dying at the

Hermitage. According to one biographer, during those last hours Jackson was talking of his farm, his business, his country, and of the annexation of Texas, and especially of recent comments by Houston which had convinced Jackson that annexation would occur. In one of his last letters to Donelson, Andrew Jackson wrote, "I knew British gold could not buy Sam Houston."

The Houstons' river passage was delayed when their steamboat ran aground. Finally, at about 6 p.m. on Sunday, June 8, 1845, the steamboat tied up at the Nashville landing on the Cumberland River. The Houstons were told that Jackson was near death. They hired a coach to race to the Hermitage. A few miles outside Nashville their coach met the Jackson family physician. He told them that Jackson had died at about the same time the Houstons had arrived in Nashville. Proceeding on to the Hermitage, Houston lifted his two-year-old son and said, "Try to remember that you have looked upon the face of Andrew Jackson." Houston then put his head on Jackson's chest and wept. At midnight he wrote to President Polk, "I have seen the corpse. The visage is much as it was in life."

The Houstons were guests at the Donelson plantation, Tulip Grove, for several days after Jackson's death. Houston led the funeral cortege as he had as governor when Rachel Jackson died. When Houston left Nashville to travel to Texas, he left his walking stick at Tulip Grove. It is made of mulberry wood and has a solid gold cap. The stick is split and has been glued together, which may have been the reason Houston left it.

How do we know this stick was Houston's stick?

For one thing, the words "Sam Houston" and "Texas" and a Lone Star are engraved on the gold cap.

For another, we know from photographs and historical accounts that Houston carried walking sticks. We also know that he knew how to use his stick. In March of 1832, while visiting Washington, DC, Houston encountered Congressman Stanberry from Ohio who had criticized the Jackson Indian policy. Houston confronted Stanberry and said, "You are a damned rascal!" and whacked him multiple times over the head with his hickory cane, cut from the grounds of the Hermitage.

Fortunately, we know about the provenance of Sam Houston's walking stick from Stanley Horn, the former Tennessee state historian, and Dr. Ben Caldwell. Both Mr. Horn and Dr. Caldwell once owned this stick. Dr. Caldwell is here tonight.

Here is what affidavits and letters from Mr. Horn and Dr. Caldwell tell us: Andrew Jackson Donelson, the owner of Tulip Grove, where Houston left his walking stick, had married a widow of the grandson of Thomas Jefferson. Their son, William Alexander Donelson, inherited many of their Jefferson and Jackson items, including the stick. Some of these items, including the stick, were exhibited at Tennessee's 1896 centennial celebration. This exhibit was mentioned in a Nashville newspaper article in 1927.

When William Alexander Donelson died these Jackson and Jefferson relics were inherited by his widow, known as "Miss Bettie." In a letter to Ben Caldwell on June 15, 1976, Mr. Horn wrote, "I knew her several years before her death in 1940. [She] told me the details of how the cane was split, etc. I bought the cane at the sale of her effects after her death, and had the slight break repaired; and it remained in my possession until I sold it to you."

Mr. Horn sold the stick to Dr. Caldwell and Baker Duncan of San Antonio in 1973.

In a letter to me in 1985 Dr. Caldwell said, "Mr. Horn proudly displayed the stick in his

home. The only way that Baker Duncan and I were able to purchase the walking stick from Mr. Horn was a purchase-swap. He was collecting books containing presidential notations that were in the presidents' personal library. He had a book [of every President] except that he did not have a book of John F. Kennedy's library as he had opposed President Kennedy and he did not want to pay a premium for one of his books . . . I purchased a book that formerly belonged to John F. Kennedy . . . and we were able to trade this with money to Mr. Horn for his walking stick."

Ben Caldwell also told me last year: "Mr. Horn had offered the stick to the San Jacinto Museum in Texas but they gave him some rigamarole and he said 'to hell with it' and so Baker Duncan and I bought the stick from him."

In 1985, I bought Sam Houston's walking stick from Ben Caldwell and Baker Duncan. Ben said it would be appropriate for the second Tennessee governor from Blount County to own the walking stick of the first. So he arranged a three-way purchase swap that worked this way: I paid money to Mr. Horn's daughter, Ruth Crownover, for a sword that belonged to General Stonewall Jackson and then traded that sword to Baker Duncan for his half of the Houston stick. I also paid Mrs. Crownover for a bird bath sculpted by Will Edmondson and then traded that to Ben for his half of the cane.

I then gave the stick to our youngest son, Will Houston Alexander, who we named for Sam Houston. When Will was born in 1979, Honey said that I was "in my Sam Houston phase." The lure of Texas also attracted Will. He spent seven years at the University of Texas and its law school but now is living in Nashville. We are glad that he is here tonight.

I have since displayed Sam Houston's walking stick in the offices of Tennessee's governor, the president of the University of Tennessee, and the U.S. Secretary of Education. The story of the stick has always produced good conversation, as well as several attempts by Texans to run off with it.

For the last eight years, Sam Houston's walking stick has been displayed in my United States Senate office in Washington, DC. It is beneath a photograph of Sam Houston taken when he was United States Senator from Texas. In that photograph Senator Houston is standing with a walking stick much like the one he left in Nashville 166 years ago when Andrew Jackson died.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO TIM CREAL

● Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize and honor a South Dakotan who has been a tremendous advocate for rural education and has shown selfless dedication to ensuring thousands of students in South Dakota achieved their highest academic potential.

At the close of this school year, Dr. Tim Creal will retire from the Custer School District, where he has served as superintendent for 10 years. Tim began his career as an educator in the Faith School District in 1979. After teaching in Faith, SD, he spent nearly 20 years with the New Underwood School District, working first as a high school math teacher and coach for 10 years. He then served as an elementary principal, special education director, and