

# Fayette man perfects print device

By Joe Myers  
Staff Writer

A Fayette County man who invented a high-tech device to help police investigators find fingerprints at crime scenes is seeing six years of his work come to fruition. The \$150 device is now being marketed by 3M Corp.

David Weaver of Lookout invented the device while working as a forensic specialist for the Alaska state police. The hand-held device, about 10 inches long and powered by butane gas, sends out a cloud of vaporized plastic that spreads over a surface area and dries. Within seconds, any fingerprints become visible.

Weaver said he anticipates the device will revolutionize crime scene investigations. It will enable detectives to find more fingerprints faster. If necessary, investigators can cover an entire room with the vapor. It also produces better-quality fingerprints and protects them with a plastic seal.

"Until now, the odds were against getting good fingerprints," he said. "But I've been out on 30 or 40 cases with this, and at every single crime scene we were able to get good prints."

Weaver developed the device under a Justice Department grant, and the patent was assigned to 3M by the state. 3M is marketing the device under the name of FIVIS (Fingerprint Visualization System).

The company has hired



(photo by Joe Myers)

**Lookout resident David Weaver demonstrates a new finger-print device which will be marketed by the 3M Corporation. Weaver, who patented the invention, will be featured on an upcoming CNN broadcast.**

training videos.

Weaver was filmed by a Cable News Network crew last week analyzing a crime scene and training police in San Antonio, Texas. The report is scheduled to air Sunday at 12:30 p.m. on CNN's weekly Science and Technology Series.

Weaver has 14 years of experi-

duced facial reconstructions from human skulls.

Although he admits it was a struggle at times pushing the product idea up through the bureaucracy at both the state and at 3M, Weaver said he feels good about his role in developing FIVIS. He said the product will give detectives a big boost in solv-

said. He envisions one in the trunk of every police cruiser.

Weaver moved to West Virginia last year to work full time as an artist and potter. He operates Midland Trail Gallery on Route 60 at Lookout. But he continues to work several days a month as a forensic consultant to various law enforcement agencies.