

## Debate on regional government goes on Informational workshop on consolidation to be held

By PETE BARATTA  
Collegian Staff Writer

For over a year, the idea of consolidating the borough of State College and the five bordering townships into one governmental body has been on the political backburner because many local officials said more information is needed.

Consolidation would eliminate the boundaries between the area municipalities and centralize the six regional governments into one assembly.

Local lawmakers and the public will have the chance to learn more about consolidation at an informational workshop at 7:30 tonight at the State College Area Intermediate High School, 650 West Parkway. The meeting is being sponsored by the Centre Region Council of Governments.

Some people have expressed concern about how consolidation will affect the Centre Region. Because no real discussion has yet taken place, there is no way to tell how government services, programs and responsiveness would be affected, said James Steff, director of COG administration.

**'I think the majority of people will agree the time for consolidation has come.'**

— John Dombroski, State College Municipal Council president

While most local officials have not expressed a definite opinion on consolidation, State College Municipal Council President John Dombroski said he is strongly in favor of the idea.

"I think the time has come for this," he said. "I think the majority of people will agree the time for consolidation has come."

Although it is only in the first stages of consideration, Dombroski said the idea of regional consolidation will begin to be studied with great interest by local officials.

Dombroski said many positive effects would come from the consolidation of the governmental

bodies of the State College Borough and the townships of College, Ferguson, Halfmoon, Harris and Patton.

As federal grant dollars dwindle and are channeled toward bigger population centers, the area would increase its chances of receiving federal aid by consolidating its 60,000-plus population under one government.

In addition to becoming one of the largest cities in Pennsylvania, the region would envelope roughly half of the Centre County population and consequently would have a stronger voice in both county and state affairs, Dombroski said.

However, Dombroski explained a major roadblock to consolidation is that a majority of residents in each municipality would have to favor giving up their independence and forming one consolidated government.

Although some officials are arguing the merits of consolidation, Steff said the final decision on whether the issue is pursued is up to local residents.

"The main factor in determining (the future of consolidation) is in the preferences of the residents," Steff said, adding that if one municipality decides against the idea, consolidation could not be implemented.

Some further arguments for consolidation include allowing the region to plan for and implement region-wide improvement projects such as transportation and storm-water sewerage.

Also, if the region merges into one government, it will exercise more power in Harrisburg and Washington, D.C., when requesting government funds, he said.

On the negative side, Steff said some residents believe a bigger government will be less responsive and they will become distant from their elected representatives.

Dombroski said a main reason why some officials are hesitant to support the idea is that they are satisfied with how local government operates now. He added that some officials believe their importance as a governmental representative would diminish.

Some residents also feel that by forming a

bigger government, more taxes will be needed to keep the system running, Steff said.

However, he said no information is available to base that argument on, adding that "it seems less expensive to operate one police station than three."

Hays Gamble, a former supervisor from Harris Township and a member of tonight's panel, said most Harris residents and officials are against the consolidation idea.

"(People) don't want to lose the autonomy of being Harris Township," Gamble said, and "consolidation means losing Harris Township."

"There's no way people in Harris Township would vote for consolidation," he added. "For all intents and purposes, we'd become the borough of State College," he said, referring to the higher population of State College exerting a stronger voice in a consolidated government.

Although the University will not play a major role in the issue, and would not be affected in any major way if consolidation occurs, they were invited to participate in the workshop tonight.

Whatever the outcome of the workshop, Steff said tonight's meeting will not dictate the road the Centre Region will take concerning consolidation.

"(The workshop) isn't a step toward consolidation. It's an informational session," he said.

Speakers will include Charles Hoffman, a local adviser for the state Department of Community Affairs who will address the history and legal requirements of consolidation; and Virgil Puskarich, executive director of the Pennsylvania Local Government Commission, who will discuss the potential advantages and drawbacks of jurisdictional boundary changes.

Also on hand will be Jake Meyer, a former district attorney for Elk County, and Greg Schneider, executive director of Saint Mary's Chamber of Commerce, who will discuss Saint Mary's unsuccessful consolidation attempt with Benning Township in 1984.

After the topics are addressed, the speakers will answer follow-up questions from the panel, which includes State College Municipal Council member James Bartoo. A general question-and-answer period will follow the panel session.

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## Gramm-Rudman: Corman joins delegation on budget cuts

By MICHELLE VICHNIN  
Collegian Staff Writer

A local state senator, along with 2,000 state legislators from across the country, recently met with President Reagan to discuss effects of the Gramm-Rudman balanced budget act on Centre County.

Sen. J. Doyle Corman, R-Centre, was a member of the American Legislative Exchange Council's 1986 presidential and cabinet briefings, held Jan. 17.

Corman and the other legislators also met with Secretary of Transportation Elizabeth H. Dole and Deputy Secretary of Commerce Clarence "Bud" Brown to discuss state initiatives, private enterprises and federal budget cuts that would affect individual states.

Gramm-Rudman, designed to eliminate the \$212 billion federal deficit within five years, specifies across-the-board cuts in many federal programs should Congress fail to reach certain budget-cutting goals each year. For fiscal 1986, the

required cuts amount to \$11.7 billion, of which half is to come from non-defense spending.

Corman said "this law could have a great impact not only on Centre County but on Penn State as well. Obviously, if there is a certain amount of money available for colleges and that money is being cut by a certain percentage, there will be less funding available for each individual institution."

"The meeting was an excellent opportunity to meet with the president and the cabinet and to get an inside view at what they plan to do for the coming year," Corman said. "The president told us about budget cuts, his plan for no new taxes and several other topics. He was genuinely concerned about what we had to say."

Brown emphasized the increasing role of the Department of Commerce as a "wholesaler of information" to complement the states.

Public school vouchers are another possibility, Corman said.

Vouchers would use federal dollars only, and could make public schools more "competitive" or make them able to attract children from wealthier areas.

A parent would be able to get a voucher from one district and present it to another district in order to provide for a given service, he said.

Corman said toll roads and user fees were discussed, especially the idea of converting Interstate 80 into a user-fee road, since federal transportation funds are likely to be cut. However, the federal government frowns upon the creation of toll roads in highly-traveled states such as Pennsylvania, Corman said.

ALEC is America's largest association of state legislators with over 2,000 members from both political parties. Corman said that ALEC, a mostly conservative group, provides research to state lawmakers and helps to serve as a liaison between state and federal officials.

## PSU dietetics prof elected foundation president

By SHELDON JONES  
Collegian Staff Writer

An associate professor of dietetics in the University's College of Human Development was recently elected president of the American Dietetics Association Foundation.

Sarah C. Parks, elected by the Board of Directors of the American Dietetics Association Foundation, will serve a one-year term as president, replacing Edna Langhelle.

Parks said she was pleased with the election because of the important work the foundation is doing in the field of dietetics, noting the foundation's efforts to raise \$8 million to develop a

national center for nutrition and dietetics.

One small part of that center will include a place where consumers can call or visit to receive information on specific nutrition needs, Parks explained.

Parks said her responsibilities as president will include development and implementation of long-range plans, budget management and formation of fund-raising projects for the foundation.

Parks' qualifications include a master's of business administration degree from Michigan State University, numerous leadership positions in the field of dietetics and membership on the foundation's board for six years.

She now teaches courses in hotel, restaurant and

institutional management at the University.

The foundation is the branch of the American Dietetics Association, which promotes nutrition education, supports scholarships in nutrition education and provides funding for research.

Evan G. Pattishall Jr., dean of the College of Human Development, said Parks' election as president of the foundation is a step forward for recognition of the college.

"This represents a very prestigious responsibility and I am pleased because it represents national recognition for one of our faculty who has outstanding reputation in dietetics as well as in hotel, restaurant, and institutional management," Pattishall said.

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