

The winners...See P. 9

Great deal...See P. 14

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TWENTY CENTS

Looking to 1990... what will area be like

by Nancy Huff

Most stellar predictions can be left to Jeanne Dixon, but as for planning projections—what will Back Mountain be like in the 1990s?—the forecasting has been done by the Luzerne County Planning Commission, Pennsylvania Department of Transportation and Health Systems Agency.

The planning commission has predicted the Back Mountain will increase in population by 5,733 persons by 1990. Dallas Township is slated to receive the greatest addition to the community with an expected population increase of 2,114. Lehman is expected to increase in size by 1,205 people.

The next highest in population increase in Kingston Township, expected to gain 915 people by 1990. Jackson Township is the next highest population getter with 476. Then comes Franklin Township with 393 increase, Harveys Lake with an expected increase of 381, Dallas Borough with 362 more people expected to be living by 1990 and Lake Township with 283.

Additional people mean additional housing. Frank Chadwick, a Luzerne County planning commissioner, estimated that the Back Mountain by 1990 would have an additional 2,203 single dwelling units—houses, and apartments.

Also in the plans for additional housing for 1990 is a dormitory for the Lehman campus of Penn State, Chadwick said. The unit has been predicted as being a 50 unit dwelling.

Also in the plans is a 140-bed nursing home to be completed by 1990.

With the additional people, there will be additional need for medical attention.

But even with the additional 5,733 people expected to be living in the area, the Health Systems Agency in Wilkes-Barre does not have plans for a hospital in the area by 1990.

"There is no need to build a hospital in the Back Mountain with Nesbitt and now General so close with the expressway," said William Vanderberg, planning director of the HSA, a government affiliate in Pittston.

With the approximately eight-mile drive to Nesbitt Hospital, a hospital in Back Mountain would not be economically feasible according to the draft projection compiled by the HSA, he said.

"The major activity for planning in the Back Mountain would involve primary care—dentists and doctors not hospital," he said.

The HSA draft is on display for public viewing in the Dallas Memorial Library. The only available revision to the draft is the additional need for either a new nursing home or additional beds in the mid 1980s.

The plan for the area includes a group practice clinic for primary care which would be opened anywhere from 12 to 24 hours a day, he said. The plans also include an improved cardiac care program. The plans are only projections, he said, not approved projects.

With the additional 5,733 people

traveling to Kingston or Wilkes-Barre for medical care, the roads in the area will need some improving. PennDOT makes 20-year projections, Paul Dodson, PennDOT community affairs coordinator said, but only for capital improvement projects costing more than \$100,000.

One long range plan PennDOT does have in mind is the incompleteness of the Cross-Valley Expressway.

"The portion of the Cross-Valley Expressway from Courtdale to Dallas will not be completed by 1990," Dodson said. "We have no way to pay it off."

A study from 1964-65 included the crossway to be completed to Dallas. But, no commitments were made by PennDOT for completion of the expressway any further than the Courtdale area, Dodson said. The portion PennDOT is committed to finish (up to Courtdale) won't be completed until around May 1980, he said.

The resurfacing of local roads are not included in a 20-year projection, he said. PennDOT only looks to the next year for the immediate conditions of the roads.

"We take a certain percentage of the roads and test them for rideability," Dodson said. "We do this each year and chose which roads are in the most need of resurfacing."

Just because a road needs resurfacing does not always mean it will be resurfaced. All of the roads on the

(Continued on P. 4)



GROUND BREAKING—Participating in ground breaking ceremonies for expansion of the Kingston Township Municipal Building were (left to right) Harry Owens, Police Chief Paul Sabol, Supervisor Harold Hill (with

pick) Township Manager Michael Stanley, Supervisor Ambrose Gavigan and Gus Kabeschat, the contractor whose firm will construct the addition. The ceremony took place Dec. 28. (Photo by Fay Broody)

Child abuse: how Back Mt. schools view it

by Nancy Huff

Tommy is a 13-year-old junior high school student. He came to school one morning with cuts and bruises on his face and arms. He refused to tell the teacher or his friends how he was injured. Tommy is an abused child.

The situation cited is purely hypothetical, but it could happen. In the Back Mountain area, the form of abuse come across by most teachers is the physical and educational neglect, not the physical abuse described in Tommy's situation.

Child abuse in the physical sense is

easier to detect by teachers. But it is the child neglect, the physical and educational neglect, which is harder to notice, said Mike Toole, home and school visitor for the Lake-Lehman school district.

"I would say the number of child abuse cases as far as physical abuse is low," Toole said. "But there are cases of child neglect, educational neglect. It is neglect when a parent sends the child to school not adequately dressed or when the parent doesn't feel an education is worthwhile and will not send the child to

school at all."

Last year, Toole came in contact with three cases of suspected child abuse in the Lake-Lehman School District. Of the three cases, two were dropped by Child Protective Services in Kingston for insufficient findings.

Both cases were reported by Toole as "educational neglect." The children were sent to school in what he considered improper clothing. Sometimes, it was noticeable the children had not eaten, he said.

The schools do provide hot lunches for the students, Toole said. The

senior high also provides a hot breakfast. The elementary school in Noxen does not have a cafeteria, he said, but is the only school in a community setting where the children can go home for lunch.

All cases of child abuse, improper clothing and feeding included, must be reported to the Child Protective Services, an agency born out of the 1975 state Child Protective Act No. 124.

The act defines an abused child as "...a child under 18 years of age who exhibits evidence of serious physical or mental injury not explained by the available medical history as being accidental, sexual abuse, or serious physical neglect, if the injury, abuse or neglect has been caused by the acts or omissions of the child's parents or by a person responsible for the child's welfare."

The act also provides exemptions for children being treated in accordance in the beliefs of certain religious sects, and for families who can't afford proper housing, medical attention and clothing for the child.

The act stipulates teachers and others coming in direct contact with children as persons required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse to the Child Protective Service, said Tom Cessarini, supervisor for the service.

"Teachers are considered mandated reporters under the new law," Cessarini said. "They report the case to the school principal or the social worker who in turn reports it to the child hotline in Harrisburg."

The penalty for not reporting suspected child abuse is high, said Mary Ward, social worker for the Dallas School District. Any required reporter who willfully fails to report a suspected child abuse is guilty of a summary offense, the law reads. A second or subsequent offense is considered a misdemeanor of the third degree.

There are step-by-step procedures

for reporting child abuse, Ward said. She compiled issued procedures from the state and the Child Protective Services into an effective, workable plan.

A teacher who suspects child abuse must report the case to the principal and the social worker. The social worker then calls the Child Protective Service to notify them of the suspects case. The school superintendent is notified as is the school solicitor and other school personnel who are directly related to the case.

Once the matter is in the hands of the protective agency, the school must wait until it is notified by the agency of their findings.

"But we never do anything in our school district without the full knowledge of the parents," Ward said. "They are always notified of our suspicions."

Since August, Ward has come in contact with three cases of suspected child abuse. Not one case was found by the protective service to be an actual case of child abuse as defined by the law.

The cases are turned over to the United Services Agency, Toole said, when there are no findings of child abuse by the Child Protective Services.

"The only problem here is that everything is voluntary on the part of the parents," he said. "They are not forced to seek help. If the child is found to actually be abused, the parents are forced to take help."

For both school districts, the number of noticeable, suspected child abuse cases is low when compared to the 210 reported cases for Luzerne County last year. But both Ward and Toole agree there are some cases which go unreported.

"I'm sure there are some cases once you get into the higher grades that aren't reported because the students won't say anything," Toole said. "Even if there is possible physical abuse, the student will hide

it. If his grades are maintained and his behavior goes unchanged, it is hard to detect."

Mental abuse is also hard to detect. "The child may be tormented mentally and not show any outward sign of abuse," Ward said.

But whatever the abuse, the child's welfare is kept in mind as the sole purpose of pinpointing cases. The purpose of the law, Ward said, is not only to encourage a more competent form of reporting the cases, but also to provide for the child's well-being and, if at all possible, to preserve and stabilize family life wherever appropriate.

"I think the trauma of taking a child from his home is unbearable," Ward said. "In some cases it is necessary to take the child away, but we try to keep them in the home."

New fireplace caused fire in trooper home

Incorrect installation of a fireplace thermolator was discovered to be the cause of a fire which caused considerable damage to the Shavertown home of a Pennsylvania State Police trooper last week, said Ted Newcomb, chief of the Shavertown Volunteer Fire Company last Thursday.

The investigation began last Wednesday at the home of Michael Brice in Druid Hills, Shavertown. Newcomb said the thermolator—the unit which surrounds the fireplace—was incorrectly placed against wood in the Brice basement.

The basement of the house received considerable water damage, Newcomb said, while the rest of the house suffered smoke damage.

There was no suspicion surrounding the fire, Newcomb said, and investigations into the causes of fires are commonly conducted.

Judges announce winners

The committee of five judges for the Dallas Post Holiday Decorations Contest this week announced award winners in the event.

The judges' tour ranged from Carverton Heights, Midway Manor, Trucksville, East Dallas, Shavertown, Dallas, Dallas Township, Harveys Lake and Lehman, Chase, and Jackson Township and many other points of the Back Mountain area, such as Sweet Valley and Hunlock Creek.

"It was difficult to come to a decision on the best lighted and best unlighted displays," said James Kozemchak, Sr., chairman of the contest. "We returned to some homes several times before making a final decision."

"Selecting the grand prize was not so difficult. The photo doesn't do the display justice. The use of one-color lights outlining a tree way up on the hill was most effective and could be seen from a great distance."

"The grand prize display," said Kozemchak, "is at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Carl Goeringer and, just as

many of the other displays, it was not entered by them but by a friend or neighbor.

"The best lighted display at the home of Arthur J. Kerpovich, 399A Manor Drive, Trucksville, was not entered by them but by a neighbor. The best unlighted display at the home of Mr. and Mrs. William Price, RD 5, Chase Corners, Shavertown, was entered by the Price family."

The grand prize which goes to the Goeringers is a \$50 savings bond. Prizes for the best lighted and best unlighted displays are \$25 savings bonds. In addition, certificates of honorable mention will be awarded.

These will go to St. Therese's Church, Shavertown, lighted Nativity; Dallas Senior High School, window artwork; United Penn Bank, Dallas, window artwork; Hill the Florist, window display; Harveys Lake Fire Hall, lighted display.

Private homes receiving honorable mention are Donald Rome, Peartree Lane, Dallas; Richard Stradus, Ransom Road, Dallas; Robert F. Lapanick, RD 6, Hemlock St.,

Dallas; Guy Giordano, Pole 299, Harveys Lake; Loren Crispell, Overbrook Road, Dallas; James Ward, Pole 25, Harveys Lake; Alfred Rogowski, RD 1, Hunlock Creek; Henry Todd, 254 Ferguson Ave., Shavertown; and Jack Barnes, Elmcrest Drive, Dallas.

Judges for the contest were Mr. and Mrs. James Kozemchak; Le Ann Wesley, Lake-Lehman art student, Mrs. Gary Stickler, instructor; Becky Ann Bestwick, Dallas art student; Mrs. Dorothy Withey, instructor; and Mrs. James Simpson, Shavertown, Back Mountain Jay-Cettes.

The judges extended their appreciation to the many residents of the area who entered either their display or the display of a friend or neighbor which helped make the contest a successful community endeavor. Co-sponsors of the display included Daring's Market, Back Mt. Lumber and Coal Co., and Offset Paperback Mfgs.

Photos of the winning displays are published in this issue of the Post on Page 9.