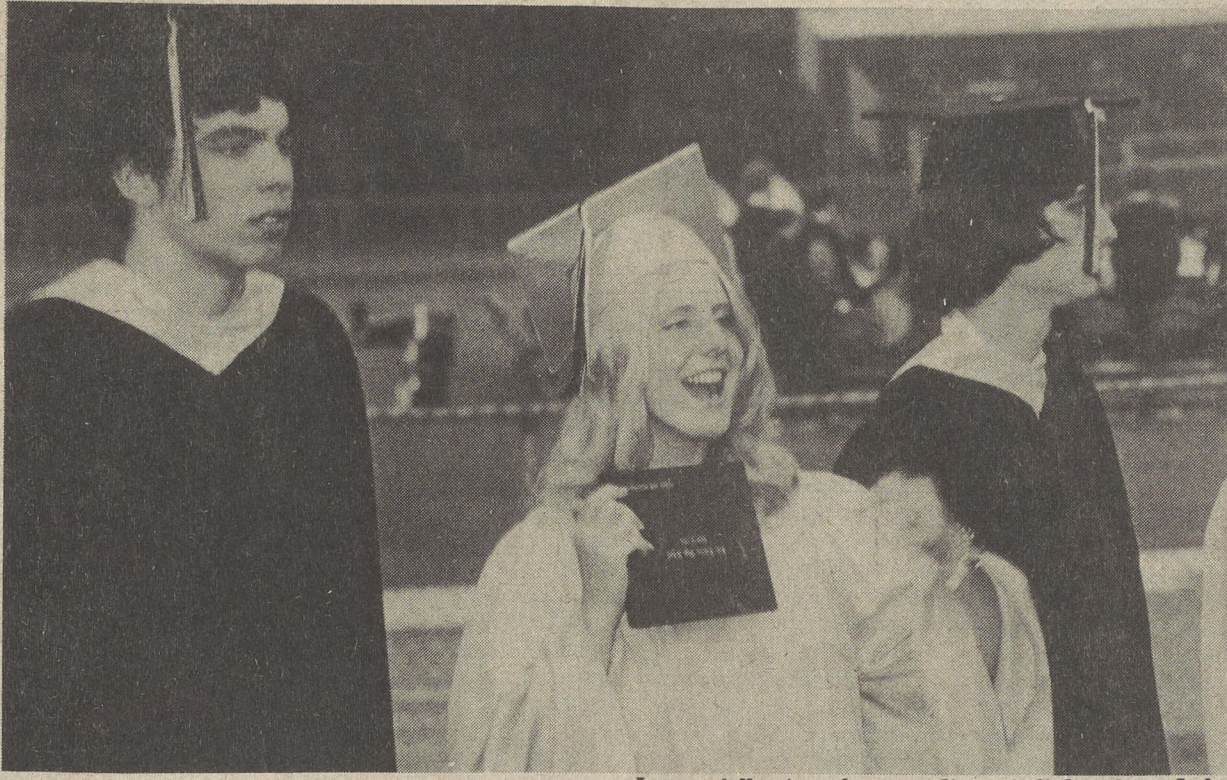


Lake CTV flap could affect Back Mountain



LOOK, MOM--Mom, I made it, says Debbie Hagenbaugh, as she stands with Dennis Llewellyn and Bob

Lasco, following the awarding of diplomas at Lake-Lehman High School. (Photo by Varden Studio)

More graduation photos. See P. 11

Harveys Lake council's on-again, off-again June meeting was on again last Thursday and again changed positions on the award of a borough cable television franchise.

The meeting began June 1, the council's regular meeting night, and was continued to June 8 to permit a decision on the award of the cable television rights in the community. At that meeting, Mayor Alvin Zim cast a tie-breaking vote to award the franchise to a new local company, Gamma Corp., turning down a belated bid from the company presently operating in the area, Back Mountain Telecable.

At the meeting June 15, a continuation of the same session, council members voted 5-1 to rescind the award to Gamma Corp. and return the issue to the floor in a work session scheduled this Thursday at 8 p.m.

Borough Solicitor Joe Kasper ruled that, since the June 15 meeting was a continuation of the regular meeting at

which the franchise was awarded, the decision could be rescinded.

Back Mountain Telecable owner Robert Barni, with his business partners and attorney, Roger Weist from Sunbury, were on hand to press their case for a return to the status quo. Gamma Corp. was represented by General Manager Murph Hislop, former employee of Back Mountain Telecable.

Much of the initial discussion at the meeting focussed on Gamma Corp., its ownership and capabilities. Councilmember Guy J. Giordano defended the firm, tracing the history of its development subsequent to a recognition of the Harveys Lake cable television situation by a local resident, Donald Smathers, who is vice president of engineering of Commonwealth Telephone Company.

Council President Bob DeRemer charged that Gamma was connected with Commonwealth, a conclusion rebutted by Giordano. Giordano

acknowledged that certain shareholders of Commonwealth may own stock in Gamma but stressed that the company's were distinctly separate corporate entities.

'I want to see this community have the best, economical cable television available,' said Giordano. 'We have been dealing with outsiders for a long time.'

Council members generally agreed with the criticisms of Back Mountain Telecable's past availability and response to operating problems in the community. DeRemer implied that a conflict of interest could exist between Giordano's position as a council member and as a former employee and consultant to Commonwealth.

But Giordano defended his actions on behalf of the borough, noting that he had recently contracted to manage a medical corporation.

(Continued on P. 4)

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DALLAS, PA.

Jackson Twp. planners adapt zoning

by Joan Kingsbury

A number of complaints submitted by township residents concerning rezoning of property in Jackson Township were resolved by the Jackson Township Planning Commission Monday night.

At the request of these property owners the following changes were approved. The properties of Mr. and Mrs. Louis Broody, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Reese, Mr. and Mrs. Albert Tomasura, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Rebennack, Dr. and Mrs. David Lucchino were zoned "agricultural" instead of the proposed "residential".

The frontage of the Paul Gates property was zoned "residential", with the rear of his property being

zoned "conservation". The boundary of the Joseph Stager, Sr. property will be adjusted as "agricultural" zone. The property of Forest Hablett will remain "residential".

A 40-foot right of way on the property of Eugene and Charlotte Crumley was zoned "mining". A request from James E. Spector, DDS, to remove the multiple family dwelling zoning from the Bulford Road Area was approved.

Farmers of the community have voiced complaints concerning the 10-acre minimum of land required to be zoned in the agricultural area. The ordinance as proposed does, however, allow for development of non-farm houses on one acre lots if the soil

proves unsuitable for farming.

Ms. Marlene Pawlowski, township planning consultant, will conduct a meeting with township farmers on Friday, July 7, to discuss the various provisions of the agricultural zone.

Another source of contention concerned a non-conforming use. Residents objected to the proposal that if a building used for a non-conforming use, such as a store in a residential zone, burns down, and 60 percent or more is destroyed, it could not be restored to a non-conforming use. This ordinance has been revised to read the building may be rebuilt and kept as a non-conforming use regardless of how much damage has occurred.

Requests made by American Asphalt Paving Company to rezone the 61.9 acres of land known as the Theta tract, and 8.7 acres at the rear of the Crumley property to mining were denied. These properties will remain in the agricultural zone.

The planning commission decided to omit an industrial park would have to present plans to the planning commission at the time they wish to build.

A meeting will be held on Monday, June 26, at 7:30 p.m. at the Jackson Fire Hall to review text changes in all zoning documents.

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Views on tax revolt--O'Connell

by Charlot Denmon

The success of California's Proposition 13, which drastically cuts real estate taxes, has prompted many local taxpayers to consider similar proposals which might bring relief to Pennsylvania taxpayers.

Unlike California, however, the Pennsylvania constitution does not allow for legislation by initiative and recall.

O'Connell

Rep. Frank O'Connell, (R) Kingston, explained that the base of tax structure between the two states is much different. And in California, the state welfare program is augmented by the county. In California, according to O'Connell, there is a state budget of \$17-\$18 billion while in Pennsylvania, the budget is about \$5.5 billion for general operation.

O'Connell said that he is aware of the feelings of Pennsylvania taxpayers concerning property taxes but that he is fearful of what may happen in California. He said he believed that the California voters acted too quickly and too radically.

The legislator said he does not believe the impact will be felt immediately because California has a \$5 billion dollar surplus. "It may be four or five years before we can judge the results. But the Californians will regret the day they acted so radically," predicted O'Connell.

However, critical as he was of California voters, O'Connell said he believes something needs to be done about spiraling property taxes.

"But if you don't reduce program or eliminate them," said O'Connell, "you can't reduce the tax burden. If you eliminate programs, it is questionable as to the results. I believe the tax structure can be stabilized by not pumping additional money into programs."

"There is no way we can totally eliminate the property tax. If it were eliminated and taxes centralized and came to the state, local control would be lost."

O'Connell said that he knows there are problems but he doesn't know the solution.

O'Connell explained that in order

for a constitutional question to be placed on the ballot in Pennsylvania, it must be approved by two successive sessions of the House and Senate. The only exception is an emergency amendment which can be placed on the ballot by a two-thirds vote of the legislature. A third means explained by O'Connell was by calling a constitutional convention, a method he said was cumbersome.

The legislator said that if a question were placed on the ballot and favorably considered by the people, in effect they would authorize the legislature to address the question.

O'Connell believes that taxes should be equitable upon classes. He explained that real estate is a class including utilities, industry, private property-all real estate but agriculture, which comes under the "clean and green" act. He believes the constitution should be changed to treat each class differently.

He believes that the elderly should be dealt with according to income. O'Connell recommended something similar to Florida and its homesteading act. The concept relieves a certain amount of the burden for elderly taxpayers on fixed incomes, thus making the taxation more uniform.

"Programs and spending determine taxes," said O'Connell. "There is an imminent threat to our educational system if we do not act in a rational manner."

"Pennsylvania is in a precarious financial position, both fiscally and long range. It is important that we act rationally. We are threatened by the southern belt and much of our industry is moving out because of our corporate tax structure."

"I believe we are exploiting our most important product--our young people."

O'Connell also stated that he believed government has been growing too fast. He does not believe in cutting service, however, because it would be difficult to place priorities. Rather, he believes that it has to start from the top down. Pennsylvania is part of a puzzle of 50 states, according to him, and if the federal government doesn't do something about it, the state can't do anything. To be effective it must be a national project.

"I'm not unhappy about the tax problems coming to light," said O'Connell, "but just as we do in our homes, if there's a problem, we have to tighten our belts, not so tight that we cut off circulation but in a rational manner to be effective."

Polsila

Walt Polsila, director of the Commonwealth's Research Department, repeated O'Connell's statement about California permitting initiative petitions and the method necessary in Pennsylvania to place a question on the ballot.

Polsila explained that Pennsylvania's recent Proposition 12 originated in a Philadelphia county. Taxpayers want to send petitions to the legislature to create a new Article 12 to the Constitution. Proponents claim if they obtain thousands of signatures, the legislature would have to put it on the ballot.

This is not so, explained Polsila, again referring to the fact that in order for a constitution question to be placed on the ballot, the identical wording must be approved by two consecutive sessions of the House and Senate.

"Proposition 13 represents the voters reaction to spending taxes," said the director. "Those who are recommending Proposition 12 don't clearly understand California's Proposition 13."

"Under California's Housing Bill," said Polsila, "property is reassessed every year. A home may be purchased for \$40,000, sold a year later at \$100,000. The new owner pays taxes on the \$100,000 assessment plus the two percent allowed under the new proposition; if the house is sold again a year later for \$150,000 the new owner must pay taxes on the \$150,000 assessment plus the two percent allowed."

"In the meantime, an identical house located on identical property adjacent to the house sold three times is assessed at the original \$40,000 value because it remained under one owner."

Rep. Peter Broon introduced a bill for a constitutional amendment setting a Pennsylvania spending limit relating to growth and per capita. Polsila explained that it is based on a

similar New Jersey Bill. It puts a limit on spending and also includes a provision for a rebate to taxpayers, if more income is received than spent.

"There also is a Resolution 107 calling Congress for a U.S. Constitution to develop an amendment to do away with deficit spending," said the director. "Rep. Lee Taddonio has reintroduced a plan to create overall spending and taxing ceilings at both the state and local level."

"Sen. John Stauffer has a measure pending in the legislature, to eliminate the property tax as a means of financing public education and replace it with a one percent increase in the state income tax."

"There also is a measure in the legislature that would allow initiative and referendum so voters could put a question on the ballot. If it were one similar to Proposition 13, there would have to be priorities. And people want the services without paying for them."

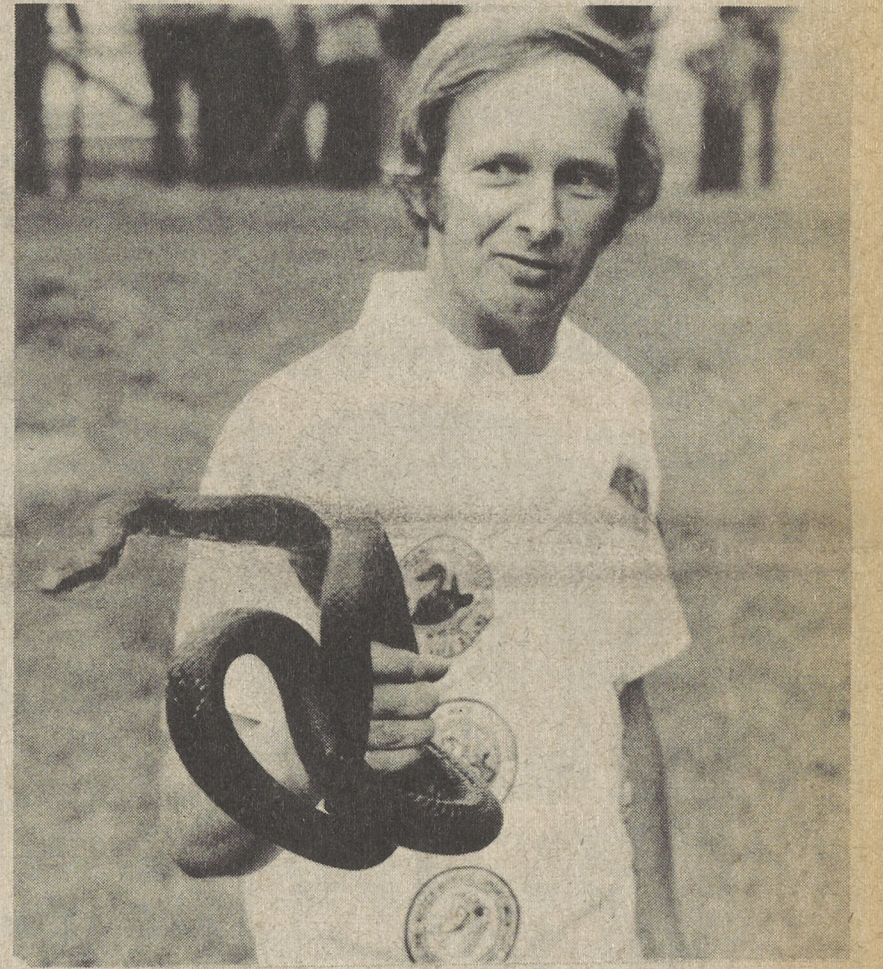
Polsila said that California will probably go to local taxes instead of property taxes and probably also move to users' taxes such as medical service taxes and others. All these services will become prepaid plans instead of free. He predicted that most of the cities would go to an income tax which they have never had.

"They will probably transfer functions from the local to the state level," said Polsila. In California, they need only a two-thirds vote in the House and Senate to increase taxes and there is no limit to the state increase. They already have one over the majority in the House and only one less than the majority in the Senate."

"Despite taxpayers protests, Pennsylvania property taxes are fairly low while in California property tax ranks about fourth in the nation. In 1975-76, Pennsylvania ranked 34th in the nation. More recently, it ranked 36th in property tax."

"There is a legitimate concern in spending taxes in Pennsylvania," said Polsila, "but I believe it is more rational than in California. It is too soon to tell what impact Proposition 13 will have on California but I fear for the results."

(Continued next week)



HANDS UP--Chuck Kovalick, president of the Noxen Sportsmen's Club, seems to be telling everybody to reach for the sky with his non-poisonous black snake. (Photo by Steward Calkins)

Noxen Snake Hunt Awards. See P. 10

Trucksville firemen plan 60th anniversary

The Trucksville Volunteer Fire Company will celebrate its 60th anniversary with the annual "Summer Fair", June 22, 23, 24 and 25. F. Allan Nichols and Paul Sabol co-chairmen, have announced that the fair will be held on the Howard Isaacs Used Car Lot, Route 309, Trucksville.

There will be a chicken bar-b-que, Saturday, June 24, 5 to 7 p.m., and on Sunday, June 25, 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. The menu includes half a chicken, baked potato, vegetable, cole slaw, roll, butter and beverage. Reservations must be made in advance with any

fireman or Robert Chamberlain, bar-b-que chairman.

The parade chairmen, David Cutten and Thomas Morgan, have announced that the parade will be Saturday, June 24, starting at 6 p.m. The parade route is from Carverton Road, beginning at Westmoreland Hills to Route 309 and north to the fairgrounds. Information about participation in the parade may be obtained from the chairmen.

Hugh Gallagher is chairman of the refreshment stand. Joe Bren and Gerald Kapral are chairmen of the potato pancake stand.

Woodlawn Avenue extension rejected

The Woodlawn Ave. extension controversy was finally laid to rest in the Harveys Lake borough council, at least for awhile.

Prior to the recessed meeting of the council last Thursday, council members held a hearing on the acceptance of the roadway for borough maintenance on the basis of a petition signed by more than 50 per cent of the adjoining property-owners.

"We'd like to move here; we'd like you to get our wage tax," was the way one adjoining property-owner supported her interest in the borough's acceptance of the roadway. Another resident questioned how many property-owners would benefit from the takeover.

Said Councilman Jack McManus, borough roadmaster, "When you take

them over, it's only human nature to expect services."

Councilman Guy J. Giordano, who acknowledged owning some land adjoining the roadway, said, "If you don't start taking positive steps to take this borough ahead, this borough will get nowhere."

"Either take them all over or quit playing with this penny ante stuff," said McManus.

Councilmembers exchanged charges regarding special interests in certain roadways before resuming their previously recessed meeting to vote 4-3 against the acceptance.

Favoring the acceptance of the roadway were Giordano, Margaret Purcell and Becky Casterline. Opposed were Andy Morgus, McManus, Robert Wintersteen and Rob DeRemer.