

# Area authorities watching for underage drinkers

By RICH JOHNSON  
Staff Writer

With graduation and the summer season quickly coming upon us some people are looking forward to a big celebration. However, law enforcement personnel are warning students that they will be watching for more alcohol use the next couple of weeks.

This is a time of the year when more and more people are "partying", and law enforcement agencies are getting ready to prevent incidents resulting from excessive alcohol use.

"There is more activity this time of the year," said Sgt. Jerome Majeski, District Office Commander of the Bureau of Liquor Control Enforcement. "It is similar to the holiday period when people want to go out and have a party."

Majeski says that his office handles a large number of violations, mostly dealing with bars and other places that sell alcohol. However, he said that the officers are more aware of underage drink-

ers partying during graduation time.

"We have a lot of cases that deal with minors going out and having a party somewhere and we have to handle it," said Majeski.

His office works in cooperation with many different agencies in an effort to stop as many problems as possible. "We try to prevent problems as well as stop them," said Majeski. "If we can stop an accident or incident before it happens, then we have one less problem to worry about."

Last year's graduation celebration in the Back Mountain was marred by the death of a Lake-Lehman graduate, Richard Hillman was shot in the early morning hours by another student after the two were reportedly arguing.

Reports on the incident say that alcohol may have played a role in the shooting. Hillman's father is urging graduates this year not to drink. "We wish the graduates the best of luck and we urge them to be awful careful when they go to par-

ties," said Ray Hillman. "It seems that this time of the year people want to drink. Kids seem to have no concern for their parents and they don't worry about what the outcome will be or who is going to be around when the party is over."

Area schools and other organizations have tried to warn students about the dangers associated with alcohol. Many different programs have been offered to students, especially graduates. One of the major organizations trying to get the message out is the Luzerne County Chapter of the Mothers Against Drunk Driving. "We are telling the kids to party smart - party sober," says MADD spokesperson Edna Vivian. "We have put out a lot of programs trying to tell kids we want them to be here for their 10 year reunion," said Vivian.

She said that MADD will continue trying to reach students with their message to "Stand tall, walk away from alcohol."

"I think a lot of kids are listening to what we are saying," said Viv-

ian. "We want them to have a safe and happy graduation with no accidents or deaths."

Area police departments say they will also be watching for alcohol related incidents during the graduation seasons also.

"There are a lot of parties that go on around here," said Harveys Lake Assistant Police Chief Ronald Spock. "It isn't just graduation but all year long," he added. Spock said that because the borough is a resort area many people go to the area wanting to drink. Often these people are minors, according to Spock.

The police department will be working to stop underage drinking in the borough. Spock said that they will be putting three cars on patrol, two of which will be used for the sole purpose of looking for underage drinkers.

Kingston Township police will also be looking for underage parties. Police Chief Paul Sabol said that parties are not that common

in the township but "...when we get wind of a party we go out to break it up," said Sabol.

The chief said that his department doesn't run into the problem of underage drinking but said that when they do catch minors drinking it is usually people from out of the area. "A lot of times it is out-of-towners who don't know we strictly enforce the law around here," said Sabol.

As far as the use of alcohol for this time, Majeski says that most of the colleges and universities have already had graduation ceremonies so those people have already celebrated. He says that once the high school graduations are done the number of parties will decline. "It is only a couple of weeks this time of year," he said. "In every aspect of police work there is always extra work and this is one of those times."

He added, "We don't try to prioritize our investigations because they are all equally important."

A lot of authorities feel that the sentence against an underage drinker is helping to stop minors from drinking. They also feel that going after the person or establishment that supplied the alcohol will also help in that battle.

"That is where you have to stop it," said Spock. "If you get people to stop furnishing the alcohol then kids are less likely to drink."

Majeski said that the laws are also strict against those who supply the alcohol. Being convicted of supplying alcohol or beer to a minor is a misdemeanor that carries a fine up to \$1,000 and up to one year in jail.

The county has recently convicted one area businessman of supplying alcohol to minors. David "Jigger" Jones, owner of the Lake Silkworth Hotel, was convicted in Luzerne County Court in April on charges of providing beer and alcohol to minors. No sentence has been handed down in the case so far.



**RESCUE DRILL** - Members of the Luzerne County Search and Rescue team pass a manikin of an infant to each other during a diving rescue drill held over the weekend at Harveys Lake. During the drill members of the rescue team, the Luzerne County Sheriff's Department, the Harveys Lake Police Department and the Harveys Lake Fire and Ambulance crews all took part in the rescue of two manikins from the lake. The drill simulated a boat accident and the crews all did their part in the rescue. The organizer of the event, James Johnson of the rescue team, called the event a success and praised the efforts of all those who took part in the drill. (Photo by Rich Johnson)

## Lake rescue drill a success

By RICH JOHNSON  
Staff Writer

A mock drowning drill that took place at Harveys Lake over the weekend is being called a big success by its organizers.

A number of emergency agencies took part in the annual event in which a drowning incident is simulated and rescue attempts are made.

This year's drill simulated an accident in which a boat hit a rubber raft on the lake, according to the coordinator, James Johnson.

Two manikins were sunk in the water and divers had to find them and bring them to shore where emergency care was then given.

Johnson praised the efforts of all involved in the drill. "I would say it went really well," said Johnson. "A lot of the problems we had at Harveys Lake and with some communications in the past were handled perfectly this year."

Johnson said that new divers of

the Luzerne County Search and Rescue team went into the water to find the manikins. Once found, they were brought to shore where members of the Harveys Lake Fire and Ambulance crews took over.

Once in the water, the divers took 15 minutes to locate the manikins. Johnson said that the divers new the approximate location of the manikins, but still added that the times were good.

One member at the drill said that the time is a factor in a rescue but added that when a body goes deeper the colder temperatures cause the breathing system to slow and this allows divers a little more time finding the victim.

Johnson said that fire, ambulance and police crews from Harveys Lake worked very well at the drill. "They should all be commended for the super job they did out there," said Johnson. "I was real impressed with the way things were handled and I enjoyed working with everyone."

Johnson said that the rescue crews knew what most of the drill would entail, but added that other things were thrown in to see how the crews would react.

Near the end of the event a fireman went into the water to simulate a "man-overboard" drill. Johnson said that divers only took four minutes to get into the water, find the man and rescue him. "It was a good reaction time. This is something that could happen during a rescue because a fireman who went overboard with boots on would go straight down," he said. Johnson added that the divers responded well to this situation and it proved to them why certain policies, such as leaving gear out and having a diver ready, were made.

Other agencies participating in the drill were the Luzerne County Sheriff's Department and the Wyoming County Dive Rescue Team.

## Smith's request to stay sentence on hold

By RICH JOHNSON  
Staff Writer

A decision is still pending on an appeal of a request for a stay in the sentence of a Lake-Lehman senior convicted of manslaughter last year.

An appeal hearing was held June 7 in the state Superior Court for 18-year-old Chris Smith. The panel of three judges who heard the case has not yet handed down a decision.

Smith was convicted of manslaughter earlier this year and began serving a three year term at a reform school at the beginning of the month.

He was convicted following the shooting last June of 18-year-old Richard Hillman outside the Smith residence.

The panel did allow Smith to leave the reform school for one day last week to participate in his high school graduation. That decision overruled the sentence handed down by Judge Donald O'Malley which said Smith could not participate in graduation.

Smith's original request for a stay in the sentence was denied on May 24 by a superior court judge and his attorney, Basil Russen filed the appeal which was heard before the panel.

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