

Price Cut

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tract. How can you go and make these changes when it is in litigation?"

Two private haulers, Searles Sanitation and C&K Enterprises have sued DAMA, the three municipalities, and the public officials individually over the garbage hauling program, claiming that it interferes with their constitutional right to do business.

According to DAMA's executive director Tom Bagley, about 100 people have asked about the discount for Dallas Township, Dallas Borough, and Kingston Township together. If all 100 people who have asked about the discount were to live in Kingston Township, the cost to the township would be \$1,350 yearly.

To be eligible for the price cut, residents of the three municipalities must meet the following income guidelines according to the size of the household:

For a one person household, the maximum income is \$8,606; two people, \$11,544; three people, \$14,482. For each additional person add \$2,938 to the maximum income. The plan still has to be approved by Dallas Borough, Dallas Township, and the DAMA board.

Also at the meeting, Tom Schmidel of the Trucksville Fire Company asked the supervisors if any progress was being made on

installing dry fire hydrants in the township.

The only effective fire hydrant in the township is behind the Back Mountain Shopping Center in Shavertown, said Schmidel.

A dry fire hydrant is not pressurized, but allows firefighters to draw water from lakes or streams without having their hoses clogged with debris.

"If there's some way you can possibly get together with the fire companies, even if we can get one each year," said Schmidel. "It helps the public in general. It helps lower fire insurance for residents."

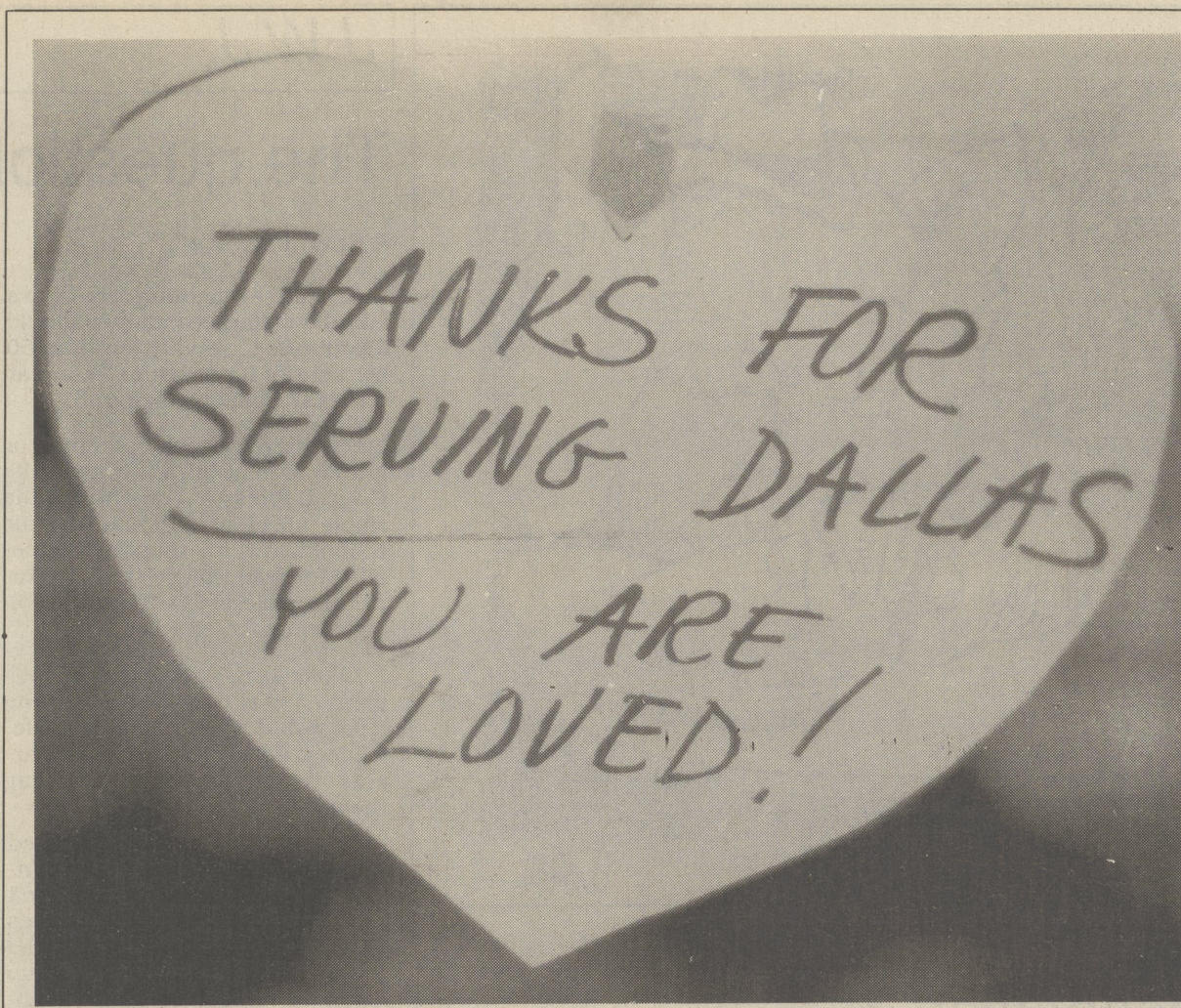
Schmidel said that a plan to install dry fire hydrants was proposed six years ago, but has gone nowhere since then.

Box said that the project died because a grant which was supposed to pay for the hydrants wasn't approved.

While sympathetic, the supervisors said there really wasn't extra money in the budget for the hydrants.

In other business, the township:

- Recognized with plaques Dick Staub for his 20 years service on the township's zoning hearing board and Keith Rinehimer for helping to prevent Wallace Stettler from sustaining a spinal injury in a traffic accident last fall.



Mystery Valentine strikes again

This Valentine's greeting appeared for the second year in a row on the front doors of Back Mountain businesses. The thoughtful culprits have yet to be identified. (Post photo/Grace R. Dove)

Parent-teacher

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recently assisted classroom teachers with the new R.I.F. (Reading is FUNDamental) program by reading aloud to classes and helping with the book distributions.

Other district-wide PTA/PTO activities include fingerprinting and videotaping each kindergarten and sixth grade student and all students new to the district for identification purposes; a food drive to aid needy district families at Christmas; a special store where the kids can buy small Christmas gifts at cost for their families; an anti-drug program featuring Foobie the robot, and a puppet show dealing with peer pressure.

Evelyn Weaver, president of Ross Township Elementary School's PTO, said that her organization has helped to purchase books for grades 2-4 in the district's first R.I.F. program. PTO mothers also volunteer time reading aloud to classes as part of the program.

"We do as many fun and educational activities as we can, including an all-day spring athletic competition, a citizenship award assembly, an Earth Day tree planting, an Easter egg hunt and a book fair to benefit the school library," Mrs. Weaver said.

"We're very proud to have the first school post office in north-eastern Pennsylvania. Each classroom has its own address; kids sharpen their writing skills by exchanging letters and cards. And they also learn the proper way to use ZIP codes in addresses," she continued. The Post Office gave the school a real mail bag and helmet for the student mail carrier.

Each PTA/PTO runs only yearly fund-raiser, a catalog sale featuring candy, gifts for the home and other items. By obtaining many items for programs at a discount or through donations, the group makes the most economical use of funds.

Lake-Noxen principal Robert Kunkle is thankful for the assistance the groups provides at his school. "The students certainly benefit from the special programs provided by the PTA/PTO. I would like to thank these organizations for helping our children."

Death penalty

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County Correctional Facility. Assistant District Attorney Scott Gartley assisted Olszewski at the hearing.

Olszewski said he would seek the death penalty because of two aggravating circumstances; that the shooting endangered the child, and that when Schwartz allegedly killed Van Leuven, he murdered a witness who was to testify at a criminal trial against him.

The victim's mother, Ruth Van Leuven had sobbed throughout the hearing but hugged her husband Robert after Olszewski's announcement.

In May of 1991, Schwartz had chased Deborah Van Leuven's car on Route 315 while brandishing a gun, and was then involved in an auto accident. He was charged with recklessly endangering another person, leaving the scene of an accident, and risking a catastrophe, and carrying an unlicensed gun. He was released on \$50,000 bail after the incident on the condition that he have no contact with Van Leuven. Those charges were to go to trial January 21.

Eight people were called by the prosecution to testify: a Kingston

Township patrolman, the first to arrive at the scene; a neighbor and the daughter of a neighbor; a doctor and a deputy coroner, a state police trooper, a former girlfriend of Schwartz's, and Schwartz's father.

"I heard a noise, but I wasn't paying any attention," said Ronald Schwartz, Stephen's father. "Then my wife came in and said, 'He did it.'"

"I went outside, she was lying there with the little girl over her," said Ronald Schwartz, who called 911 for help. He said he covered Deborah's body with a blanket while Karen Heltzel, of Huntsville Road, talked to Deborah Van Leuven who moaned in agony.

"He (Ronald Schwartz) came out of the house and he said, 'Yeah, he shot her,'" recalled Heltzel, who was visiting her parents who live next door to the Schwartz home.

Joseph Sincavage, the next door neighbor on the other side of the Schwartz's, home testified that as he was pulling into his driveway, he saw Stephen Schwartz get into Van Leuven's black Honda.

After the shooting, Sincavage

took the child into his home, along with the Schwartz's two other grandchildren who were visiting.

Though Stephanie wasn't injured, he said he noticed blood on her pacifier and face, which he wiped away.

When Deborah Van Leuven was taken to the hospital, the emergency room staff found a handcuff on her right wrist which had to be cut off.

State trooper William Bevan testified that a key to a pair of handcuffs was found in Schwartz's pants pocket after he shot himself. Bevan also said an electric stun gun was found on the seat of Van Leuven's black Honda, the car Schwartz allegedly drove from the murder scene and which was recovered in Dickson City. Bevan said that Deborah Van Leuven's family said that she did not own a stun gun.

Bevan said two holes were found in the driver's head rest of the car while the driver's side rear window had been shattered. Bevan said Schwartz told a suicide negotiator that he had fired a shot in the car.

Schwartz was charged with three counts of theft and receiving stolen property for allegedly stealing

the handgun used to the commit the murder from girlfriend Carole Cimasky, and for stealing Deborah Van Leuven's car and credit cards after the shooting.

Cimasky, of Tenth Street, Kingston said she purchased the handgun in November of 1991 for self protection, with Schwartz putting up a small part of the approximate \$115 cost. She testified that she never fired the gun however, or even purchased ammunition for it, but left the .380 caliber automatic pistol in its box under the bed. She found it was missing after she said Ronald Schwartz called her on January 27 asking if Stephen was there.

"He asked me if Stephen was at my apartment," said Cimasky. "He said 'He's in trouble, he shot Deb.'"

The defense team of Ferris Webby and Lewis Bott claimed that there was only circumstantial evidence to substantiate the charges that Schwartz recklessly endan-

gered the child or attempted to unlawfully restrain Deborah Van Leuven.

"That child but for the grace of God, could have been hurt herself," countered Olszewski. "I would submit that the child was so close to the body and the shooting that she had Miss Van Leuven's blood on her face."

Of the claim that there was no direct evidence to show Schwartz had put the handcuffs on Van Leuven, Olszewski said, "It would be incredible to believe that the victim placed it there."

Webby and Bott also argued that the theft and receiving stolen property charges should be dropped also because Schwartz may have had permission to use the items.

After the hearing, Schwartz wound his way through reporters to the police car which waited to take him back to prison, veering away sharply when asked if he had loved Deborah Van Leuven.

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