



Letters

Special Olympics thanks fair volunteers

Editor:  
To the people who volunteered for the Special Olympic Booth at the Luzerne County Fair, I wish to thank you for volunteering your time and apologize for any inconveniences to you due to a last minute decision by "Area P" Special Olympics manager. The Luzerne County Committee will not be staffing the booth.  
I hope when Luzerne County has been accredited by the state, I

can count on you to volunteer and support us again.  
Again my sincere thank you for the consideration that you gave by contacting me in the endeavor.  
Susan Stephens.

Jackson will finally move into building

By GRACE R. DOVE  
Post Staff

The Jackson Township supervisors hope to finally take official possession of the municipal building - after nearly a year of attempts to have renovations completed.  
According to supervisor Joe Stager, the bonding company, USF&G, offered the township \$19,866 to pay to have the remaining work finished under the supervision of the township's architect, Harry Seargeant.  
The supervisors voted at their September 14 meeting to accept USF&G's offer under the condition that Jackson Township will not be held responsible for paying the subcontractors whom the now-defunct contractor, Tri-City of Allentown, never paid for their services.  
The township and the unpaid

contractors will be paid by the bonding company, the supervisors said.  
In related business, the supervisors directed secretary Henry Zbick and solicitor Blythe Evans to contact Representatives Hasay and Jarolin and Senator Lemmond for help in obtaining grants to clear stumps from the recreation area behind the municipal building, pay some of the contaminated waste cleanup costs and possibly purchase a new police cruiser.  
In other business, an open burning ordinance and a pave cut ordinance were unanimously adopted.  
Evans reported that the state has hired Vibra-Tech to conduct noise tests at homes near the pump house for the new water line to Chase Prison. Neighbors are concerned that the pump house's two 75-horsepower and two 35-

horsepower pumps operating simultaneously up to six hours per day will generate large amounts of noise.  
Although neighbors may have to contend with noise, the supervisors went on record supporting the prison's use of the water line rather than its continuing reliance on three wells in the Chase section.  
Pennsylvania Department of Corrections will advertise for bids for a \$40,000 hydrological study of wells within a mile radius of Chase Prison. Last year's drought caused several families' wells to go dry, generating concern that the prison's reliance on wells for its water could further draw down the water table.  
Zoning hearings on the pumping station and a fence around American Asphalt's quarry will be held Monday, September 28.

J.W.J.

No room for censorship in free country

By J.W. JOHNSON

Censorship has no place in a free society.  
You've heard that in this column before. And if a new report is even close to being accurate, you can't hear it often enough.  
According to the 10th annual report for People for the American Way, a group dedicated to monitoring attempts at banning text and library books, censorship is exploding particularly in public schools.  
The group reported 348 censorship attempts in 44 states during the 1991-92 school year. The most frequent complaint was that materials were Satanic or anti-Christian. The second most common complaint was profanity, followed by complaints about sexual content.  
For example, one of the books most frequently targeted was John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*, because of its allegedly 'anti-Christian' content, and its profanity.  
Let me repeat that censorship has no place in a free society. Our elected officials have no right to prescribe what you or I can read, or see.  
Parents obviously have the right to decide what their children will use in schools, but it is not in the interest of parents or children when a few individuals seek to deny all students access to materials which do not fit some narrowly construed criteria for political or moral correctness.  
This whole idea of the free flow of information and ideas seems simple enough, doesn't it? And it was John Milton who said: "Give me the liberty to know, to utter and to argue freely according to

conscience, above all other liberties."  
Milton uttered those words more than 100 years ago before this nation's Declaration of Independence and its subsequent Constitution. As such, he must have envisaged the most important element in that constitution, the First Amendment.  
The First Amendment, and the right of free expression contained therein, is the most basic freedom that we enjoy in this nation. All other freedoms are the progeny of this right, without which we would be subjects and not citizens.  
In addition to the newspaper you are reading, and the radio and television you will hear and see later, the other bulwark which preserves you as a free citizen is the public library.  
There you can be informed, take flights of fancy, sit and sip wisdom from the ages, while formulating your own contributions, and crystalizing your own plans and dreams.  
Most notably for the young, but certainly for all ages, the public library is, in fact, the crucible for a free and independent mind.  
Still there are those who say: "I'm sick and tired of hearing that the First Amendment should be used to protect every perversion in our society. And the reason it was written was to protect political speech, and not to protect every Adam and Steve who comes along and wants to photograph his lover's genitals. And I'm sure that our forefathers are turning over in their graves knowing how the First Amendment was being twisted."  
I wonder if the person who says this means the same founding fathers, many of whom were

avowed atheists; at best, Thomas Jefferson was agnostic.  
And while many Americans would agree that, for example, pornography is bad, the disagreement comes about in defining what exactly is pornographic become reconciled with First Amendment guarantees?  
The Supreme Court has sought to do so by saying that while you might disagree with the contents of a book, play, movie, or photographic exhibit, and might find the contents of same to be offensive, immoral or whatever, the U.S. Constitution does not give you, as a citizen, or a borough council as a group of elected representatives, the right to decide the beliefs and habits of others.  
Would an atheist be wrong in seeking to prohibit Christian bookstores, stores that the atheist would find offensive?  
The atheist would say no.  
The Christian would say yes.  
The constitution says both have a right to their beliefs and that laws exist to provide for a peaceful coexistence.  
This constitutional tenet is of paramount importance. It is, in fact, the basic tenet upon which our forefathers founded this nation, and a tenet upheld by the Supreme Court.  
What does all this have to do with book banning in public schools? It is through the protection of alternatives that any kind of sanity prevails.  
We, in fact, define, cherish, and promote the middle by protecting the extremes.  
And in protecting those alternatives, we are preserving for ourselves the right to be wrong; indeed, the right to be heard at all.

Senior citizens can get low cost dental care

Senior citizens on a fixed income can now obtain dental care at a reduced cost through the Pennsylvania Dental Association's (PDA) Access to Care Program, according to Senator Charles D. Lemmond (R-20).  
Senator Lemmond said that since 1984, nearly 35,000 senior citizens have taken advantage of the program, which makes dental care more affordable for people age 65 and over who meet income

qualifications.  
More than 1,500 dentists in communities across the state have agreed to participate in the program by voluntarily reducing their fees for dental procedures by at least 15 percent. This includes cleanings, extractions, denture work and regular examinations.  
To be eligible for the program, seniors age 65 and older and may not receive federal, state or other dental health assistance or have

private dental insurance. In addition, the total annual household income must be less than \$13,000 for a single person or \$16,200 for a married couple.  
For more information, senior citizens may call the Pennsylvania Dental Association toll-free at 1-800-692-7256 (M-F, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.). The PDA will refer patients to a dentist in their area who participates in the Access to Care Program.

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