

Highway

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Road intersection. Traffic lights are also proposed for Route 415 at Dallas Corners, Center Will Road at Pickett's Charge and Route 118. Other improvements to these intersections include:

- Hillside Road: Construction of a jug handle turn near the former Harter's Dairy to accommodate northbound traffic turning left onto Hillside, and separate lanes for southbound traffic turning right onto Hillside and traffic from Hillside turning onto Route 309 south.

- Carverton Road: Addition of bus pull-offs on both sides of the highway, a barrier to prevent left turns from the northbound lanes of Route 309 onto Knob Hill and widening the bridge over Toby's Creek for a right-turn lane onto Route 309 northbound.

- Franklin Street: Improve the right turn lane from Route 309 north.

- Main Road at Offset Paperback: construction of right turn lanes for northbound and southbound traffic and concrete islands to direct traffic turning onto the highway.

- Center Hill/Upper Demunds/Hildebrand roads: Construct right turn lanes onto Route 309 from

Center Hill and Upper Demunds roads and add additional traffic signals at the Upper Demunds/Hildebrand Road intersection to accommodate school bus traffic.

- Dallas Corners: Add a right turn lane on Route 415 in front of the Dallas Post Office and on Main Street in front of the borough building. Eliminate parking on Main Street below the borough building.

- Center Hill Road at Pickett's Charge: Add a right turn lane onto Route 415 north.

- Routes 415 and 118: Add right-turn lanes onto Route 118 from Route 415 south, concrete islands to direct traffic flow and barriers to prevent cross-turns from Route 415 into the convenience stores.

- Route 309 between Harris Hill Road and Center Street: either create a center turn lane for traffic going into the businesses along this route or install a barrier to prevent cross-turns into these businesses.

- Two loops of synchronized traffic lights, between Hillside and Harris Hill Roads and between Center Hill and the Route 309/415 intersection.

Cost of highway improvements

A breakdown of the cost of upgrading and installing traffic lights at the eight intersections along the Back Mountain section of the Route 309/415 highway corridor is listed below.

INTERSECTION	COST
Route 309:	
Hillside Road	\$765,000
Carverton Road	\$339,000
Franklin Street	\$ 80,000
Main Road (Offset Paperback)	\$149,000
Upper Demunds Road	\$178,000
Route 415:	
Dallas Corners	\$153,000
Center Hill Road (Pickett's Charge)	\$163,000
Route 118	\$249,000
Additional costs:	
Signal interconnection	\$ 44,000
Center turn lane:	
Harris Hill Road to Center Street	\$681,000
TOTAL COST:	\$2,801,000*
OR	
Center barrier instead of turn lane:	\$489,000
TOTAL COST:	\$2,609,000*

*The total cost will be determined by the treatment of Route 309 between Harris Hill Road and Center Street: constructing a center left turn lane or installing a concrete center barrier.

"There's still a lot of work to do. We have to put together the funding package and keep refining the specifications," said Chales Mattei, district engineer for PennDOT.

Mattei said that PennDOT will continue to work closely on the plans with the Transportation Management Association and also will hold a public hearing on the improvements



TEACHERS DONATE TO FOOD BANK-Dallas School District teachers recently requested the Back Mountain Food Bank provide 10 items which they needed. Front row, left to right: Cleda Shelby, Marilyn Klick, Sharon Lyons. Second row, left to right: William Wagner, Joan Makowski, Maryanne Gelso, Jack Wega, Mike Pawlik (Post photo/Bill Harper)

Food

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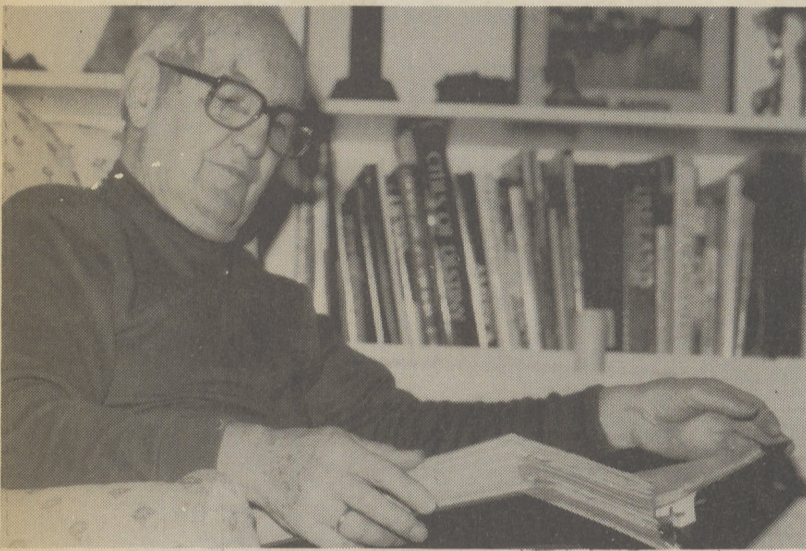
kept on who can use the food bank. Makowski said not enough people are aware of the food bank's services.

"Many people in Back Mountain do not know where the food bank is or that it is available to them," Makowski said.

Makowski said that to avoid the same items being contributed, the teachers association contacted the service and asked them to specify which items were needed most. From that list, teachers at each school were assigned different items to bring for the drive.

Irish

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TOUCHING THE PAST - Dr. Sidney Curran of Dallas looks through one of several large notebooks filled with records of his family, which he has traced 200 years back to Ireland. (Post Photo/Grace R. Dove)

According to *Paddy's Lament*, a blight destroyed most of the potato harvest in Ireland in 1846-47, seeming to creep into entire districts almost overnight, causing the plants to rot in the fields.

"The English laws prohibiting the Irish from eating their own produce and forcing them to ship it to England, and the English government's refusal to help the starving Irish were all part of a campaign of genocide," Curran asserted.

Faced with widespread starvation, homelessness and disease, Irish families had to make difficult decisions: should they raise enough money to send as many of their kin as possible to the United States, risking the dangers of the long voyage, or should they remain in Ireland and hope that the situation would improve?

Those lucky enough to afford the passage often traveled on British ships, where the deplorable conditions matched those found on the African slave ships a century earlier. Ships' records indicate that nearly one-fourth of the passengers never made it to the United States, according to *Paddy's Lament*.

Curran's great-great grandfather, John Tierney, died as a result of the Potato Famine. The family was so poor that they couldn't afford a burial plot and had to bury him with another relative in the same grave.

Tierney's widow, Judith Fitzgerald Tierney, brought her six children to the United States from Ballyluby in County Tipperary in 1851.

One of their sons, Michael Tierney, grew up to become bishop of

Hartford, CT, becoming well-known for having built four churches, a hospital and a seminary. A plaque in the Ballyluby church commemorates his work.

"My ancestor who came in from Canada was known as an 'ice-back' because, like many others, he walked across the frozen St. Lawrence River to slip undetected into the United States, after having made his way to Quebec," Curran said.

Second and third cousins, descendants of the original immigrants' large families, have surfaced in such widely separated places as Kansas City, western Pennsylvania, New York State, western Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Australia, where one ancestor had been exiled for his participation in the Young Irelanders' resistance movement.

"Basically, I've done this for my children, so that they know where they come from," he said. "Reading about the events that shaped my

family's destiny makes them more real and alive to me."

Curran's cousin, Jim Curran of Greensburg, has also traced the family tree and has written a play based on old family letters, Irish songs and poetry about the Irish peasantry, who were "sent to the waste places to wither and die at their leisure."

Its haunting prologue begins: "I am the voice of Ireland. I sing in the mountains, the valleys...I was here at the beginning of time...We are the exiles, brothers of the West Wind."

Curran said that his family "finds" have mostly been a series of lucky coincidences. He is still looking for descendants of his great-grandmother, Catherine Butler, who immigrated to the United States around 1850. No one seems to know her hometown in Ireland.

"None of the old people talked much about Ireland because memories of conditions there were so terrible," he said.

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