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35 Cents

Inside Story



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Empire Brass coming to Kirby. Page 9.

SPORTS

Basketball showdown as Dallas meets Lake-Lehman Thursday night. Sports page.



Lady Knights lose close game to Meyers. Sports page.



Red Cross Blood drive

Thurs., Feb. 25, 11 a.m. - 5 p.m., Dallas United Methodist Church. Call 823-7164 for appointments.

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Clothing put in blue bins is sold for rags

By GRACE R. DOVE
Post Staff

Generous Back Mountain residents attempting to help the needy by leaving donations of used clothing in blue collection bins probably don't realize that they aren't helping any local charities. Instead, they are providing revenue for a company on Long Island that sells the clothes to rag dealers and donates a small portion of the profits to a storefront mission in Queens.

All clothing is shipped to New York, for the benefit of two chari-

ties located in Queens and Brooklyn, operated by one congregation.

Not one stitch of these donated clothes goes on anyone's back; all of it is sold to a commercial rag dealer.

And the two out-of-state charities aren't registered with the Pennsylvania Bureau of Charitable Organizations, although the Pennsylvania Department of State says that they should be.

Conspicuous stickers on each padlocked bin proclaim: "Help the needy. Clothing for the benefit of the hungry and needy," with the

name of the owner, U.S.A. Leasing, and two telephone numbers, one toll-free and the other on Long Island, underneath.

"Congregation Nachlas Maharan," on a sticker on the back of each bin, isn't listed in the telephone directory of any municipality in the greater New York metropolitan area.

"These things are being dropped by the thousands all over Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania," said Col. Raymond Howell, commander of the Salvation Army's regional rehabilitation center for

the northeastern United States.

"It's a racket; the drivers lease the bins and trucks to haul them from U.S.A. Leasing and are told to drop them off anywhere. A rag dealer pays them 10 cents per pound for all the clothing they bring back, then turns around and sells the entire lot - good, usable clothing as well as rags - for up to 25 cents a pound. The public doesn't know the difference."

Howell added that Congregation Nachlas Maharan is a "home synagogue" operated in someone's house in Brooklyn, with a store-

front mission using a different name located in Queens.

Mel Kushner, spokesman for U.S.A. Leasing, admitted that his firm isn't registered with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, although it is registered in New York.

Under Pennsylvania law, any charitable organization which wishes to solicit donations in the Commonwealth and collects more than \$25,000 in donations in any state must register with the Bu-

See BLUE BINS, pg 14



WANTS TO CHANGE PLEA - Dallas Township resident Stephen Schwartz, flanked by two prison guards, leaves the courtroom after a hearing Monday, January 22, to withdraw his plea of guilty in the shooting death of Deborah VanLeuven.

Schwartz says he was forced to plead guilty

By GRACE R. DOVE
Post Staff

Claiming that public defenders Ferris Webby and Louis Bott had been ineffective in advising him to plead guilty to shooting his former girlfriend to death, convicted murderer Stephen G. Schwartz appeared in court February 22 before Luzerne County Judge Hugh Mundy, requesting a new plea and a new trial.

In requesting that his original

plea be changed to not guilty, Schwartz alleged that Webby and Bott had threatened and coerced him into pleading guilty to a general charge of homicide in a bench trial (without a jury) before Mundy in May, 1992.

Mundy had found Schwartz guilty of homicide, which carries a mandatory sentence of life imprisonment without parole. He also was convicted of theft and receiving stolen property for fleeing the murder scene in Ms.

VanLeuven's car, taking her credit cards and taking the pistol used in the shooting from the home of another girlfriend, Carole Ci-makasky of Kingston.

During his testimony at Monday's hearing, Schwartz maintained that Bott and Webby had told him to plead guilty and follow their instructions on what to say to Mundy, threatening that they would not represent him if he

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Tests find lead in Dallas water

By GRACE R. DOVE
Post Staff

Tests on the water supplied by the Dallas Water Company to 40 homes in Dallas Borough and Dallas Township indicate that six homes have elevated levels of lead, according to company manager Mike Coyle.

The tests, mandated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (E.P.A.), included samples from homes whose water service mains are known to contain lead and homes built between 1982 and 1986, when lead solder used to join pipes was banned by the U.S.

Congress, Coyle said.

The EPA's recommended maximum lead level of .015 milligrams per liter was exceeded in six homes, whose lead levels ranged from .017 to .045 milligrams per liter, or more than double the limit, Coyle said.

"The owners of the homes with high lead levels have been notified," Coyle said. "We will take additional samples for testing from these homes within the next month; if we find more elevated lead levels, we'll have to begin a treatment plan."

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Gasoline still in water in Lehman Township

By GRACE R. DOVE
Post Staff

Eighteen months after the discovery of a gasoline additive in nearly a dozen wells around Lehman Center, the cleanup is expected to enter its last stage as soon as the weather breaks, according to Mark Carmon of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources (DER).

Tests on between 15 and 20 wells around Lehman Center during August and September, 1991 had shown abnormally high levels of the unleaded gasoline additive MTBE.

Wells at Bryant's Trailer Park on Route 118, the Maple Hill Nursing Home and the Lake-Lehman Junior High School, as well as eight or ten private residences had been contaminated, Carmon said.

The contamination had spread in a generally easterly direction from Lehman Sunoco, where owner George Maculloch had

replaced a leaking gasoline tank in October, 1990, and was confined to only one aquifer (layer of water-bearing rock), Carmon said.

MTBE is added to unleaded gasoline to prevent engine knock and dissolves easily in water, unlike gasoline, which floats on top of water, Carmon said.

Carmon commended Maculloch, who has paid for all corrective action so far: supplying bottled water to the school and nursing home; the drilling of two new wells, at the trailer park and the nursing home; and installation of special carbon filters to remove the MTBE from the water in affected homes.

"The contaminants could have been in the water a long time and it just took this long for them to show up. Ground water is a funny thing - it can move between several inches and a foot a year through the water table," Carmon said.

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Women's Network seeks Pathfinder Award nominees

The Wyoming Valley Women's Network is seeking nominees for the 1993 Pathfinder Awards which will be presented June 5 at the Ninth Annual Luzerne County Women's Conference, to be held on the Wilkes-Barre Campus of Penn State at Lehman.

Established in 1985, the Pathfinder Award recognizes women of this county who have challenged the traditional assumptions of women's roles and have blazed new trails.

Nominations may be submitted by any person or organization. The deadline is April 15. All entries must include the name, address and information about the nominee's background, including details which would qualify the candidate for selection as a Pathfinder Award recipient.

Nominations should be sent to the Wyoming Valley Women's Network, c/o Esther Gutin, Pathfinder Chairperson, 45 Mallery Place, Wilkes-Barre.

Last year's Pathfinder Awards went to Judge Ann Lokuta, the first woman elected to the bench in

Luzerne County; Eleanor Miller, for her work in peace and justice issues, civil rights and women's issues; Terry McGurdy, coordinator for the National Organization for Women for almost 15 years; and to the Luzerne County Commission for Women for its WILPOWER project aimed at placing more women in decision-making positions in county government. A special Pathfinder award for a woman who does not reside in Luzerne County but who made an impact through the region was given to Mary Ann Gale, head of Proctor and Gamble in Mehoopany.

Other past recipients of the award include Helen O'Connor, Phyllis Mundy, the late Ethel Price and Martha Reese, all for accomplishments in the political arena; Carol Lavery, Hannah Janjigian, and Sally Jervis for leadership in community improvement; Madge Benovitz, Stephanie Wychock, Negro Women's Community League (Joyce Davis, president), Susan

See PATHFINDER, pg 5



Little pizza makers

Tiger Cub Scouts from Pack 232, Gate of Heaven tried their hand at making pizza Saturday at the Dough Company in Dallas. From left, Kevin Tanner, Phillip Engler and Carl Seitz rolled out the dough before adding sauce and toppings. The Scouts, their pack leaders and parents joined in enjoying the pizzas when they were finished.

POST PHOTO/RON BARTIZEK