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Luzerne County's 911 plan not favored here

By GRACE R. DOVE
Post Staff

It's like being pregnant - either you are or you aren't.

That's the confusion in terminology which officials of the Back Mountain Communications Center face - do we already have 911 service or not?

The answer could affect the Back Mountain's relationship with Luzerne County's proposed county-wide high-tech 911 sys-

tem, first proposed more than a year ago.

Luzerne County 911 director Kevin O'Brien and coordinators David Macekura and John Skludowski met with the Back Mountain Communications Center board November 9 to discuss how the proposed system will affect the Back Mountain.

"We're not here to sell the county's system," O'Brien said. "We're not here to take away your business. If you want to go through

Under a study proposal, the county could charge a \$1.25 monthly fee on phone bills

the county, that's your prerogative."

Although Act 78, dubbed the 911 Bill, provides counties with access to funding for county-wide 911 systems, it does not make them mandatory in Pennsylvania, O'Brien said.

Act 78 defines 911 service as any system in which a caller can dial 911 and reach an emergency dispatcher 24 hours a day.

Of Pennsylvania's 157 counties, 44 already provide some form of 911 service, according to Department of Community Affairs

911 coordinator John Patten. It's up to each county to decide if it wants to use basic 911 or more expensive high-tech versions, Patten said.

The Back Mountain's 911 system, which automatically forwards all calls to the dispatcher, is an example of a basic system as defined by the act, according to Commonwealth Telephone Company business marketing manager William Bader.

Luzerne County is pushing for

a high-tech enhanced 911 system, which can trace all incoming calls and provide callers' specific locations, medical information and other pertinent data. It's a better system than the Back Mountain's, O'Brien said.

Under the county-wide 911 plan, all calls would come into a central answering point, where dispatchers would route them to the appropriate dispatching cen-

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POST PHOTO/GRACE R. DOVE

"EAT! EAT! EAT!" - Lake-Lehman athletes Will Woronko and Ernie Chamberlain were encouraged by cheerleaders and friends Mandy Disque, Becki Olson, Amy Keiper and Tim Williams, and,

back row, Megan Kovach and Christy Shamus at a pizza-eating contest against Dallas at the Villa Roma November 18. The event ended in a draw.

Pizza-eaters chomp to a draw

By GRACE R. DOVE
Post Staff

Harveys Lake's Villa Roma Restaurant was packed Thursday night as 10 athletes from Dallas and Lake-Lehman high schools squared off in a pizza-eating contest as part of the two schools' traditional Old Shoe football game.

As fans and family cheered them on, each gridded devoured an 18-inch pie in an exciting timed 10-minute event which ended in a draw.

Although they had practiced eating pizzas earlier in the week, Lake-Lehman athletes Will Woronko, Mike Adamshick, Kevin Rusinko, Ernie Chamberlain and David Fosko faced stiff competition from Dallas gridders Marty Straigis, John Robinson, Greg Nazdan, Rich Butcokski and Dan Brody.

Origin of 'Old Shoe' discovered, page 10

Straigis had set a 1992 record by eating 75 Buffalo-style chicken wings at the Dallas Gridiron Club's annual Wing Night, while "Naz" Nazdan had bested him this year, chowing down on 90 wings, four cuts of pizza and a six-pack of Coke.

Before the contest began, Villa Roma's general manager, Chic Sicco, walked around blowing a whistle to keep order as the wait staff bustled about carrying trays of food and drinks for the other patrons. It definitely wasn't business as usual.

"We're going to have some fun tonight," Sicco said after a few shrill blasts. "Wait for the pizzas to cool off. When the balloon pops, start eating. May the best team win."

"EAT! EAT! EAT!" chanted the Lake-Lehman cheerleaders as the Knights kept pace with their rivals. At one point Ernie Chamberlain, still manfully chomping on a pizza slice, climbed onto his chair to check on the Dallas team's progress.

Dallas supporters called out technical advice in the glare of a television spotlight and bright blue flashes of reporters' cameras.

"Make two pieces into a sandwich! Don't eat the crust!"

It was neck and neck the entire time, until only a pile of crusts remained on each table as

See PIZZA-EATERS, pg 14

Amusement tax posed at lake

By GRACE R. DOVE
Post Staff

Harveys Lake Borough's mayor-elect Rick Boice said at the council's regular November 15 meeting that he is asking the council to consider a four percent general amusement tax.

The amphitheater would probably be required to pay this tax, Boice said. "They have been in business for two years, with us helping them," he said.

Lake-Lehman School District attempted to enact a 10 percent amusement tax in 1992, which would have also directly affected the amphitheater. It was unable to do so because none of its member municipalities had such a tax on their books, a state requirement.

Boice added that he wasn't concerned about any threats from concert promoter Thom Greco like those he made to bring in heavy metal bands if Lake-Lehman enacted its tax.

"They dropped the idea and he brought those bands in anyway," Boice said.

Boice, who will begin his first term as mayor January 1, also is forming an "advisory committee to the mayor-elect" to discuss solutions to the borough's noise problem and other problems and asked interested residents to contact him at his office at the municipal authority.

"I want people to tell me what's needed," he said. "If I don't make significant efforts to address our problems and solve the noise problem, then I'll resign and the council can appoint Mr. Gwilliam as a successor."

Republican George Gwilliam was Boice's opponent in the recent municipal election.

In other business, the council voted to:

• Contact the state Civil Service Commission to set up testing for

See AMUSEMENT TAX, pg 10

Arson charges against two men are dropped

By GRACE R. DOVE
Post Staff

Arson charges against two Dallas Township men were dropped at their preliminary hearing November 18 before District Magistrate Earl Gregory.

Alfred "Rocky" Koziel, 34, currently lodged in the Susquehanna County Prison on parole and firearms violations, was arrested September 28 and charged with four counts of arson and related offenses in connection with fires March 28 and May 22 at vacant homes at 87-B Washington Street and 92 Harris Street in Dallas Township's Roushey Plot section.

Also arrested September 28, Barry Dean Miller of 94 Harris Street, was charged with two counts of arson in connection with the May 22 fire at 92 Harris Street and had been released on his own recognizance on \$10,000 bail.

Prosecuted by assistant district attorney John Aciukewicz, the charges were dropped due to what the District Attorney's office called "substantial problems with the prosecution."

Under a proposed plea agreement, Miller was to have testified against Koziel in exchange for having charges against him reduced, according to assistant district attorney Dan Pillets. At the last minute Miller declined to testify, Pillets said.

Compounding the problem, another witness who could definitely identify at least one suspect in the vicinity of the fire was never available to be subpoenaed, Pillets said.

"Clearly there was enough probable cause for an arrest," said Pennsylvania State Police trooper Charles Parulla, who investigated

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POST PHOTO/GRACE R. DOVE

THE FIRST WAVE - Loading up the first truck of non-perishable food items collected for the Back Mountain Food Pantry last week are Dallas students Jeff Morris, Harry Phillips, John Thompson and Terry Eyerman.

Dallas High bests food drive's goal

By GRACE R. DOVE
Post Staff

It was the best kind of food fight. Everybody won and not a scrap was wasted.

Dallas High School's week-long food drive to benefit the Back Mountain Food Pantry, in which each homeroom competed to collect the most items, netted 15,626 cans, exceeding its original goal nearly four times.

That's not counting nearly 1,000 food items donated to the drive by the Westmoreland Elementary School, \$1,000 in cash donations, 21 large turkeys, two roasting chickens, two Cornish game hens and a canned ham.

Organized by Jay Pope's senior sociology students, the drive, held

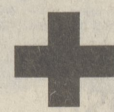
the week of November 15-19, exceeded everyone's expectations.

The high school's halls were filled November 19, the last day of the drive, with a steady stream of students carrying boxes and bags of food items to the loading dock, where the overflow from the storage area in the faculty dining room had piled up.

Motivational food drive posters containing everything from Bible verses to quotations from famous figures still decorated the halls.

Particularly memorable was a neatly hand-lettered excerpt from a haunting ballad of the days of the Irish potato famine: "Oh, the praties (potatoes), they were small, when we dug them in the fall. And we ate them, coats and all, full of

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■ Red Cross blood drive Fri., Nov. 26, 1-6 p.m., Gate of Heaven School, Machell Ave., Dallas. Call 823-7161 for appointments.

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