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Increase in youth crime worries police

By GRACE R. DOVE
Post Staff

Although police say youth gangs aren't yet a problem in the Back Mountain, they have noticed an increasing number of young people mimicking the gangs seen on television and in movies.

"It's small, but it could grow quickly," said Kingston Township police chief James Balavage, one of several area police officers who have attended special seminars on gang activity.

"When we described several recent in-

cidents in the Back Mountain, officers from New York, New Jersey and Ohio said the same things had happened in their towns a couple of years before they had gang problems. Five years ago it was just a bunch of kids who thought they were a gang. Now they are a gang," he said.

Police have seen more kids wearing baseball caps set at special angles, more graffiti on buildings and highway dividers and more fights during the past several years, he said.

Four names or acronyms have been

"What separates a gang from a social club is the criminal activity - violence or intimidation on the streets or at school."

James Balavage
Kingston Township police chief

heard with increasing frequency in the Back Mountain: OTR (On The Rise), TWK (Third World Knights), Straight Edge So-

ciety, and 187.

OTR is a tagging posse, a group of young people who spray-paint graffiti on buildings and blank walls, Balavage said.

"They say they don't do drugs or alcohol and don't engage in sex," he said. "All they do is spray paint."

He isn't sure what TWK and Straight Edge Society do - they could be tagging posses, gang wannabees or bona fide gangs, he said.

The 187 group's name disturbs police. According to the California penal code, Section 187 covers murder.

"We're not sure whether they claim any affiliation with out-of-state 187 gangs or if they're simply gang wannabees," Balavage said.

A group of students who dress alike, have a special group name and hang out together aren't considered a gang until they begin to break the law and police see a pattern to their activities, he said.

"These kids are the 'wannabees,' the ones who mimic the gangs they see on television and MTV," Balavage said.

See YOUTH CRIME, pg 8

Dallas will host speaker on gangs

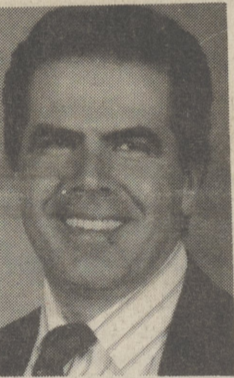
By GRACE R. DOVE
Post Staff

Concern over recent altercations involving Dallas High School students has prompted the district to schedule a special parents' meeting November 15 at 7 p.m. at the middle school, in which

James Marinello, assistant chief of the Luzerne County Parole Department, will discuss local and national gang trends and what parents should know about gangs.

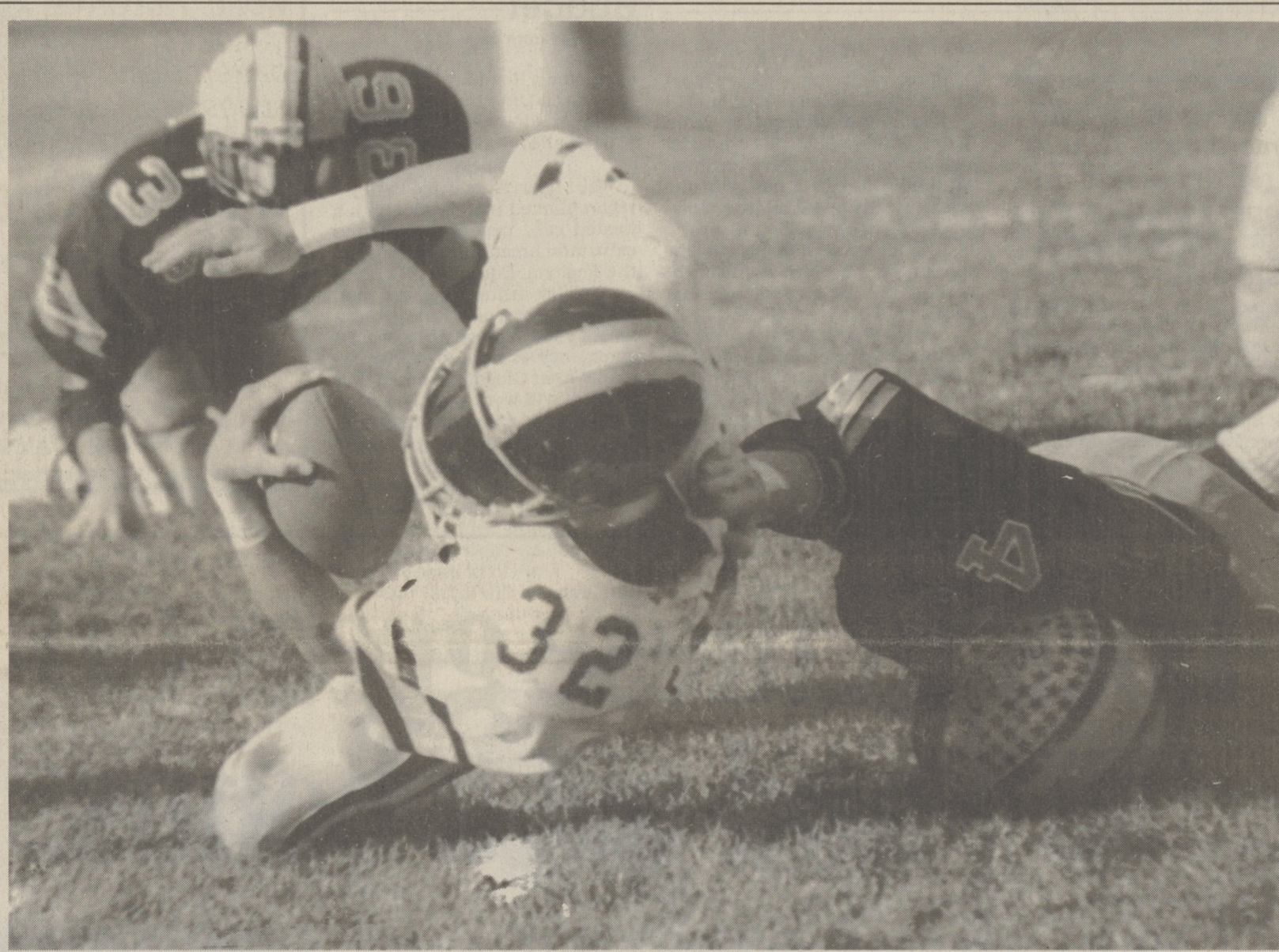
"We don't have a gang problem here yet," Marinello said. "Our kids are intelligent. We can work with them to prevent gangs from getting a foothold in the area."

Television, rap music and MTV have glorified West Coast youth gangs to such an extent that many local kids now think the lifestyle



JAMES MARINELLO

See GANGS, pg 8



POST PHOTO/LYNN SHEEHAN

Not so fast!

Pat O'Neill finally brought down Lake-Lehman's Mike Pitcavage in last weekend's Old Shoe Game. Dallas won 19-0, completing an undefeated regular season. The Knights end with a 6-4 record

and will go to the Eastern Conference playoffs, meeting Wellsboro at home Saturday. Dallas hosts Meyers Saturday for the District championship. More photos on page 9.

Jackson budgets four-mill tax hike

By GRACE R. DOVE
Post Staff

After holding the line for a year at 13 mills, Jackson Township property owners will see a four-mill local property tax increase next year, if the draft budget adopted Monday night holds.

The Jackson Township supervisors approved a preliminary 1995 budget with property taxes of 17 mills at a special meeting Oct. 31. Earned income and per capita taxes will remain the same.

The total spending figure of \$637,819 is a 5 percent increase over the current year. Tax revenues of \$436,114 show an increase of \$29,164, or 7 percent, over 1994 after the proposed 31 percent tax rate increase. Some of the increase will offset a projected decline in state funding.

Miscellaneous public works expenditures are expected to increase 27.8 percent or \$16,000, to \$57,400, while \$249,055, an additional \$22,840 or 10 percent, has been budgeted for road repairs and maintenance.

General government expenses are budgeted to decline by nearly 5 percent, while outlays for culture and recreation are slated for a nearly \$6,000 cut.

The township expects to begin the year with \$91,700 on hand, an increase of \$35,065 or 61 percent more than it had last year.

For more than 30 years the township's property tax was 3.5 mills. It was raised to 13 mills in 1993 to fund badly needed road repairs.

The budget will be available for public display at the municipal building until the December 5 meeting, when the supervisors will vote on it.

At the regular November 7 meeting, the supervisors voted to name three roads. The former Bonkottown Road A has been named Bonko Drive, while

See BUDGET, pg 2

Local musicians return for special concert

Wyoming Seminary 150th Anniversary Concert, Sunday, Nov. 13, 3:30 p.m., St. Stephens Episcopal Church

Jeff Martin is tenor in Dusseldorf

By GRACE R. DOVE
Post Staff

Back Mountain native Jeff Martin, a tenor with the Dusseldorf Opera in Dusseldorf, Germany, will return to the area November 13 to perform in a concert celebrating Wyoming Seminary's 150th anniversary.

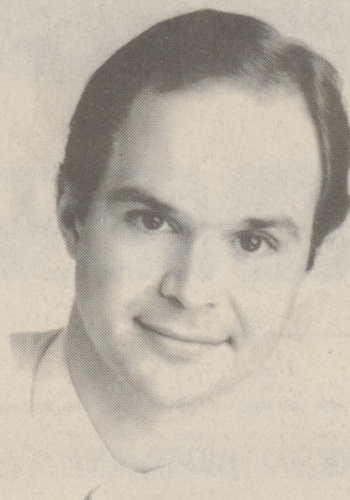
Martin lives in Stralsund in the former East Germany, not far from the Baltic Sea and the city of Rostock.

The son of Trucksville residents Mr. and Mrs. R. Spencer Martin and a 1977 graduate of Wyoming Seminary, he studied music with department chairman John Vaida, who inspired him to study voice at Westminster Choir College.

"I wouldn't have even known that Westminster existed if Mr. Vaida hadn't told me about it," he said.

He also studied at the University of Cincinnati and sang with the New York Choir College, the Chicago Opera Theater, the Pennsylvania Opera theater and the Central City Opera in Colorado before going to Germany in 1989.

"I went to Germany with high hopes," Martin said. "In this pro-



JEFF MARTIN

profession, there are more jobs in Germany than anywhere else in the world. Every town with more than 70,000 residents has an opera house - the government subsidizes them."

Unable to find work as a professional singer when he first arrived, he eventually ran out of money and became a street musician to pay the rent.

"I had heard of people performing on the street and decided to try it," he said. "I was amazed - people actually enjoyed it. It's incredible to think that you can stand there and sing or play and people throw money at you."

His career as a street singer lasted only two months, ending

See MARTIN, pg 2

Brian Farrell in piano master class

By GRACE R. DOVE
Post Staff

Brian Farrell, the son of Hunlock Creek residents Donna and Dennis T. Farrell, will return to the area to perform in a concert celebrating Wyoming Seminary's 150th anniversary November 13.

A fourth-year piano student at Julliard Conservatory in New York City, Farrell graduated from Seminary in 1991.

While at Seminary, he accompanied the choir and soloists at chapel, participated in a few drama productions and played for recitals. He studied piano with Tom Hrinkew and the late Ann Vanko Liva.

"I didn't have much time for anything else," he said.

His high school mentor was music department chairman John Vaida.

"I learned to be more aggressive with people in music," Farrell said. "In the musical world you must be an aggressive person - no one will do things for you."

Vaida remembers Farrell as an extremely talented person who always had his nose either in a textbook or his music.

"Brian is one of the most gifted and scholarly students I have ever known," he said. "His talent is in a class by itself."

Farrell showed a great depth of understanding, both in musical composition and musical struc-

ture, Vaida said.

He enrolled Farrell in an accelerated music theory course taught on a college level during his senior year at Seminary.

"He did so well that his freshman music theory course at Julliard was a breeze," Vaida said.

Farrell has been accepted into an accelerated master's program at Julliard, a course which Vaida said is "nearly impossible to get into."

While Julliard isn't too difficult academically, its intensive music courses have extremely high standards, Farrell said.

Students must give recitals and attend master classes, which he described as private music lessons given in front of an audience.

"You check your ego in at the door," he joked.

Farrell wants to perform, conduct and teach private lessons, but is keeping his options open.

"I'm not sure how it will happen," he said.

His fondest recollection of his Wyoming Seminary days is a special piece by Felix Mendelssohn which he performed at a recital.

"Kenny Parks and I played alternating pages of music using one piano," he said. "It was a lot of fun seeing us jumping on and off the piano bench without missing a note."

The concert celebrating Wyoming Seminary's 150th anniversary will be held November 13 at

3:30 p.m. at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church.

A 150 voice chorus of alumni, students and friends of the school and a festival orchestra will join Farrell and tenor Jeff Martin in the program.

■ **He's the top.** Ed Roth was named a 332d degree Mason recently. Page 3.

■ **On the run.** Matt Samuel and Steve Oliver are winding up outstanding college cross country seasons. Page 10.

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