

## Couple accused of welfare fraud

A Dallas couple has been accused of welfare fraud and could face a prison sentence or fines if convicted.

According to Maureen McKeown, claims investigation agent for the Office of the Inspector General, Brian and Annette Billings of RR 3, Dallas, received \$1,839.90 in cash assistance and \$638 in food stamps which they weren't entitled to because Mrs. Billings hadn't told the Department of Public Assistance that she had a job, McKeown said.

The charges were filed before Magistrate Marvin Kane, with the preliminary hearing scheduled for December 6. This is their first offense, McKeown said.

If they are found guilty they could receive a maximum sentence of seven years in prison and fines up to \$15,000.

They would also be required to make full restitution and be disqualified from cash assistance and food stamp programs for six months, McKeown said.

The Inspector General's Office has a 90 percent conviction rate for welfare fraud, McKeown said.



### House available

This two-story Victorian doll-size farmhouse, valued at \$1,000 and made by Willard "Red" Cottrell, will be raffled off by Wyoming Valley Habitat for Humanity, a non-profit organization which helps low-income families refurbish and buy their own homes. Showing of the doll house are committee members Lucille Luksic, Morag Michael, Rev. David Cappelloni and Bette Segrave-Daly.

POST PHOTO/GRACE R. DOVE

## Martin

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when he landed a role in *The Phantom of the Opera* with the Hamburg Opera.

Since then Martin has performed in *The Magic Flute*, *La Boheme*, *The Barber of Seville*, *The Flying Dutchman* and *West Side Story*.

Martin had arrived in Germany just in time for the opening of the border separating East and West Germany two months later.

"It was an extremely volatile period," he said. "No one would have dreamed in August that the borders would open to the free world in November. I'm still amazed that it went so peacefully."

The German Democratic Republic (East Germany) couldn't have continued much longer because it was running out of money due to a recession, Martin said. Several East German cities had sold their cobblestone streets to raise funds.

"The opening of the borders was followed by incredible optimism," he said. "Now we have growing pains - people have realized that it will take a long time to rebuild to the standards of what they were used to in the West."

Getting along in German wasn't much of a problem for Martin, who had studied it in college as a required course. He managed to

*"Every town with more than 70,000 residents has an opera house - the government subsidizes them."*

Jeff Martin

Trucksville native, now a singer with the Dusseldorf Opera

pick up more of the language as he went along, sort of on-the-job training.

John Vaida remembered Martin as an exceptional student.

"I taught him my first two years here," Vaida said. "Jeff's special gift for music was very obvious. Watching his career has been like watching my own children growing up."

Although he might occasionally forget an English word or two, Martin has never forgotten his local roots.

"Trucksville and the Back Mountain have changed a lot since I left," he said. He returned to see his parents in 1992 and 1993. "Coming back to the Back Mountain and the valley, I'm coming home."

## Budget

(continued from page 1)

Bonkotown Road B will be known as Russell Drive.

The road into Sutton Farms will be called Sutton Farms Road.

The supervisors voted to buy a reconditioned road grader with a heated cab, new paint job and extra attachments for \$4,000 from the Regional Equipment Center.

A policy authorizing the road foreman to hire part-time personnel for snow removal in case of an emergency was approved. Chairman Walter Glogowski noted that workers will work mainly during the night and early morning hours and will receive training from the regular road workers.



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