

Comm Center

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want that. All we want is what's best for the Back Mountain."

The Back Mountain Communications Center is funded through contributions by its five member municipalities, which contribute between \$12,150 and \$32,798, based on population. Each of the nine member fire and ambulance companies contributes \$750. The Nesbitt Hospital contributes \$21,946.

The communications center's operating commission is presently negotiating to sell the Back Mountain's equipment at fair market value to Luzerne County and to hire some Back Mountain dispatchers once Luzerne County's 911 system goes on line.

The Back Mountain employs a full-time chief dispatcher, who earns \$8.66 per hour, two full-time dispatchers and six part-time dispatchers, all of whom earn \$8.29 per hour, Sabol said.

Assistant Luzerne County emergency services director David Macekura expects the new center to be on line by the end of March.

1996. It will relocate from the sub-basement of the courthouse to a new building in the Hanover Township Industrial Park, a location which wouldn't be affected by flooding of the Susquehanna River, Macekura said.

Although transmitter sites haven't yet been selected, Macekura said they'll be located in areas which will make the best use of the area's high mountains and compensate for several dead spots where radio waves don't penetrate efficiently.

"We plan to use microwave technology and a signal system similar to a repeater to give a very strong radio signal," he said. "Most fire and ambulance companies will be able to use their present radios and won't need to make massive equipment upgrades."

The county communications center will employ about 12 certified call-takers and dispatchers per shift, depending on the need, he said.

Macekura expects the center's annual budget to run between \$3

million and \$5 million. The county system will serve 74 municipalities, with the possible exception of Franklin Township, dispatched through Wyoming County, and Nescopeck, which is dispatched through Columbia County.

"We still have to discuss our dispatching with the Franklin Township supervisors, to see what they want to do," Macekura said.

Under the present system, Franklin Township's residents in the 333 and 388 telephone exchanges call Wyoming County's emergency dispatch center, while the residents in the 675 exchange call the Back Mountain dispatcher.

The township has its own volunteer fire company but shares its ambulance (Franklin-Northmoreland), housed at the Franklin Fire Hall, with Northmoreland Township in Wyoming County.

The Back Mountain Communications Center will use a \$30,000 grant, originally obtained to help build new quarters, to purchase

new radios for the member emergency services organizations. The center is housed in the Dallas Township municipal building and had considered relocating, either to the medical center building on Route 118 in Lehman or in the new Back Mountain Family Practice building on Upper Demunds Road.

Sabol was instrumental in forming the Back Mountain's central dispatching system in 1986, when he was Kingston Township's police chief, with Dallas Township police chief Carl Miers and supervisor Phil Walter, Kingston Township supervisor Ambrose Gavigan, Harveys Lake police chief Lionel Bulford and Dallas Borough police chief Ed Lyons.

Sabol was the first chairman, while Walters was vice-chairman and Lyons was secretary-treasurer.

The Back Mountain became a basic 911 system, in which callers may dial the number free of charge to contact an emergency services dispatcher, in 1990.



POST PHOTO/GRACE R. DOVE

For rent

The Insalaco's supermarket at Dallas Corners will close August 12, according to company public relations spokesperson Melissa Margis. Employees will be offered jobs in other Insalaco's stores, she added.

The company plans to expand its Shavertown store, but no details are available, Margis said.

Akita

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female owned by Sylvia Lorber of West Brookville, NY, won the title of best puppy in the match.

Best adult went to Stormy, a female Rottweiler owned by Lehman Township resident Sherry Radzinski.

Golden retrievers, Rottweilers and Schipperkes were the most popular breeds at the match, which also featured such unusual breeds as the Rhodesian ridgeback, wire-haired pointing griffon, a pale-eyed Australian shepard and a sleek Pharaoh hound.

Founded in 1944 to promote the good relationship between a dog and its owner or handler

and to encourage the responsible ownership of purebred dogs, the Back Mountain Kennel Club sponsors events for purebred dogs and holds a point show every November at the Bloomsburg fairgrounds. The point show is sanctioned by the American Kennel Club.

It also hosts a "canine good citizenship match" every October, open to any dog which has had obedience training and has good manners.

For more information on the Back Mountain Kennel Club's activities and events, call 822-5517.

Town officials wonder about future costs

By GRACE R. DOVE
Post Staff

BACK MOUNTAIN - Although they admit that closing the Back Mountain Communications Center will save tax money, some elected municipal officials still wonder if joining Luzerne County's new 911 emergency dispatch system is a good idea.

"We hope it will turn out the way they have described it to us," said Dallas Borough council president Don Cooper. "Supposedly there won't be any cost to us, but that's not set in concrete. We don't have any of the specifics in writing."

Luzerne County emergency services personnel have said the center will be funded by a \$1.25 surcharge — \$15 per year — on all telephone lines in the county, but Cooper is concerned that the county might assess municipalities sometime in the future.

Jackson Township supervisor Walter Glogowski is also concerned.

"What will it cost the municipalities to get the system up and running?" he asked. "What will be required of us?"

He doesn't know whether or not all the police, fire and other emergency services' radios will be compatible with the new system, or if the township will have to pay to get them refitted.

Not having to fund the Back Mountain communications center will save Dallas Borough \$27,464, or slightly more than one mill, while Jackson and Lehman Townships will save \$12,150 each.

"It will save us about a mill," said Lehman Township supervisor Doug Ide. "We'll probably use the money to try and keep up with road maintenance."

Lehman Township joined the Back Mountain's system in 1990, while its three fire companies (Lehman, Lake Silkworth and Idetown) were members from the communication center's inception in 1986.

"We were told a lot of things by the county," Ide added. "Nobody knows for sure what will happen. If the new 911 system works the way they say it will, I have absolutely no question about it. The Back Mountain couldn't afford to provide this level of service on its own."

He commended the Back Mountain for forming the emergency

dispatch system nine years ago, and for the quality service the center has provided.

"The Back Mountain has worked very well," he said. "But now it's time to move on to the next step. If we had decided in 1986 to wait for the county system, we'd still be waiting for it."

Jeff Box, who wears two hats as the Back Mountain Communications Center treasurer and Kingston Township manager, said he can't envision the Back Mountain system going out of business before the end of 1996.

"It took us eight years to set this system up," he said. "You simply can't shut it down in a heartbeat — there's lots of work to do before we close the doors."

The area's 10 fire and ambulance companies, supported mainly by fund drives, Bingo games and hoagie sales, will save \$750 each.

Until last year, each paid \$1,500 a year to the Back Mountain center, but being part of it was worth whatever the cost, according to Kunkle fire chief Jack Dodson and Shavertown fire chief Gary Beisel.

"Before the communications center started, each fire company had its own emergency phone number," Dodson said. "We had fire phone lines into 10 homes — but you couldn't be sure someone would always be there to answer them. And we had 10 phone bills, one for each line, which could run between \$500 and \$1,000 a year."

The fire chiefs said they'll probably put the savings towards equipment. Shavertown is presently raising money to buy an aerial ladder truck.

Each Back Mountain fire com-

WHAT THE BACK MOUNTAIN PAYS FOR 911 SERVICE

The Back Mountain Communications Center is funded by contributions from its member municipalities and fire companies. These figures are based on the center's 1995 budget, adopted October 12, 1994.

Harveys Lake left the communications center in 1993. Franklin Township is dispatched through Wyoming County and uses the Pennsylvania State Police. Ross, Lake and Fairmount townships aren't members.

Member	Contribution
Kingston Township	\$32,798
Dallas Township	32,798
Dallas Borough	27,464
Jackson Township	12,150
Lehman Township	12,150
Kingston Twp. ambulance	750
Trucksville Fire Company	750
Shavertown Fire Company	750
Dallas Fire and Ambulance	750
Kunkle Fire and Ambulance	750
Lehman Twp. Fire Company	750
Jackson Twp. Fire and Ambulance	750
Idetown Fire Company	750
Lake Silkworth Fire Company	750
Nesbitt Memorial Hospital	21,946
Total	147,056

pany has submitted maps of its coverage area to the Luzerne County system to help dispatchers give directions to emergency services personnel, Dodson added.

Back Mountain fire and ambulance companies will also probably keep their present radio frequencies and fire ground channels, Beisel said.

"The county has said it will hire our full-time dispatchers," Dodson said. "I hope they'll be assigned to our area, with which they're already familiar. It will be a bit confusing at first, but I'm sure it will work out."

age to advertise for bids to pave Idetown, Park and Outlet roads. Sutton noted that only the township-owned section of Outlet Road, a 140-foot stretch between Route 118 and Firehouse Road, will be paved.

"It's the second shortest township-owned road," road supervisor Doug Ide noted.

Lehman

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undisturbed. Trees larger than six feet in diameter may not be disturbed.

No development or use, including on-site septic systems, is allowed within 50 feet of the edge of any other body of water, including streams, ponds, lakes and wetlands.

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