

Firefighter

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was almost like the station mascot.

"He asked a lot of questions and was always eager to learn things," said Anthony Kaiser III, assistant fire chief.

Alar lived just a few blocks from the station and nothing could keep him from being with his buddies, not even a small creek that flowed across the path to the station. Alar built his own small step bridge for easier access to the station.

"As the years passed, Alar made many friends at the station, who supported him during a difficult period in his life. His father died of a heart attack when he was 14 years old. The fire station then became an even more important part of his life, a second home full of big brothers to guide him through the painful time.

"They helped me out a lot, put a lot of effort and time into me," Alar explained from his mother's house in Shavertown, where he was visiting over the holidays. Being at the station gave him something to do and kept him out of trouble, he said. Alar is now a fire and safety technician at Catholic University in Washington D.C.

The department was happy to provide a place for him to grow, learn and heal. "I'm a firm believer that the more active kids are (in something positive), the less time they have to get into trouble," said Gary Beisel, chief of the fire department.



A humble hero Louis Alar in front of the Shavertown fire house, once his second home.

The department stands by its choice. "Luke always had the values of a firefighter. He's always done the best he could do and really takes it to heart," explained Beisel. "That really says something, considering it's volunteer work."

Unfortunately, this sort of volunteer is becoming harder to find said the chief. Beisel laments the fact that the number of volunteers has decreased, along with the once revered selfless attitude demonstrated by firefighters like Alar.

Turner agrees. He sent Alar to many fire science classes at LCCC to increase his knowledge of fire fighting and safety. Alar ended up getting an associate degree in fire science from LCCC before getting a bachelor's in the major at University of Maryland.

Turner credits Alar's constant willingness and ability to learn for his being a good firefighter. "Luke never assumed he knew it all. He was always trying to learn more.

"Luke was very polite, mannerly. I've seen other single parent kids take the wrong turn, but Luke never did that," explained John Turner, fire science instructor at Luzerne County Community College (LCCC) and Shavertown fire fighter. "He had adversity in his life from an early age and he used it to make himself a better person."

Alar certainly wasn't getting into trouble and his dedication earned him the respect and admiration of his comrades, so much so that at 14, the Shavertown firefighters made him a bona fide Junior Firefighter. The department changed the previous bylaws setting the ages for a junior firefighter at 16 through 18, to 14 years old just for him.

He was very studious of the technical aspects of the profession," said Turner. "It wasn't just whistles and bells for Luke. He truly wants to help others." Also, adds Turner, "He's aware of the tradition and the art of it all."

Alar returns the favor when he describes his teacher. "John put a lot of effort into me by sending me to many classes. He really helped me out tremendously."

Interestingly, the tables have turned and Alar can now show Shavertown a thing or two. "I'm older and I learn from him now," said a humble Kaiser. "He's still coming up with new ideas all of the time. It's great. We're all proud of him."

The station may be proud of his honor, but they aren't surprised. "He's a natural talent - good head on his shoulders. I'm sure this won't be the last honor he achieves," said Turner.

"I'm very proud of him and know that he will do fine in life," said Beisel, who would love to see his job go to Alar when he eventually steps down.

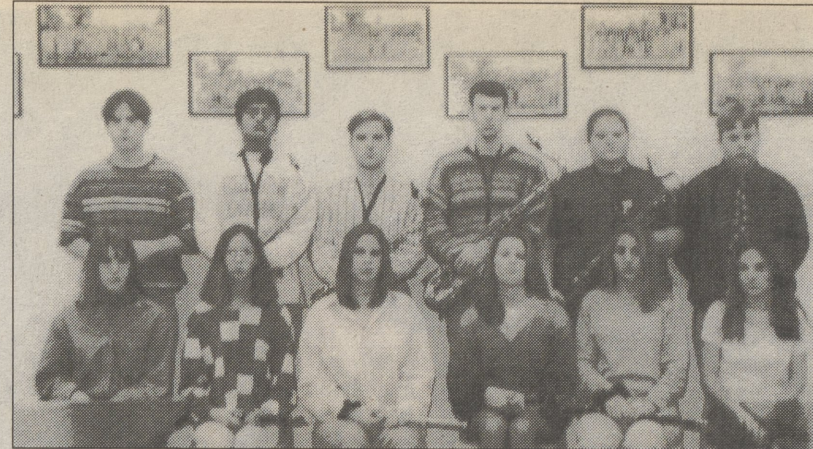
"They helped me out a lot, put a lot of effort and time into me."

Louis Alar
Former Shavertown firefighter

Despite the excellent reputation he enjoys among his fellow firemen, Alar is not immune to the practical jokes that have been known to take place at the station. Kaiser tells the story best, since he was the main conspirator. "You get a little rambunctious around the station when all of the work has been done," said Kaiser who climbed on to the roof with a bucket of water waiting for Alar to unsuspectingly walk outside.

"When he came out I dumped about five pounds of water on him," Kaiser then slid down the flag pole as Alar was climbing up to the roof to catch the schemer. This event happened once and Alar never caught Kaiser that day. "It was hysterical," Kaiser said. But, he eventually found out. "He said he would get me back. He never did," said Kaiser laughing. "Luke's a great guy to joke around with, good sense of humor."

A more serious anecdote indicates the sincerity of his commitment to firefighting. "A couple of years ago Luke heard about a fire at the laundromat and turned around to help," remembers Beisel.



Dallas and Lake-Lehman students selected for district band, orchestra

Dallas and Lake-Lehman high school students have been selected to attend district band and orchestra. In top photo, Dallas musicians are, from left, front row; Todd Kern, Christine Shaively, Tanya Spurlin, Kim Wall, Jonathan Humphrey, Kristen Faerber, chorus. Back row; Jennifer Lyons, Todd Butcher, Tim Mansfield, Mike Dobranski, Charles Martin, Paul Carlson, Joe Sallitt.

Lake-Lehman musicians are, sitting, Joanne Shoemaker, Melissa Rasmus, Katy Martin, Michelle Boltz, Melanie Yakus, Stephanie Pinone. Standing; Ben Wolfe, Sivakumara Rajagopalan, Matt Link, Jeff Ehart, Theresa Doty, Darrel Hogan. Absent from photo, Ryan Mahle.

Jackson

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tary Henry Zbiek, and zoning officer John Krupa will be affected by the change. Zbiek and Jones will both receive two weeks vacation. Glogowski explained that the policy for these positions has never been on record and that now the employees will be paid just for the days they work.

Jones says he is limited to five hours of supervisory work and must supervise nine officers. "I do not want to be held responsible for the actions of police officers that I cannot supervise," Jones said. He went on to say that the salary reduction "reduces my authority." Jones requested a public hearing to resolve the salary dispute.


Also during the meeting, solicitor Evans announced that the survey of Kraynak Road has been completed. A hearing will be held

on Feb. 3 at 6:30 p.m. before the regular township meeting to address any comments from concerned citizens.

The process of vacating the road will be completed on March 3, when the ordinance will be passed. Evans explained that there will still be access to the cemetery that is on the road.


The supervisors accepted the resignations of township auditor James Hutchins and police officer Joseph Kasper. Hutchins resigned due to a move outside the township, and Kasper said he is moving on to another job.

Glogowski announced that the township hopes to appoint a new auditor at the next meeting and that any interested candidates should contact secretary Zbiek for more information.



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Ambassadors

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Pennsylvania.

On the trip, the students will visit a zoo, go snorkeling, and visit several museums. They will stay with each of their host families for two nights.

The girls have been encouraged to share their experiences when they return. Amie intends to create a photo album and has offered to give presentations to groups who choose to sponsor her trip. Amanda hasn't yet decided how to explain her experiences but believes that she will write something she can share with friends.

Encouraged and aided by their families, both girls are avidly seeking funds to make the trip. Both families stressed the importance of the girls' efforts at fundraising. Steve Young, Amanda's father explains, "The main thing I wanted her to do is participate. I could have paid for her to go, but I don't think she would appreciate it as much."

Amie has solicited about 40 local businesses through a letter writing campaign. She has received offers for fundraising assistance from Back Mountain Bowl and Friendly's thus far. Mrs. Tkaczyk says, "We're just getting started. It's going to require a lot of work." She went on to say, "She's not really looking for a handout. The more she puts into it, the more it shows us that she wants to go. And we'll help her with anything we can."

Amie, who says she's a little nervous about traveling so far from home, plays field hockey and runs on the track team at Dallas Middle School. The eighth grader also plays soccer, swims, ice skates, and roller blades. At Dallas, she is a member of the yearbook staff and the honor society. Although

The requirements?
"You can't be too much of a picky eater. You have to be able to wake up in the morning and you can't be really homesick."

Amanda Young
Selected for People to People Student Ambassador program

she's not sure what she'd like to do, Amie says she would like to continue to travel in the future.

Amanda has taken a different approach to raising funds. Along with her two brothers, Amanda has started a business. Since December, the family has been making home-made pen and pencil sets under the name JAC Woods, an acronym of the children's first names. They are selling the sets for \$35. Amanda said that so far they have just sold them to friends and family but that anyone who is interested in buying them can contact the family at 675-4194.

Amanda attends summer camp every year and is undaunted by the prospect of travelling to Australia. "I'm fine with it," she says. The 13-year-old hopes the trip will help her in the future. "I want to attend Cornell," she explains. "I hope this will help me get into college." Amanda wants to one day be a doctor.

Amanda plays the flute and the piano. She enjoys skiing, ice skating, soccer, and softball. At Dallas, she is in the ski club and the honor society. She is also on the yearbook staff and will be participating in a spelling bee.


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