

EDITORIALS

County, comm center should make final effort at cooperation

It's a shame the relationship between Luzerne County Emergency Services and the Back Mountain Communications Center has broken down to the point that they are scheduled to face each other in a Harrisburg courtroom Oct. 6. Judging by how things have worked out in other counties, it would seem the two agencies working together could offer the finest emergency dispatching services possible, at the lowest cost.

Both sides make valid arguments to support their case. The county, working with state tax money (that came from you and me don't forget), will have the latest technology and hopefully the staff, management and skill to make use of it. The BMT Comm Center has intimate knowledge of the Back Mountain's geography and its people, both those who provide emergency care and those who receive it. Melding the strengths makes a great deal of sense.

The deck is stacked in the county's favor, since the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency leans heavily to county-wide 911 systems. The agency's regulations also make it an administrative nightmare to separate reimbursable costs from others, and its financing scheme is a lure for county officials to make their system as comprehensive - and expensive - as possible. Since the state will reimburse salaries as a fixed percentage of the total cost of operations, the bigger the budget, the more will be available for payroll. Luzerne County has already proven to be a master at spending that money, with more high-priced managers than comparable systems, or even some serving larger and more affluent counties.

Contrast the goings on here with Berks County, and you're left to wonder how things reached this state. There, a county center takes all 911 calls, then transfers some to secondary centers, including one that is similar to the BMT center. It functions well, it's cost effective and the people on both sides are working together to make it even better, as they have since the system was first installed. In fact, in an atmosphere of trust, a couple of secondary centers voluntarily closed after they saw how well the county handled things.

That may be the primary failing here; the county lost the trust of local officials and the general population when it pushed too hard to have things its way, first by making promises it couldn't keep and then by installing a lavish department that gave itself generous raises even as the project fell behind schedule. Instead of cooperation, they got resistance and gave Luzerne County's first 911 program - ours - the back of their hand.

Given the chance, we'd like to see the two sides start over from the beginning, with the goal of taking advantage of both parties' expertise, for the ultimate benefit of the people served by a center that dispatches both 911 and non-emergency calls. The county says it's too late for that, but we don't believe it. The state wants 911 available, and is willing to bend as necessary to see it become a reality throughout Pennsylvania, as it has been in the Back Mountain since 1990. It will take a great effort from both sides to properly resolve this issue, but it's worth it.

Enough is enough on smoking and work

You won't find any sympathy for tobacco companies in these columns, or any defense of smoking. But the movement against tobacco has gone too far when people are held out of jobs because they refuse to sign a pledge never to have a smoke off the job. That is what has happened to municipal workers in some southern California communities, a move justified by the local governments' concern about long-term health care costs.

There is no question that smoking is unhealthy for most people. But so is overuse of alcohol, eating too many cheeseburgers and driving too fast. One must wonder if we'll all eventually have to provide pedigrees of perfection before we can be hired, or gain access to health insurance. And there's the rub; insurance once meant we all shared the risk that some of us would get sick, have accidents or just be unlucky. But no more—insurers want to weed out those more likely to require some return for the premiums we pay, and employers have little choice but to help them do so.

It's time to step back from the headlong rush to stigmatize anyone who doesn't conform to the insurance companies' idea of a good risk. As long as it's not illegal and doesn't impair performance on the job, what someone does off the job shouldn't exclude them from work.

Your news is welcome

The Dallas Post welcomes submissions of weddings, engagements, birthdays and other items about people and events in the Back Mountain. The deadline for items for the next issue is Friday at 4 p.m. Photos are welcome. Black and white prints are preferred, but color can usually be used. We will attempt to publish articles based on timeliness, available space and interest to our readers. If you have any questions or comments, call Ron Bartizek at 675-5211.



The old oaken bucket, or at least the well at Darling's Farm. Photo by Charlotte Bartizek.

GUEST COLUMN

You can make a difference in a girl's life

If you've been thinking about incorporating something new into your routine that's both exciting and meaningful, becoming a Girl Scout volunteer may be just the thing. If you think you don't have the time or just can't imagine yourself entertaining a group of girls every week, then you must not be familiar with today's Girl Scouting.

As Girl Scouting grows to include a wide variety of girls, so does the need for a diverse group of adult volunteers. While some of today's Girl Scout do indeed meet weekly, go camping and sell Girl Scouts cookies, many other girls in Girl Scouting have different interests and needs. They may want to learn about specific careers, may want to take on leadership roles and initiate community projects, or may wish to become involved in a host of other activities. Every Girl Scout activity is, of course, planned to be fun,

as well as educational.

Why be a Girl Scout volunteer? Because girls need you. As most of us are aware, an increasing number of children are living in one-parent households and can often benefit from another adult's concern, sense of humor, hobbies, or career knowledge.

But regardless of a child's home life, all children are at some risk. There are many levels of risk, and the Girl Scout program continues to help many girls in at-risk situations—from facing peer pressure to struggling with low self-esteem, to facing poverty to homelessness, to being the target of prejudice against their gender or race or religion or simply their individual uniqueness. Girls may face sickness in their families or divorce, or even issues that may not seem as grave but are certainly important for growth—things like not knowing how to dance or never having an opportunity to be the

leader of a team.

There are so many options for Girl Scout volunteering—you can train other adults, handle publicity, be a consultant, lead song workshops, chaperone weekend trips, work on fundraising, teach girls about your culture, have a girl job-shadow you at work, be a translator, and so much more!

Whatever your schedule permits and whatever your "specialty" is Penn's Woods Girl Scout Council needs you experience and skills to benefit girls in your area. Please call us today and get involved.

We can accommodate the busiest schedule. The satisfaction you'll gain from seeing young girls grow into confident, successful women will make you wonder why you didn't volunteer with the Girl Scouts before.

For more information about volunteer opportunities in Girl Scouting, call Penn's Woods Girl Scout Council at 1-800-432-9786.

Top 10 traffic nightmares

10: The Kunkle Road/Tunkhannock Hwy. intersection, Kunkle.

Hey, you, in the Mustang. What is so important that you have to pass me on the right when I'm trying to turn left onto Kunkle Road?

9: The Center St./Rte. 309 intersection, Shavertown.

To the people who pull down west Center st., stop next to the highway on a red light, and effectively block traffic from Roushey st., do you know what "Stop Here on Red" means?

8: The Rte. 118/Rte. 29 intersection, Sweet Valley.

I just don't like flashing traffic signals.

7: Demunds Corners, Dallas.

This is my idea of safety. In order to turn off of Upper Demunds, you have to pull your car almost into the oncoming lane. Viva l'ambulance!

6: Lakeside Drive, Harveys Lake.

I don't mind the bicyclists, the jam ups by the amphitheater, or the fog. But must so many people park literally on Lakeside Drive?

5: The Main St./Pioneer Ave. intersection, Dallas.

How many times have YOU screamed bloody murder and slammed on the brakes because someone was making a left onto Pioneer from Main?

4: The Huntsville Rd./Sutton Rd./Hillside Rd. intersection, Huntsville.

This one was bad before, and now besides other drivers, we also have to watch out for the concrete island in the middle of the intersection which is ideally there for our safety.

3: The Main St./Church St./Memorial Hwy. intersection, Dallas.

How many people have ever seen 5 cars in a row move into the center lane back at Wendy's and then drive up to the left turn lane at the light by the post office?

2: The traffic signals by Friendly's and Orloski's on Rte. 309, Dallas.

It never fails. If you come down from the Tunkhannock Hwy. and proceed left onto 309 through the light at Friendly's, the one at Orloski's is ALWAYS RED!!!!!!!

1: The Church St./CVS parking lot mess, Dallas.

It's a parking lot/it's a road/it's a parking lot/it's a road/it's a JOKE!!!



Mike Twitchell

WARNING: THE FOLLOWING COLUMN IS INTENDED FOR PEOPLE WITH A SENSE OF HUMOR ONLY.

With all the money spent to maintain the roads in NEPA, isn't it ridiculous that so many downright annoying intersections and traffic junctions are merely restored to their original, poorly designed condition. Even when improvements are made, it just seems to make the problems worse.

Of course, this isn't to say that drivers don't make mistakes when proceeding through these places. Even a well designed intersection can be ruined by pilot error.

There are several examples of this throughout the Back Mountain, and what follows is a selective list of "The Top-10 Most Annoying Places to Drive in the Back Mountain." (David Letterman is not affiliated with the Dallas Post.)

ONLY YESTERDAY



**60 Years Ago - Sept. 24, 1937
POLIO SCARE PASSES, SCHOOLS REOPEN**

Confident that all danger of a reappearance of infantile paralysis here has passed, it was announced that classes will resume next Monday morning. Borough schools were closed last Friday morning after a second infantile paralysis case had been reported in the borough, as a precaution against further spread of the disease.

Another important step in paving the way for further development on Goss Manor and Manor addition in Dallas Township will be taken early next month when a parcel of lots will go through the formality of a sheriff's sale in an effort to clear titles. L.A. McHenry, trustee for Realty Investment exchange said that he expects the present titleholders will have clear titles by the end of this year.

**30 Years Ago - Sept. 21, 1967
OLD BUTCHER SHOP BEING TAKEN DOWN**

Soon to disappear will be an old landmark on Main Street, Dallas. Dismantling is already taking place of the Titman property with the sale going to Wilbur Houck, Ashley. The original building was built by Chester White and housed a butcher shop. H. Titman purchased the store from White and continued in the butcher shop business. The time of purchase was about 1912. Later the Post Office used part of the structure then removed the separating wall to enlarge the quarters. It was used as postal quarters until 1952, when the office was moved next to Garinger's Dairy.

**20 Years Ago - Sept. 22, 1977
STATE REP. O'CONNELL EYES WATER SUPPLIES**

What are the water resources in the Back Mountain? Can the wells of 20 private companies including Dallas/Shavertown Water Co. adequately supply the continued development or within the near future will it be necessary to find another solution? Rep. Frank O'Connell believes the solution to providing water service to a fast growing Back Mountain is the creation of a water authority with a merger into one large source of supply.

Mr. and Mrs. Harold Brace observed their 50th wedding anniversary at an open house by their children at the home of son and daughter-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Brace of Orange, Sept. 24. The couple are the parents of two children, have three granddaughters and one grandson.

**50 Years Ago - Sept. 26, 1947
FOUR FORM NEW HOME IMPROVEMENT FIRM**

Foundations have been set and materials are at hand for the erection of Dallas Water Company's 278,000 gallon storage and supply tank on the hill back of Natona Mills where the company drilled a new well last winter. One thousand feet of 10 inch line will connect the tank to the well.

Stanley D. Shewan, L.H. Deater, John Reese and William Shewan, all local residents have formed Heatrite Sales & Service Co. with headquarters in the Texaco Building on Memorial Dr. and Center Street, Shavertown. The new firm will specialize in all types of domestic and industrial heating, insulation, roofing and plumbing work.

Now playing at Shaver Theatre - "Deadline at Dawn" with Susan Heywood and Paul Lukas.

**40 Years Ago - Sept. 20, 1957
PLANS ANNOUNCED FOR TWO SHOPPING CENTERS**

Announcement that two new shopping centers will be created in the Back Mountain area has caused considerable speculation as to what they will be like and what merchants will occupy them. There have also been many unfounded rumors. This week Ralph DeRemer of American Stores Co. refuted one of them. American Stores Co. will not close its Dallas market and combine it with Shavertown into one large market, on the plot being developed by Eyerman & Fine opposite Evans Drug Store in Shavertown.

Crowded conditions on Dallas-Franklin-Monroe school buses were eliminated this week with the addition of another Myers bus to the fleet of seven already in operation.

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