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Schools will use ball fields

Delay in building new fields will disrupt BMT Baseball, Softball, Soccer

By KYLIE SHAFFERKOETTER and RONALD BARTIZEK Post Staff

DALLAS - The Dallas School District will take over Little League fields used by Back Mountain Baseball and Softball, superintendent of schools Gil Griffiths said Tuesday, because of delays in building new fields caused by neighbors' appeal of a zoning change for district property.

The district will need to use the fields for middle school baseball, field hockey and soccer because the present fields will be unavailable after the April 1 start of construction of the Gerald Wycallis Elementary School.

Construction will also disrupt next fall's Back Mountain Soccer schedule, since the league uses those fields for practices and games.

Griffiths said if work on the new fields had begun on schedule, they would have been ready for use this fall. Now, it will take at least a year to have them ready for use, depending in how long it takes to settle the legal matter.

"It's not a good situation," Griffiths said. He said the district would consider

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IN THE ACTION

Nicky Nackley, left, went up to try to block a shot by Kelly Spencer in Monday's game between Dallas and Lake-Lehman. The Black Knights took a 43-35 win to claim the first half title in Division 2. More photos on page 9.

POST PHOTO/RON BARTIZEK

'Disruptive' bus students subject of controversy

By JESSICA MORGAN Post Correspondent

LEHMAN - Once again this month, the Lake-Lehman school board meeting erupted into controversy when several board members and residents of the district questioned the rationale behind the board's decisions concerning transportation and the busing of "special children."

While last month's controversy centered around the busing of inter-district students who are children of professional staff, this month's verbal battle started when the board asked to amend a busing contract with Slimak and Sutton.

While busing the extra students will not affect the district's bottom line for the present time, the proposed amendment to the busing contract includes a \$10 per run increase effective January 5, the cost of an aide to ride the school bus Route #525.

Newly elected board member Robert Allardyce set the tone for the rest of the meeting by asking the board to stick to the guidelines given to them for bids on contracts. "In the past, this board took liberties. We need to stick very strictly to all guidelines given to us in this area," he chided. Then he continued to challenge his fellow board members' decision to hire the school bus aide after calculating that the cost of the aide's services for the rest of the school year would amount to \$1,800.

John Oliver, high school principal, presiding at the meeting in the absence of Superintendent William Price, said the board felt that an aide should be hired to address an issue involving students who

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Neighbors say there's room for compromise on fields

By KYLIE SHAFFERKOETTER Post Staff

DALLAS TWP. - Neighbors of three proposed athletic fields behind Dallas High School say they don't mind if the fields are built, but do mind if they are built practically in their back yards.

Some residents on Westminster Dr. filed an appeal opposing the issuance of a variance for a 15 ft. setback from the adjoining property line instead of a 100 ft. set-

back, as outlined in the township's zoning ordinance.

The appeal describes the variance's approval as, "arbitrary, capricious, illegal and contrary to the law." The appeal states that the township failed to notify the public in a general circulation newspaper, post the property in accordance to the ordinance and failed to establish the existence of an unnecessary hardship facing the school board.

"I don't think anyone is op-

posed to it going through; it's just the way it went through," said Sterling Lamoreaux of Westminster Dr. He said the township should have posted the district's request.

Leonard Kozick, zoning officer, acknowledged he is supposed to post a sign that informs residents of any exception or variance to the ordinances. "They do have a point there," he said when discussing the complaints in the appeal. But, he said he did not see it as neces-

sary because the decision is an interpretation of the ordinance by the zoning board.

According to the township ordinance, the zoning officer has the right to reduce the minimum yard to 10 percent of the set requirements if acceptable landscaping or screening is provided. Such screening includes a solid wall or fence between five and six feet tall. Landscaping includes a

See COMPROMISE, pg 11

Commonwealth rate hike turned back, will try again

By KYLIE SHAFFERKOETTER Post Staff

DALLAS - Commonwealth Telephone Company (CTCO) has filed a petition with the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) in an effort to have a proposed rate increase re-evaluated and approved. The PUC turned down the company's first proposal Dec. 4.

"We are asking the PUC to re-think their decision. We want to take the 60-day mediation period and make modifications so the request satisfies all parties," said Mike Burnside, CTCO public relation director. He explained the increase derives from a "revenue neutral restructuring of our rates with an increase in \$3.50 per customer." The increase is for primary lines only.

Burnside said based on calling patterns, the average customer's bill will increase by 75¢. Toll-free local calls, reduction in toll rates and reduction in revenue CTCO gets through long-distance carriers will offset the increase, said Burnside.

CTCO said it would add call waiting, speed dialing and call forwarding to their basic phone service. Customers who already have one or all of these services will no longer have to pay for them, said Burnside.

Burnside said the PUC will decide either Jan. 15 or Jan. 29 whether or not the proposed increase is acceptable in its current form.

If turned down again, CTCO will go back to the drawing board and craft a new plan.

Energy choice slow to gain a following

By RONALD BARTIZEK Post Staff

BACK MOUNTAIN - At the moment, "energy choice" is simply confusing. By this time next year it probably will also be annoying. What's certain is that choosing a supplier for electricity or natural gas will take time and patience, but it may yield savings.

Joseph Rymar, Manager of Customer Relations for UGI Utilities, the Back Mountain's electricity company, described the new system under which consumers will be able to select a supplier — and perhaps save some money — when he spoke at the January 8 meeting of the Back Mountain Business and Professional Association (BMBPA).

While adapting to the new system may provide savings, it won't come without customers' time and attention, since it will be up to them alone to pick the company that will generate the power that reaches their home or office. The annoyances will likely begin when suppliers begin telephone sales campaigns to attract business.

See ENERGY, pg 5



New drive through. A '98 Pontiac operated by Scott Sanfilippo of Dallas ended up on top of McDonald's landscaping Jan. 8 after swerving to avoid an oncoming car.

POST PHOTO/RON BARTIZEK

Because of rain, potential tragedy averted

Heavy rain may have contributed to several accidents last week, but it may also have saved injuries.

Kingston Twp. police said Scott Sanfilippo, 26, of Dallas, swerved to the right to avoid a head-on collision with an oncoming car at about 1:30 p.m. Jan. 8, and his '98 Pontiac jumped the curb and flew into a landscaped area in front of the McDonald's restaurant in Shavertown. Because it was raining,

landscapers who had been working on the bed all week were off that day.

"It could have been a lot worse," said Kingston Twp. patrolman Robert Parrish. He said the other driver, Fred Stevens of Norristown, was cited for failing to yield the right of way when he turned left into the restaurant.

Sanfilippo was taken to Wilkes-Barre General Hospital after complaining of pain.

Good timing

The checker took a break just minutes before a car crashed into Mr. Z's market. Pg 2.

Good Scout

Bruce Davies Jr. honored for 70 years working with the Boy Scouts. Pg 3.

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