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Local pastor fed thousands of ice storm victims

By KYLIE SHAFFERKOETTER
Post Staff

IDETOWN - As the ice storms lay siege to the north in January, most of us watched the images of snapped trees, damaged power lines and abandoned homes from our toasty living rooms. Not so for two men from the Back Mountain. Rev. Pat Colladay and Ron Boudreaux of Dallas Baptist Church were called to the scene to help feed people whose homes were powerless. As members of the Disaster Relief Team, which is part of a Southern Baptist agency that works closely with the Red Cross, the men spent a week in Watertown, New York. Their job was to provide government regulated well-balanced meals for the entire community. Colladay estimates

they cooked 10,000 meals a day for seven days.

The two are Red Cross trained and certified to work in disaster areas. A sturdy mobile kitchen serves as their workplace while they cook up a variety of meals including beef stew, sweet and sour chicken and sandwiches.

The men went up the third week in January and helped where 13,000 homes were out of commission.

"When we drove into town, we saw timbers twisted like toothpicks, trees were 'topped' and homes abandoned," said Colladay of his first impressions. "It's a big farm country, a lot of the farmers had to shoot their milk cows because they couldn't milk them. Also, some children had not been back to school since Christmas break. It was very hard for them."

It was good to get to where the people were and see how our efforts were being put to use."

Rev. Pat Colladay
Dallas Baptist Church

The men stayed at the local community building, where there was plenty of water and electricity. Watertown was chosen as their cooking site for both reasons.

Colladay said he was struck by how thankful everyone was. "They were so thankful for the volunteers. The night before we left we noticed people wearing

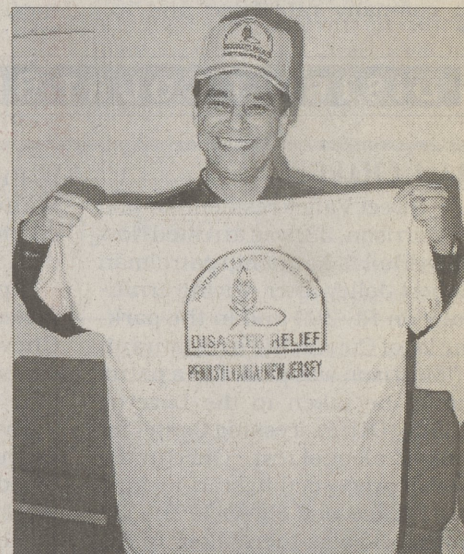
black ribbons. It turns out the ribbons represented their appreciation," he said. "One woman thanked me and said, 'It's people like you that give us faith to go on.'"

The soldiers at the local Army base presented the volunteers with a certificate of gratitude.

For Colladay, the experience was a fulfilling one. "There really is a sense of satisfaction in helping people. It was good to get to where the people were and see how our efforts were being put to use," he said. Colladay rode with the Red Cross to other shelters to help deliver the food.

"It was good to work together during a crisis. Even though there were different

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POST PHOTO/KYLIE SHAFFERKOETTER

Rev. Pat Colladay shows off his yellow hat and t-shirt. Colladay ventured up north last month to help people who were stranded due to the ice storms.

Handling of prison break criticized

By JESSICA APPOLO
Post Correspondent

JACKSON TWP. - Last month's escape from the State Correctional Institution at Dallas, located in the Chase section of town, brought angry citizens to Monday's supervisors meeting.

Edward Chesnovitch asked the township board to request a public meeting with the prison committee and federal agents.

Chesnovitch came fully armed with reasons to request a meeting with the prison committee. He noted that armed guards were not easily identifiable at safety and road checkpoints. He also said road checkpoints were poorly marked and not signed for drivers, causing hesitation in drivers to stop and cooperate.

Another cause of some confusion was the siren used to sound for the prison break. Some citizens were not sure if the siren was sounded for a fire or some other emergency. Fred Murray said he had to call the prison to confirm an escape, but never got an answer after being put on hold for several minutes. Murray decided to call 911 to confirm his fears.

Chesnovitch also said the sketch of the bearded prisoner given to media sources was inaccurate and therefore slowed efforts in capturing the escapee. He also said the prisoner was a high risk for work detail because of an upcoming federal trial which could have sentenced the prisoner to an additional 15 years to life. "The break could have been prevented if federal agents would have shared their information with the prison,"

See PRISON BREAK, pg 8



POST PHOTO/CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK

VROOM, VROOM

Jason Jolley set his car in place during last week's Pinewood Derby. Scouts from Pack 281 competed in the races held at the Dallas Middle School. Jason finished second overall. More photos, results on page 8.

Teens say DUI not condoned but common

By KYLIE SHAFFERKOETTER
Post Staff

BACK MOUNTAIN - With state statistics showing a six percent increase in alcohol related accidents between 1996 and 1997 in drivers under 21 years old, the obvious place to look for information about the issue is teenagers.

Many local teens say they are more responsible than people may think when it comes to drinking. Others think there shouldn't be anyone drinking to begin with.

Five students from Dallas Senior High School estimated that 40 percent of the students at their high school drink at least every other weekend, but say there is usually someone acting responsibly when it comes to driving.

"Everyone has a friend who doesn't drink," said Eric George, 16. "Usually kids take responsibility. Some use designated drivers."

The small group made up of mostly juniors said seniors probably drink the most, while freshman and sophomores are starting to experiment.

All of the students interviewed at both Dallas and Lake-Lehman were opposed to drinking and driving. "It's never okay to do," said a Lake-Lehman junior, who asked that her name not be used. "So many people die from drinking and driving. It's a stupid choice to make."

See TEENS, pg 8

Link to Back Mountain's history, Ruby Elston dies at age 101

Ruby Elston, the Back Mountain's best connection to its history, died Friday, Jan. 30 at the age of 101. Born Nov. 16, 1896 in the home she still lived in until shortly before her death, she was the daughter of the late B. Frank and Ellen (Duckworth) Bulford, and the granddaughter of John and Rachel Bulford of Dallas and Phillip and Catherine Duckworth of Kingston. Her father and grandfather were signers of the charter that made Dallas a borough.

A direct descendant of Rev. Jacob Johnson, the first permanent minister in the Wyoming Valley, Mrs. Elston was proud of her life and heritage. She kept family albums filled with photographs and newspaper items about her family and the Back Mountain.

An ardent fan of The Dallas Post, she said her family had been subscribers since the first issue in 1889. When Post associate publisher Charlotte Bartizek visited to take her photo for her 99th birthday, Mrs. Elston told how her grandmother was run over by one of the first trains to come through Dallas. She said people weren't aware then of the dangers the trains posed, and her mother died trying to save the family's goat that was on the track. Traveling by horse and buggy, Mrs.

Elston attended the Shaver School on Overbrook Rd., the one-room school in East Dallas and the old Goss School in Dallas. She was a 1914 graduate of Dallas Borough High School.

She worked as a secretary in the Ordinance department of the U.S. Army in Bethlehem, PA during World War I. After the war she worked as a clerk in the Dallas Post Office until 1924, when she married Clarence Elston of Lehman. The marriage brought together two of the Back Mountain's oldest and largest families.

They lived together on Overbrook Rd. until her husband's death in 1986 at the age of 90, and had two children, Harold, who lives in Lehman, and Nancy Schimmel, State College. The home they lived in was built from trees that grew on the property. Mrs. Elston enjoyed raising vegetables, especially eggplant, one of her favorites, in their garden.

In an interview with the Post at her 100th birthday in 1996, Mrs. Elston noted the loss of closeness in communities. "Neighbors should be neighbors," she said, "helping each other out, showing an interest in each other and not keeping to themselves."

See RUBY ELSTON, pg 2



POST FILE PHOTO

Mrs. Ruby Elston, shown in a photo taken for her 99th birthday, kept albums of the history of her family and of the Back Mountain.

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■ Hard battle

Jackson Twp. family fights daughter's eating disorders, seeks support group. Pg 3.

■ Hoop action

Dallas boys salvage season, and all the other roundball action. Pg 9.

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