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## Neighbors not comfortable with 150 ft. tower next door

By KYLIE SHAFFERKOETTER  
Post Staff

**KINGSTON TWP.** - People who live near the proposed site for a new 150 ft. cellular phone tower think the township should reconsider its agreement with Cellular One. Decreased property values, the possibility of an eyesore and health questions are the main issues that concern them.

But the township says the tower would have been built regardless if it was on their land or not. This way the township can make \$9,600 per year, said Jeff Box, township supervisor.

Clifford Troup has lived in his house next to the municipal building for 30 years and he feels the tower will be an ugly factor lowering the property value of his home.

"It will be very, very close to our yard. We will look right out on it," said Troup, who attended a planning commission

*"It will be a detriment to selling my home; it will depreciate the value."*

**Clifford Troup**  
Kingston Twp.

meeting last week to express his opinions. "It will be a detriment to selling my home; it will depreciate the value."

Robert Wicht of Knob Hill Rd. said cellular towers have not been around long enough to determine their long range effects on people's health. "I have three kids and I'd hate to have something go wrong down the road," said Wicht. "I wish we knew the long range effects."

The Telecommunications Act of 1996 states that state and local governments cannot deny the construction of a cellular tower on the basis of environmental effects of radio frequencies since the ef-

fects are still being determined.

Cellular One wants to build the tower because there is a break in cellular connection through the rock cut on Rt. 309.

Wicht said he has owned a cellular phone for 10 years and accepts the break in service. "I just don't use it until I'm down the hill," he said. He suggested the tower be put near the old railroad tracks. The old Lehigh Valley railroad is the site

See TOWER, pg 8

## Encon is sold to Missouri company

*Jobs said to be secure, expansion possible*

By RONALD BARTIZEK  
Post Staff

**DALLAS** - All the stock of Energy Converters Inc., known in shorthand as Encon, has been purchased by Watlow Electric Manufacturing Company of St. Louis, Missouri. Executives of both companies say the sale will not reduce employment or operations at the Dallas plant.

"They've given us every assurance that this facility is here to stay and if anything they will grow it to more sales and more people," said John W. Lloyd, Encon vice president of operations.

Encon has 230 full-time employees, with an average wage of \$8 per hour. The company completed a 20,000 square foot expansion in April, 1997, and added \$750,000 in equipment and 20 employees.

Announcement of the sale was made



POST PHOTO/CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK

Rosalie Harrison of Sweet Valley worked on a heating element at Encon in Dallas. The company has been sold to a Missouri firm that is the largest in its industry. The Dallas plant will continue operating under the Encon name.

Tuesday by Lloyd and Gary Neal, president and chief executive officer of Watlow. Lloyd said Encon will continue to operate in its Dallas location under the Encon name, and the management team will be retained. The sale took place Feb. 4.

Watlow officials sought to reassure

Encon employees. "It is business as usual," said Judy Simms-Brown, Watlow manager of marketing communication.

"In fact, Encon may be expanding. Watlow is more than willing to invest money into

See ENCON, pg 7

**More on page 7**

■ New owner is largest in industry

■ Encon has unique products

## Dress code too vague, board member says

*Teachers' union skeptical*

By KYLIE SHAFFERKOETTER  
Post Staff

**DALLAS** - Policies enforcing a dress code and drug testing for both professional and administrative employees passed a first reading at Monday night's Dallas School Board meeting.

The board voted 8-1 to accept the first reading. At its next regular meeting March 9, the board will have a second reading and vote on whether or not to pass the two policies.

Ellen Nagy, board member, voted against the policies because of the dress code. "I agree in spirit with the policy, but I'm not sure I agree with the language of it," Nagy said. She said this was the first time she had read the policy and thought it best to have a month to think about it.

"That is what the second reading is for, so that you don't rush into any decision." The text of the policy can be changed for the second reading.

Nagy said the language in the dress code was ambiguous and would be hard to enforce. Part of the dress code for men reads, "Dress slacks with a dress shirt and tie or turtleneck, with or without a dress coat, is preferred."

Nagy and other board members said that "preferred" was unclear.

Bill Wagner, president of the Public School Education Association (PSEA), said the group intends to watch the poli-

See DRESS CODE, pg 2

## Little progress on demolishing abandoned houses

By MEIRA ZUCKER  
Post Correspondent

**HARVEYS LAKE** - Harveys Lake is a community with a wide variety of homes, from opulent lakeside mansions to cozy hillside cottages. But most people believe there is no place for abandoned disintegrating homes in their neighborhoods.

"I'm just glad they tore it down," said Donn Hunter, speaking of the burned-out home on Second Street that used to neighbor his own. Residents near that house brought a petition to a council

meeting last year to encourage action. The Harveys Lake Borough Council, funded by the Luzerne County Office of Community Development, managed to tear down that dilapidated property last summer, and more demolitions are planned.

It's a complex process to tear down a house, said Fred Javer, the Harveys Lake Borough Zoning Officer. "We're working on several houses," says Javer. "In a couple of months we hope to tear down a property on Lakeside Drive."

"Last summer, I talked to the

*"It's about time. It's ready to fall down anyway."*

**Floyd McRoy**  
Lakeside Drive

Council and they said it was a high priority for them," said Jim Koutnik of the dilapidated house on Lakeside Drive. Koutnik, who has lived at Harveys Lake for over 20 years, said he has seen no one in the house for over 10 years.

"It's about time," said Floyd

McRoy, who has lived down the block from the eyesore for four years. "It's ready to fall down anyway."

For each property the borough hopes to tear down, there must be a title search, property owners must be contacted, consents must be gathered, the problem of asbestos must be dealt with, and estimates for demolition must be obtained. The process is lengthy, but rewarding.

"It improved the neighborhood," said Hunter, who has lived at

See HARVEYS LAKE, pg 8



Neighbors have been waiting a year for this abandoned home on Old Lake Rd. to be torn down.

## School director relishes building representative role

By KYLIE SHAFFERKOETTER  
Post Staff

**DALLAS** - As a seventh grader spells one of the more difficult words correctly at the spelling bee, Thom Russ smiles proudly, as if the girl was his own daughter.

Russ serves as the school board's representative to Dallas Middle School. As a representative, he visits the school at least twice a month and talks with students and faculty. Essentially he gives the school's concerns and issues a voice within the board.

There is a representative for each of the four schools. John Litz, board president, represents Dallas Elementary; Karen Kyle represents Westmoreland Elementary, and Maureen Banks represents the high school.

Although it can be time consuming to work around a full-



POST PHOTO/KYLIE SHAFFERKOETTER

Thom Russ, right, talked with Middle School band director Michael Pawlik on a recent visit.

time job, Russ believes his work as a board member goes beyond the two Mondays a month the board meets.

crones dances at both the high school and middle school. With two of his three daughters currently in the district, he has a

"As a board member you have to get out and know the buildings and the people who work there. I know I can't meet everyone, but I try," said Russ, who also tries to attend as many school functions as time permits. "Unfortunately, I can't be everywhere all the time," he said.

It might seem like he is. Russ also chaperones dances at both the high school and middle school. With two of his three daughters currently in the district, he has a

vested interest in what is going on. He said he will probably still be involved with the district in one way another even after his daughters graduate.

"I would've been here even if there was no representative program," said Russ, who feels it's worth it even though he cannot fix everything. "I'm only one vote. I can't solve all the problems. But, each building needs a voice. So I can go back to the board and say, 'These are the issues that need to be addressed. Can we do it? What's the priority?'"

The district has come up with a five year list of objectives that tries to rank priorities in each building. "Dallas is in a stage where things are starting to need repair. I like to come around and see what needs to be fixed. Not that we can do it right away, but

See SCHOOL DIRECTOR, pg 8

### ■ Dunkey ball?

Lake-Lehman holds annual donkey basketball game. Photos, Pg 5.

### ■ Telco strike?

Commonwealth employees "practice" picketing, say negotiations stalled. Pg 8.

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