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Stepped-up presence of police yields results

By KYLIE SHAFFERKOETTER
Post Staff

TRUCKSVILLE - With less noise, garbage and vandalism, the people of Meadowcrest credit the police for their peace of mind. Using grant money for extra patrolling of the area, the Kingston Township Police have eradicated certain "elements" that left residents feeling vulnerable and unsafe.

James Balavage, police chief and Rose Yarmel, Luzerne County Housing Authority grant coordinator, credit the program for the improvements.

Even so, the Kingston Township Board of Supervisors approved the program for only three months at last week's meeting, saying the project was still under evaluation.

The Meadowcrest Community Oriented Policing Grant Program with the Luzerne County Housing Authority is run through the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). It is a two-year \$27,000 grant that expires in May 1999. The township pays the officers' salary and is reimbursed with the grant money. The contract must be renewed every year.

The project is currently into the first six months of the second year and only received approval for three months of the second part of the year.

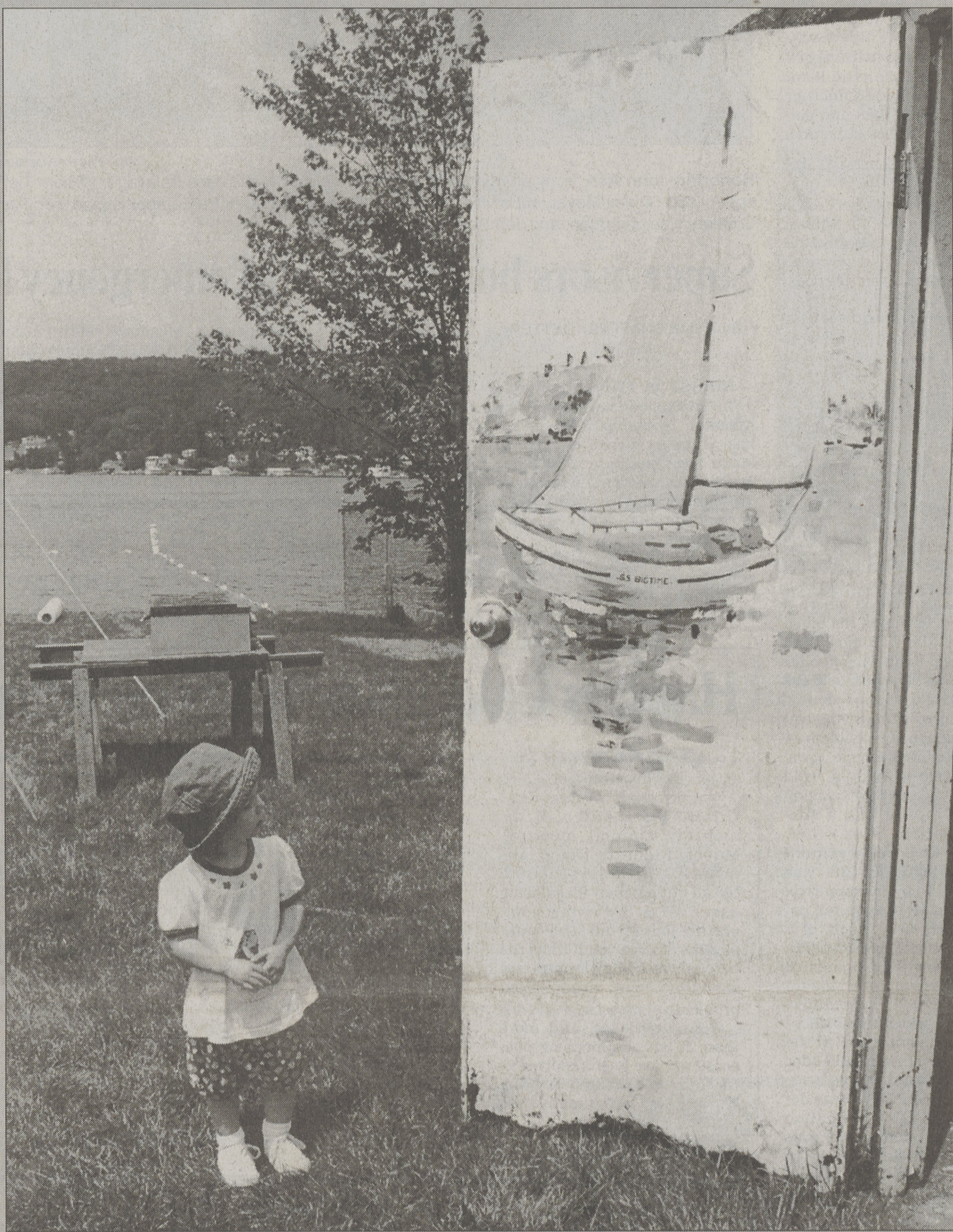
Officers work one third of their regular shift in Meadowcrest and two thirds when they are off-duty. Police work 32 hours a week in the project.

Balavage explained the goal of the project. "HUD (by using police) attempts to increase the level of safety and security for the many elderly and single parents who live in Meadowcrest. To make life as safe as possible these grant programs have been initiated," he said.



Patrolmen Martin Maransky, left, and Frank Ziegler walk around Meadowcrest.

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Admiring the art

Rebecca Colwell gazed at a sailing scene painted on a door at the Harveys Lake Beach Association. The club held its annual open house Saturday. More photos on page 3.

POST PHOTO/CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK

Storms took toll on lake businesses

But a pickup comes with sun, warmth

By KYLIE SHAFFERKOETTER
Post Staff

HARVEYS LAKE - Between thrashing thunderstorms, tornado warnings and cool temperatures, the usual summer activities have been postponed at the lake. For the past few weeks people have not been eating or playing with the same force as previous years and business owners took notice.

Fortunately, the past weekend gave anxious vacationers and business owners a window of sunshine and warmth, and they took full advantage.

Ray Ostroski, co-owner of Josie's Italian Water Ice, said it had rained every day since their opening. "Friday was the first day it didn't rain. Thursday there were people just standing in the rain eating. I think they were just tired of the weather," he said.

Josie's celebrated its grand opening Saturday under the hot sun. "The response from the public has been very good. They are as excited as we are."

Just down the way a little, the Funnel Cake Haus had a similar fate. But, owner Chris Janusz takes it all in stride. "We had to pay for the nice weather we had to start the summer off this good," he said. "People are glad (the warm weather) is finally here."

Janusz said even when it's raining the lines form. "Even when it's raining and cold people will buy ice cream. I guess people need ice cream," he said with a smile.

Getting ice cream at the Funnel Cake Haus is a tradition for James Brokenshire and family. Although he has moved to Wilkes-Barre, Brokenshire still visits his parents often. "With the lake I always have someplace to go. We swim, fish and I ride my motorcycle around the lake," he said.

Kim Hritzak of Jones' Potato Pancakes said blocks of time without customers was as much a reminder of the stormy weather as thunder. "We've been pretty slow. It's usually really busy in the summer, but the past few weeks have

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Spencer family works, plays, stays together in business

By KYLIE SHAFFERKOETTER
Post Staff

LEHMAN - It's safe to say that if Sam Spencer had not struck a golf ball so well, at least 10 lives would have been very different. And local golfers would not have a 74-acre haven so close to home.

In the early 1950's, working as the golf pro for such places as Irem Temple Country Club was growing old for Sam. "He never wanted to be dictated to by the clubs. He wanted to get into his own business where there would be a decision of one," said John Spencer, Jr., Sam's grandson.

As a result, in 1953 Lehman Golf Course, the first public golf course in a 30 mile radius, was open for business.

Fast forward 45 years and the business is stronger than ever with the Spencer family still at the helm. The entire family.

After Sam retired, his son John and his wife, Fran (who passed away in 1990) ran the course and raised their nine children. Gradually, as the kids grew, they would help. Whether it was mowing the lawn or shagging balls, they all helped.

Pride fills his voice when John tells his father's story. "He started as a caddy at Valley Country Club in Hazleton, then became caddy master and assistant pro," explained John. In 1935 Sam became a member of the Professional Golf Association. "He was almost one of the original members." He even played one year in the famous Master's tournament.

Sam then worked at Elkview Country Club in Carbondale for 14 years before going to Irem Temple Country Club, where he was the club pro for 12 years. He retired from Lehman in 1974, and passed away in 1992.

John, an only child, was brought up on the course and always worked there, so it was only natural that his children do the same. "I think it's great that we work together," he said. John played golf all over Europe while he was in the Army. "He was a very good amateur player," said his daughter, Beth. He played with Jennings Randolph, Jr., who is now a golf announcer.

This is John's 45th year working at the course. He is the owner and his son, John Jr., 31, is the general manager. Beth is the golf instructor. John, Beth, John Jr., his wife Kim and their three children live together in the family home which is on the course.

The other seven children live elsewhere, but do their share of work when they can.

Beth, who is also the physical

See SPENCERS, pg 8



John Jr. and Beth Spencer stand in front of the family home and business. They are the third generation to operate the golf course.

POST PHOTO/KYLIE SHAFFERKOETTER

Virginia Banks honored as Sisters of Mercy Woman of the Year

Virginia H. Banks of Dallas has been honored as the 1998 Sisters of Mercy Woman of the Year.

Virginia (Ginger) Banks has devoted a lifetime to the service of others, particularly children with physical challenges and young women.

A Massachusetts native, she graduated from Boylston's High School of Commerce and Salter Secretarial School in Worcester. Soon after graduation, the Central Intelligence Agency in Washington, D.C. hired her where she

worked until 1956. She met her husband, the late Joseph B. Banks, in the nation's capital. Mr. Banks served as second lieutenant in the Air Force, fulfilling his military duty after graduating from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Virginia and Joe married in 1954 and planned



VIRGINIA BANKS

to return to Boston in 1956 so that Joe could complete his master's degree. Instead they came to the Wyoming Valley, Joe's hometown, where they stayed to raise their family.

Virginia was actively involved in the Parents Association at Wyoming Seminary, the school her children and husband attended. The Parents Association was instrumental in many of the school's fund raising efforts. In addition, the Association set up support or 'host' families for the resident

boarding students, and Virginia and Joe opened their home to many youngsters over the years.

King's College also benefited from Virginia and Joe's involvement. Each summer the College seeks local residents to host teachers from Ireland. Virginia and Joe participated in this exchange program for many years.

In 1983, when her husband purchased the financially troubled Pocono Downs racetrack in Wilkes-Barre, Virginia began to dedicate herself to serving the lives

of children with mental and physical challenges.

Through a special Night at the Races, Mr. and Mrs. Banks donated the entire use of the racetrack, and its employees to host an event to benefit St. Joseph's Center in Scranton. The Center treats mentally and emotionally challenged children and young adults who have multiple neurological impairments. The event, which raises about \$55,000 an-

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