

## Lake-Lehman

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her concerns to the Department of Education.

Kopcha was worried about possible legal ramifications since her signature was included on the paper work. "I signed a blank cover sheet and I asked to see the figures when they were ready. When I saw that we had \$1.5 million written in I went to Kathleen (Williams) and I told her 'this is wrong'. We had the same problem last year, we had \$2.5 million and we reported \$1.5 million."

A large property tax increase was passed following the 1996-1997 school year when the district was projecting a fund balance deficit in the amount of \$236,473. "We actually ended the year with about \$100,000 but we raised taxes in Luzerne County by 23 mills and by 18 mills in Wyoming County," said Kopcha.

A second millage increase for taxpayers residing in Luzerne County was approved in 1997-1998. "In two years, the taxes went up by 31 mills (in Luzerne County) and if you multiply that by the amount each mill generates, about \$33,000 you're getting over \$1 million every year. That's how we have \$4.2 million dollars."

Kopcha contends the district has been able to accumulate a substantial fund balance from increased revenues in the form of higher taxes while expenditures have remained constant. "There is no way on God's green earth you save \$4 million by reducing spending," she said. "I mean we have made some cuts, but the bottom line is the people in this district are overtaxed."

The issue of taxation is especially contentious at a time when Lake-Lehman is making final arrangements to float a bond issue to fund renovations and new construction in the district. "That's one thing I don't understand, why are we borrowing all this money when we have \$4 million," said Kopcha. "Even if we have a little

less than the treasurer's report said in June we can still reduce the amount we are borrowing."

Ross Elementary School expansion plans are moving forward with a descriptive account of the improvements presented at the September school board meeting. "The entire existing building will be renovated with most of the changes being cosmetic," said Doug Trumbower, district architect. "The one structural change that will be made is the walls dividing classrooms will be replaced by folding partitions much like those at Lehman-Jackson and Lake-Noxen."

The movable separations allow classrooms to be easily converted into larger spaces for group lessons. "We do a lot of cooperative learning in the district and the partitions accommodate that style of teaching," said Robert Kunkle, principal of Lehman-Jackson Elementary.

Other changes planned for the existing structure include removal of asbestos floor tile in the multipurpose room and the installation of a more efficient heating and ventilation unit. New ceilings, carpet, doors and windows will be added, as well.

Improvements to the school property include expanding the parking lot to accommodate 61 cars, changing the bus drop off and pick up area, adding a concrete sidewalk and installing a handicap accessible ramp.

The addition will include space for six new classrooms and a cafeteria. "The new wing will be constructed from concrete block exterior and interior bearing walls with a brick veneer very similar in color to that of the existing structure," said Trumbower.

The project is estimated to cost \$3 million to complete. "It's for the kids; we need this," said Kopcha. "What I'm concerned about is the kids who will be paying for this project 30 years down the line. We shouldn't take on more debt than we have to."



### Dallas Church group donates quilt

The Wilkes-Barre chapter of Project Linus donated a handmade quilt to Timmy Pocono of Plymouth. Timmy, age six, suffers from the genetic disorder Cystic Fibrosis. Donations were made to Project Linus from children who attended the Vacation Bible School that was held at Fellowship Evangelical Free Church of Dallas. The children wanted to collect money to donate to the organization, which makes comfort blankets to give to area children with special needs. The children collected a total of \$500.23 during the Bible School which ran from July 19 to July 23. A special quilt, which was signed by everyone who attended the Bible School was then presented to Timmy Pocono during Sunday services at the Fellowship Evangelical Free Church. Displaying the new quilt, from left are: Megan Pocono, Timmy Pocono and Tammy Fuhr.

### PTSO

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a student by filling out a ballot form at the high school."

Most PTSO events, like the student-of-the-month program, are conducted in cooperation with area businesses and civic organizations. Monetary contributions support the group's efforts and volunteers from the community frequently donate time. "We hold a career day for juniors and seniors in which professionals come to the school to speak about their fields of expertise and offer some insight," said Bartolini.

Projects like the Fall Coat Drive and the SPCA Food Drive offer students a chance to return the generosity shown by their communities throughout the year. "Part of our idea is to provide children with opportunities to get involved and make a difference. It makes our school better and our community stronger," said Bartolini.

Anyone who would like more information about the PTSO may call the guidance office at 674-7218.

## Ziegler

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a police officer," he said. "He and Ed Richards were the ones who got things going in the township."

Sabol remembers Ziegler as a no-nonsense man who put his advanced business degree to work for the interests of township personnel and citizens. "He was a very stern person, but he wanted to make the township better," Sabol said. "He was very shrewd with investing the police pension."

In his later years, Sabol said Ziegler would occasionally forget to give the chief his retirement check, and would be very apologetic about the error.

A bachelor since 1950, Ziegler enjoyed playing bridge in a group that met at the Irem Temple Country Club, Sabol said. "I guess he did some traveling, too."

Snowdon said Ziegler turned his attention to his daughter, Janet, who now lives in Wilkes-Barre, and to the township after his wife died. "His whole life has

*"His whole life has been his community."*

Harold Snowdon  
Lifelong friend

been his community," he said.

William Tippett, presently a township supervisor, also served on the police pension board with Ziegler, who he said "did a very, very good job." He described Ziegler as a stickler for details, who "did a lot more than I knew about."

After he retired, board members continued to invite Ziegler to the annual Christmas party, "and, of course, he came," said Tippett. He seemed in good health last December, Tippett said.

A complete obituary appears on page 14.

## Seitz attends dance program

Nicole Seitz of Dallas, was awarded a talent scholarship to attend Point Park College Summer International Dance Program this summer in Pittsburgh. The intense six week program culminated with a show on August 6 and 7. Nicole was featured in the Peasant Pas de Deux from the classical ballet, Giselle.

Nicole is a student and an instructor at the Degnan Ballet Center and a member of its resident company, Ballet Northeast where she has performed various lead and solo roles. She is a senior at Bishop O'Reilly High School where she is a member of the National Honor Society, National Language Honor Society, Spanish Club, Glee Club, Pennsylvania Junior Academy of Science, Future Business Leaders of America, Forensics Team, Cross Country Team and Assists in Choreography for the school musicals.

Nicole was a member of Pennsylvania Governor's School for the Arts in Ballet in 1998 and the



NICOLE SEITZ

Junior Leadership Wilkes-Barre Class of 1999. She was recently accepted into Who's Who Among American High School Students.

### Noxen church hosting Biblical presentation

On October 1, the Walk Thru the Old Testament seminar will be conducted at First United Methodist Church in Noxen. Internationally renowned for its innovative, entertaining presentation, the Walk Thru the Bible seminar utilizes interactive learning techniques to help people absorb and remember the key characters, geography, and major themes of the entire Old Testament. Those interested in attending the seminar should contact Pastor Keith Benjamin at Noxen First United Church at 298-2503.

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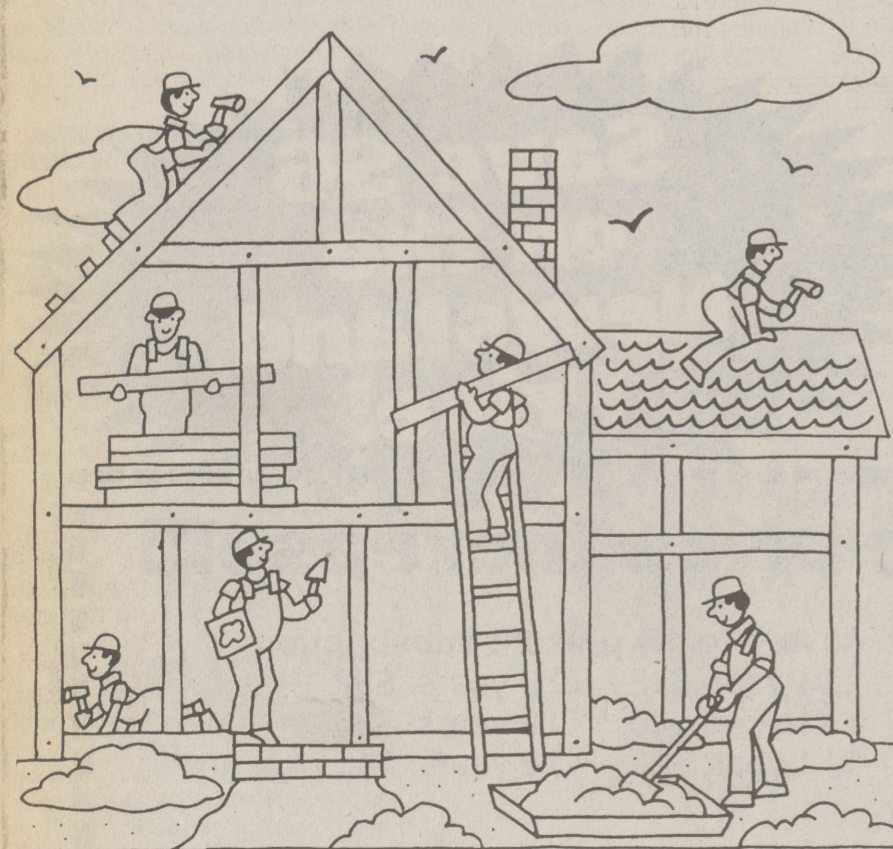
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