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Redesigned regional recreation complex cuts ballfields

By M.B. GILLIGAN Post Correspondent

LEHMAN TWP. - A new conceptual plan for the Back Mountain Sports and Recreation Complex was presented at a lightly attended public meeting on July 17. The major difference in the plan is a result of the apparent lack of interest on the part of the Back Mountain Baseball, Inc. to be involved in the project. "We took out a section of fields," said Dave Sutton, chairman of the Back Mountain Rec organization. "The last plan had five baseball fields, this one has two." Much of the plan has been reorga-

nized and now the multi-field soccer complex has been moved onto the area originally set aside for baseball and the indoor facilities. "We're happy down there because the property owners are letting us use the area now," said Dave Rosnick, president of the Back Mountain Youth Soccer Association, who has been busy preparing the fields for play. "We'll have two game and three practice fields ready for this season." According to Jack Snyder, president of Back Mountain Baseball, Inc., Julie McMonagle, peer consultant for the project, is scheduled to meet with his executive board on August 6.

"I didn't know they changed the plan. We never told them we weren't interested."

Jack Snyder President, Back Mt. Baseball Inc.

"I didn't know they changed the plan," Snyder said when asked to comment. "We never told them we weren't interested. We said we would rather stay where we are but that we could

use more facilities." The baseball organization has used land owned by Dallas School District for its ballpark since 1960. Although the rental fee is nominal, they have been responsible for upkeep and maintenance. "We would like to buy this property," said Snyder. "We would borrow the money or hold some major fund-raisers if necessary. We have to do what we have to do." There are currently more than 1,000 children involved in Back Mountain Baseball. McMonagle, peer consultant for the Management and Maintenance Plan Project, called the public meeting. She

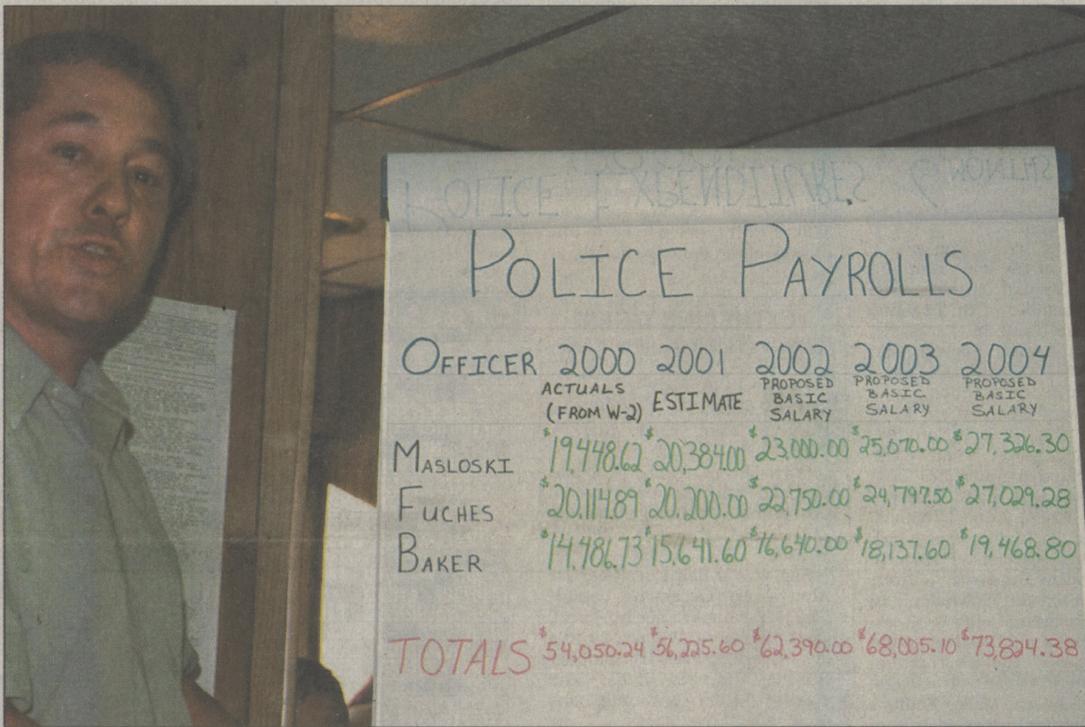
assists the organization in complying with all of the requirements of the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources grant. She has been meeting with local municipalities and organizations to explain the project and seek a commitment of support. "As far as management and maintenance is concerned, DCNR needs to know that municipalities are in support of this," she said. Many of those she has spoken to are in favor of the project and are planning to support it with either cash donations or in-kind services, but none have com-

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Lake Twp. police force dissolved

By HEATHER B. JONES Post Staff

LAKE TWP. - It was standing room only Thursday night at a special meeting of the Lake Township Board of Supervisors, as one resident after another told the board they did not want to lose their police force. Lake Township Supervisors David Walkowiak, Bob Gray, and Lonnie Platt announced a week earlier that there would be a special meeting regarding the disbanding of the Lake Township Police Force on July 19. "We wanted to hear from the citizens," Walkowiak, chairman of the board, said. After about an hour of heated discussion, during which residents presented a number of ideas on how to retain the police force, 80-year-old resident Margaret Anderson asked the supervisors, "Have you already made up your mind?" "No mama," said Walkowiak, but with the same breath he added, "At the present time, I'd like to make the motion to adopt the resolution to disband the police department effective July 31." In less than one minute, the board of supervisors introduced the motion, voted unanimously to disband the police



David Walkowiak, chairman of the Lake Township supervisors, used charts to support his contention the township can't afford its own police department.

force and adjourned the meeting. The crowd erupted in shock at how fast the meeting had turned from questions and comments about the possibility of disbanding the police, to it actually happening.

The supervisors stance was that disbanding the police department was an economic necessity for the township. In 2000, the Lake Township police force cost the municipality \$98,677. Wages for the two full-time officers and one

part-time officer accounted for \$54,050, and the purchase of a new police car accounted for \$23,575 of the overall costs.

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Wal-Mart says it's not coming here

By HEATHER B. JONES Post Staff

DALLAS TWP. - Rumor has it, the Back Mountain will be home to a new Wal-Mart Supercenter, but it appears the rumor is only that, at least for now. Back Mountain residents have been talking for several years about the possibility of Wal-Mart Stores, Inc., becoming a neighbor. "I thought they were going to be breaking ground soon," said Phyllis Clemow from behind the counter at Steven's Town and Country Cleaners. But what Phyllis heard was just rumor. The 50 acre parcel of land which all the speculation revolves around is located on Route 415 in Dallas Township. In February, the land was rezoned commercial, said Leonard Kozick, Dallas Township zoning officer. "People tell me that Wal-Mart is interested," said J. Naparolo, owner of the 50 acres. He said a man from Harrisburg had first approached him with the Wal-Mart idea. When Naparolo called Wal-Mart to see what the story was, he was told Wal-Mart is not looking in the Dallas area at this time. Naparolo, from Williamsburg, Va., bought the property in Dallas about

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Kocis hearing continued to August 3

By HEATHER B. JONES Post Staff

DALLAS TWP. - The preliminary hearing for Bryan Kocis of 60 Midland Drive has been granted a continuance until August 3 by District Justice James Tupper. Kocis, 39, was arrested July 12 at his Dallas Township home for statutory sexual assault, aggravated indecent assault, indecent assault, involuntary deviate sexual intercourse, corruption of minors, sexual abuse of children, and unlawful contact or communication with a minor. A 15-year-old boy from South Whitehall Township told police he met Kocis through the internet. On two separate occasions the boy said Kocis picked him up in South Whitehall Township and drove him to 60 Midland Drive. The boy told investigators Kocis had performed sexual acts with him. Dallas Township Police Chief Robert Jolley said a third party had heard about the boy's involvement with Kocis and told the boy's parents. The parents contacted the police in South Whitehall Township and from there the Dallas Township Police and the Luzerne County District Attorney's Office were notified. The preliminary hearing was original

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Keeping a home for Millie Harveys Lake family defends care at White Haven

By HEATHER B. JONES Post Staff

HARVEYS LAKE - The fight to keep state facilities for the mentally retarded open is a personal battle for one Harveys Lake mother. Angry, scared and disgusted are a few of the words which describe how Marion Attanasio feels about the Pennsylvania State Office of Mental Retardation's five year plan to re-tool and improve the mental retardation system in the state. Mildred Attanasio, Marion's daughter, has lived at White Haven Center (WHC) for the past 29 years. "She's getting special care at White Haven Center and we are just pleased with what she has up there," Marion said. She can't say enough wonderful things about the people who work at the facility and who have cared for her daughter for almost three decades. Mildred was born on February 15, 1956, a healthy and beautiful baby, to Marion and Carmen Attanasio, Jr. Millie, as her family calls her, spoke her first words at age 1. At 15 months, she



Marion Attanasio looked at a picture of her daughter, Millie, in a family scrapbook.

stood up and took her first steps. By age 4, her mother said she was a delightful child who was smart as a whip. Millie is the eldest of the three Attanasio children. She was a good big sister to her baby brothers, Carmen III, and Michael. Millie also loved music and her church. Sitting in her home at Harveys Lake, Marion revisits the day her life changed

forever. One Sunday afternoon, in 1960, 4 1/2 year old Millie came home from church and told her mother, "Mommy, I don't feel good." "I said, honey, go up and lay down; I'll be right up," Marion said. She will never be able to forget that day. It would be the last time Marion would ever hear her little girl call her Mommy. "Within five minutes I was up there and she was in convulsions lying in bed," Marion said. "I screamed to my husband who didn't hear me, so I took my shoe off and threw it down the steps. He came running, and he said 'what's the matter?'" Millie was having violent convulsions and her father rushed her to Nesbitt Hospital. Marion, a nervous wreck, stayed behind with the two boys. When her husband came back several hours later, he told Marion Millie was not going to make it. "My gut reaction was if Millie dies, I want to die too," Marion recalls. "I didn't know that at

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