

Firefighters

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ber them every day." Assistant Fire Chief Ted Wright gave an emotional account of what 911 means to him. "When I hear people refer to September 11 as 911, I get angry. It's a slap in the face to the brave men and women who serve their communities and risk their lives. Saying or calling 911 should always bring about a good feeling and a positive result. We are the first line of defense. A little bit of all of us died that day, but we are a proud group, and we live to serve."

Wright read some e-mail messages he had received from fellow firefighters in New York City. One gave an account of those lost. One out of every 34 firefighters, or 343 people, were killed. Most of the upper command was wiped out. Thirty-two battalion chiefs perished. Some entire fire companies are gone.

One firefighter told Wright about the death of Father Michael Judge, the New York City Fire Department chaplain. "He was giving a firefighter last rights when he was hit by objects falling from the buildings," he said. "Then two firefighters carried his body to the nearest Catholic church about a block away and lay him near the altar. When asked why they did that, one said, 'I guess God knew that many firefighters were going to lose their lives today, and Father Mike would be needed to help at the gates of heaven.'"

At the close of the service, the Ceol-Mor Pipe and Drum Band played Amazing Grace. The music echoed throughout the auditorium and adjacent hallways. People quietly left and made their way back to their cars. They had come to pray and pay their respects, and it seemed that there was nothing more to say.

Participating companies were Dallas, Harveys Lake, Kunkle, Jackson Twp., Trucksville, Shavertown, Idetown, Lehman Twp., Franklin Twp., Noxen, Mt. Zion, Lake Silkworth, Northmoreland Twp., Fairmont Twp., Sweet Valley, Kingston Twp. EMS, Harding, Exeter Twp. and Bear Creek Twp.

School bids

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Angelo DeCesaris, president of the school board, expressed concern over the growing numbers and said he wished to "make people aware that these costs are getting substantial. We need to take a look at them on a monthly basis as we go along through this next three years of construction."

Asked about the costs of the ongoing Ross Elementary school project, DeCesaris said, "I took a look at the contracts for some of the prime contractors; we have about \$487,000 yet to pay. That's in total."

Doug Trumbower of Doug F. Trumbower and Associates, Inc. Architects and Engineers stated that he had attended a Monday afternoon meeting with Kathleen Williams, Lake-Lehman school board business manager, and assured the board that "taking the elementary school and senior high school into consideration, we still have about \$3 million in funds to do the athletic facility."

After the additions and alterations to the senior high school, Lake-Lehman students can celebrate a new combined middle-senior high school where the existing high school now stands.

In other business:

- The Head Start Program has donated playground equipment to Lake-Noxen Elementary School.

- Principal John Oliver announced that the guidance department of Lake-Lehman Senior High School is expecting over 50 colleges and universities to take part in their annual College Fair, October 18, at 1 p.m. The public is encouraged to attend.

- The N.E. Pennsylvania Theatre Alliance awarded the Lake-Lehman Senior High School cast and crew of the musical "The Pajama Game," directed by music teacher John Pinenio, Best High School Production of 2001.

- As the next regular Committee-of-the-Whole meeting conflicts with Election Day, the meeting has been postponed to the following Tuesday, Nov. 13, at 7 p.m. and the next regular meeting for general purposes will be held Tuesday, Nov. 20, at 7 p.m. Both will be held in the music room of the Lehman-Jackson Elementary School.



A fire truck from Kunkle was one of many fire and rescue vehicles draped in black as a sign of mourning for their fallen brothers.



Shavertown volunteer firefighter Clarence Newcomb watches over Phoenix and Ember, mascots and friends.



Bernie Castillo, a member of the Harveys Lake American Legion, held the American flag during the memorial service.

Police

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said Melnick. Taxpayers at the meeting don't want the contract dispute to go that far.

"I hope that you do find a way to get some discussions underway," said Alan Pugh, a Lower Demunds Road resident. "I hope that this can be settled before arbitration, where it costs money for the township."

Salary levels is one issue the township supervisors and the police officers disagree on. The average salary of a Dallas Township police officer is more than \$4,000 a year less than the average salary of a Kingston Township police officer.

"We pay for a lot of things in the Back Mountain to have good facilities, a good life. I don't mind paying a little more to have our cops paid at least equal to the rest of the Back Mountain," said Pugh.

Tony Kaiser III, an Overbrook Road resident, was outraged over the low salaries of the Dallas Township police officers.

"You people have learned nothing in the last month in a half from what happened in New York. The police officers in this township are our first line of defense. Some of these guys might go out and not come home," Kaiser said. "You guys don't take any of this into consideration. They're underpaid. They're not up to par with everyone else."

"Are you willing to go out there and stick your life out on the line and get shot and killed? Are you?" Kaiser asked the board of supervisors.

"I don't know that anyone has been shot lately around here," responded Glenn Howell, township secretary and treasurer. "We think they're great guys."

"Are you willing to go out there and stick your life out on the line and get shot and killed? Are you?"

Tony Kaiser III
Overbrook Rd.
Question to township supervisors

because we hired them. They do a good job," Walter said. "If these guys want to come in and talk, let them come in and talk. But don't come to a meeting with all their friends and parents."

"I'm a parent and proud of my son," said Tom Feeney, father of police officer Brian Feeney. "And I'm here to ask you guys why are you negating their feelings and wishes to do a job for this township. And now you're trying to be funny by saying, 'I'm not going to negotiate with parents.' Fine. Negotiate with taxpayers because that's what I am first. I'm a taxpayer."

The other major issue holding up contract talks is health care insurance. Under the current contract, five out of seven full time police officers' medical benefits are fully paid by the township. The two other officers pay half of their medical benefits.

All non-contracted township employees receive fully paid medical benefits from the township.

Residents at the board of supervisors' meeting had ideas on the health care coverage issue. Residents suggested looking into other providers or plans than the current Blue Cross Traditional Plan.

"We had a representative here

from Blue Cross and we looked into the First Priority Health with the Access Care. It turned out they were going to be cheaper, I believe," said Fred Rosencrans, police officer.

"I had a representative come and talk to all the supervisors and before any decision could be made, the police officers filed for arbitration" said Nancy Balutis, assistant secretary and treasurer.

Medical benefits ended up another dead end in the contract negotiation talks between the township and the police which led to arbitration.

"It's hard to find employees who care about the job," said Allen Pugh. "You've got a lot of guys who do care about the job."

After the turmoil of negotiations and pending arbitration, many police officers are worried about their futures in Dallas Township.

"I'm looking elsewhere, I'll tell you that," admits Fred Rosencrans. After a pause he added, "I enjoy working here, believe it or not. It's a nice place to work. The guys I work with are great, we all get along well. It's a nice community and I don't want to leave. But paying half my benefits and living paycheck to paycheck isn't a good way to come in to work."

"... paying half my benefits and living paycheck to paycheck isn't a good way to come in to work."

Fred Rosencrans
Township police officer

Saturday, October 27 Downtown Wilkes-Barre



Everything you need for a day of fun with the family can be found in downtown Wilkes-Barre October 27. The United Way in conjunction with area businesses and organizations have planned an action-packed day of contests, prizes, good music and great food.

Best of all, proceeds benefit the **United Way's Success by 6[®]** initiative. So get the family together and join us in downtown Wilkes-Barre for Family Fest 2001.

special thanks to **Gerrity's** supermarket

Bring your appetite, and leave your diet at home...

2nd Annual Rib Fest 12 noon until 5:30 p.m.

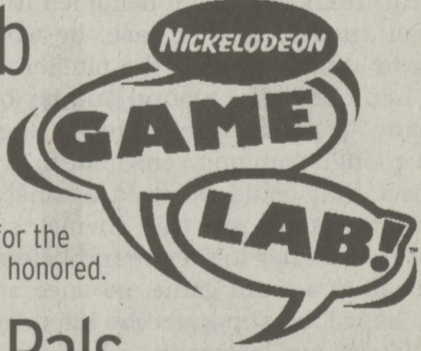
Food, fun and music are on the menu in Public Square. Local companies will prepare some of the best ribs this side of the Mississippi. Join us for some great food and live entertainment. Tickets can be purchased the day of the event. Participating Companies include: Allied Services • Alltel • Blue Cross of NEPA • Gerrity's • Greater WB Chamber of Business and Industry • Luz. County Head Start sponsored by the WB/Scranton Penguins • NAACP/Tyre Square Club sponsored by PNC • PMMC • Parente Randolph • Rosenn Jenkins & Greenwald LLP, Mercy Healthpartners/Metz and the Times Leader.

Get slimed...

Nickelodeon Game Lab

Two separate shows will begin at 1pm & 4pm

The F.M. Kirby Center hosts this popular event based on the Game Lab attraction at Nickelodeon Studios in Orlando Florida. Join in the excitement and be there to cheer on selected audience members as they participate in a series of games. All tickets are general admission and are on sale now at Gerrity's Supermarkets and the front desk of the Times Leader. All tickets sold for the rescheduled Sept. 15 show will be honored.



Take a slap shot...

Wilkes-Barre/Scranton Penguin Puc Pals

Kids can learn the basics of hockey by participating in a street hockey clinic in downtown Wilkes-Barre hosted by the Penguins and the Wilkes-Barre CYC.

Come and Cheer on kids with special needs Allied Services Half Mile Fun Run

Begins at 11 am

Children ages 5-15 with special needs will participate in a 1/2 mile fun run beginning at 11 a.m. at the Ramada Hotel on Public Square. For registration information, call Kelly Martin-Johnson at 826-3738.

See the wonder in their eyes...

Osterhout Story Time

12-1pm & 2pm-3pm

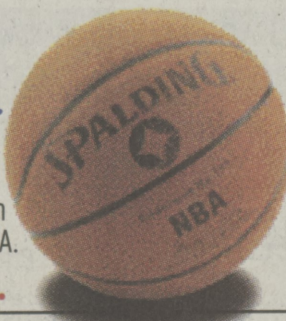
Bring your children to listen to local celebrities and members of the community narrate their favorite children's books.

Get hooked on hoops...

Pepsi Shootout

Teams will compete in this popular 3-on-3 basketball shootout contest beginning at 9:30 a.m. and played on Wilkes-Barre's Public Square. Sponsored by Pepsi Bottling Company and hosted by the Wilkes-Barre YMCA.

Look for the registration form in the Times Leader or call 823-2191 ext. 129 for details.



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