

Townend

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He is also known for his role as the director of Luzerne County Civil Defense during the 1972 flood sparked by tropical storm Agnes and his involvement in many community organizations.

"My father was a tremendous, ethically principled person," said daughter Cynthia Donaldson of Lamoine, Maine. "He was very committed to his friends and family."

A lawyer by trade, Townend worked in his law office in Wilkes-Barre's Public Square up until his death, friends said.

"He went to work every day," said Lt. Col. Pat Riley, commander of the 92nd Aerial Port Squadron, an Air Force Reserve unit based in Wyoming. "There was a right way to do things, and Frank always did that. He was moral and decent. He was a living link to the past."

Townend was involved in many major news events linked to the Wyoming Valley during his life.

On June 23, 1972, he ordered residents to leave their homes at 6 a.m., about four hours before officials predicted the Susquehanna River would rise beyond the dike system, which then stood at 35 feet.

In 1996, he said that controversial decision was one of the most agonizing of his life.

"With the concurrence of the rest of the staff," he said in a 1998 Times Leader interview, "it was the hardest decision I ever had to make."

Donaldson on Sunday said people would sometimes approach her father and tell them they remembered his voice from his work during the flood.

"He loved it when people came up to him, not because they remembered him, but because he felt like he provided a service to people during that time," she said.

Townend joined the Pennsylvania National Guard's 109th Field Artillery Regiment in 1938 after graduating from Princeton University and Harvard Law School. He was promoted to major during his four years of service in the European Theater during World War II. He was awarded the Bronze Star and five battle stars during the war.

He also served in the Korean War, held various command positions and rose to the rank of major general before retiring from the Guard.

"He was a mentor and a role model to any military person in this area," Riley said. "People really looked up to him. He was the grandfather to us all."

Early on the morning of Sept. 11, 1950, Townend was the commander aboard a train carrying 700 troops from the 109th that had been mobilized for the Korean War.

The troop train was carrying soldiers from Wilkes-Barre to Camp Atterbury, Ind., when it stopped to allow workers to repair a broken air hose. Another train, the Spirit of St. Louis, ran through two warning signals before it attempted to stop.

It was too late, and the trains collided, killing 33 soldiers from the Wyoming Valley. Townend tried to wake soldiers sleeping in the rear cars.

It was his "greatest disappointment," Townend said at a September ceremony marking the tragedy.

Donaldson said her father never got over the loss.

"He held those men in his heart for the rest of his life," she said.

Townend's involvement with the Wyoming Valley's Veterans Day Parade stemmed back to the 1940s, Riley said.

Some years ago, Townend produced a document from 1946 that showed he was the chief of staff for the annual affair, Riley said.

During a recent planning session, Riley said, the talk was about the parade's spotty attendance every year.

According to Riley, Townend stood up and said: "It doesn't matter if there are 10,000 people or no one shows up. We are still going to march to honor the veterans."

"It wasn't a commercial venture to him," Riley said.

Townend was also the long-time solicitor for Dallas Township, said Phil Walter, a township supervisor.

"Frank was a very community-orientated individual," Walter said. "In the 36 years I have been on the board, he missed very few meetings. He worked right up until the end. He never wanted to give it up."

"Somebody would tell him they were retiring and he would say 'Why are you going to retire?' He was very talented and a good man. He was the type of guy who didn't mind working."

Townend was active in many community organizations during his life, including the Wyoming Valley United Way, Nesbitt Memorial Hospital, the Greater Wilkes-Barre Chamber of Commerce, the Westmoreland Club, the Kiwanis Club, the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the American Legion, among others, according to Times Leader archives.

He also ran for judge of the Luzerne County Court of Common Pleas in 1973, but lost.

At a recent Veterans Day Parade breakfast, when asked what personal sacrifices he made for his country, Townend said: "I don't look at it that way."

In addition to Donaldson and her husband, Gordon, Townend is survived by his wife, Lenchen Coughlin; a son, Stephen, a doctor; Stephen's wife Suzie; and six grandchildren: Morgaen Donaldson, Cary Donaldson, Nell Donaldson, Stark Townend, Ben Donaldson, and Dunham Townend. Townend is also survived by one brother, Henry. He was preceded in death by a son, David.

Editor's Note: This article originally appeared in the Nov. 26 issue of The Times Leader.



Work has begun at Lake-Lehman High School, but one contractor has asked to withdraw its bid and another is asking for changes in its performance bond.

L-L school

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said. "It seems to me we are putting ourselves out for a lot of risk on a \$11 million project that could probably be held up because we can't get the work done right."

The bid withdrawal by Construction Unlimited resulted in the re-awarding of the bid to Laguna Plumbing of Hazleton and will cost the school district an additional \$65,333. If the next lowest bidder must be chosen for the electrical contract it will cost the district another \$23,000.

"But how many thousands of dollars is it going to cost us if these people can't do the work?" Boytin asked.

"If you have trouble getting bonding, you have trouble," board member Charles Balavage said. "I voted no on the original vote and I think you're going to have problems."

Although he said he had a personal dilemma as he works for the next lowest bidder for the electrical contract, Balavage pointed out that the next two bidders are "fine contractors too and they won't have any problem getting bonding."

Trumbower cautioned the board that many games are played in the construction business and there are many experts who want to sue and file actions for lost costs. "We have to be careful we don't take action that will cause this project to go to the courts by a bidder who thinks he's being treated unfairly," he said. "There are people in the construction industry that are professionals at filing for profitability that never did exist and they are winning, especially when it comes to public work."

Board members decided to do more research on the issue and place the issue on the Dec. 4 board meeting agenda. Angelo DeCesaris, president of the board, asked Trumbower and Savage to be prepared to move to the next step in the process if the board voted to deny Main

"I've been doing this stuff for 35 years and this is the first time I've ever experienced this."

Douglas Trumbower
Trumbower and Associates

Electric's request. Trumbower said the next step would be to either accept the next lowest bid or rebid the contract.

Later in the meeting, board members seemed taken aback when John Bodner of Bodner Sales and Service of Berwick spoke up during visitors' comments, saying his company had submitted a bid that would save the district about \$7,000 on faster and better copier machines than the recommended bid proposal on the agenda. Bodner, who came to the meeting to find out the results of his sealed bid on the copier machine systems contract, said he has had a good working relationship with the school district for almost 20 years and was very surprised by the higher cost of a proposal that was on the verge of acceptance. After some muddled discussion and shuffling of papers, DeCesaris moved to table action on the proposal from Golden Business Machines, Inc. of Kingston until the Dec. 4 meeting so the matter could be looked into further.

Moderno Rossi, second vice president of the school board, informed the audience that anyone could call the school and be put on the bid list for any item or service to the school district. "We look forward to that," he said. "We can perhaps get a better price that way, the more

bids people put in."

In other business;

- The solicitor reported a doubling of cost would occur as a result of additional required bonds if the board approved the appointment of deputy tax collectors. The board moved to address the request by two tax collectors to appoint deputy tax collectors at the Dec. 4 meeting.

- Savage also said audits of the tax collectors can be done by an independent auditor, as is currently the case, or by the municipalities of the district on the condition all are involved and qualified.

- The solicitor will send a letter notifying tax collectors that extra fees being charged for certain reports should cease, as the board has not approved them.

- Bob Roberts, superintendent of Lake-Lehman School District, reported outstanding accomplishments by the district's sports teams, including the junior high school football team, which took their league championship and which their division at the Wyoming Valley Conference Junior High Football Championships, and the junior high field hockey team, who won their league and District 2 championships.

- Roberts congratulated the Middle Level Educational Building Builder's Club on raising \$2,000 for the United Way and providing 14 local families with Thanksgiving dinners.

- The board will meet for a re-organization meeting on Tues., Dec. 4, at 6 p.m. in the music room of the Lehman-Jackson Elementary School. A special meeting for general purposes will be held immediately following and the next regular committee of the whole meeting will follow the special meeting.

Back Mountain Memorial Library new books

The Back Mountain Memorial Library, 96 Huntsville Road, Dallas, announces the addition of the following books to their collection.

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- "Mercy" by Julie Garwood
- "A Heart of Stone" by Renate Dorrestein
- "The Talisman" by Stephen King & Peter Straub
- "Grand Avenue" by Joy Fielding
- "The Mitford Snowmen" by Jan Karon
- "Half a Life" by V.S. Naipaul
- "Portrait in Sepia" by Isabel Allende

NON-FICTION

- "The Accidental President" by David A. Kaplan
- "The final Days" by Barbara Olson
- "Wittgenstein's Poker" by David Edmonds & John Eidinow
- "The Naked Chef" by Jamie Oliver
- "Sicilian Home Cooking" by Wanda & Giovanna Tornabene
- "Chef on a Shoestring" edited by Andrew Friedman
- Twin Towers: the life of New York City's World Trade Center" by Angus K. Gillespie
- "Your Life is Worth Living: the Christian philosophy of life" by Fulton J. Sheen. Presented by Charles Shafer

BIOGRAPHY

- "Seldom Disappointed: a memoir" by Tony Hillerman
- "Call Me Crazy" by Anne Heche
- "Thirteen Senses" by Victor Villaseñor

LARGE PRINT NON-FICTION

- "Christmas in Plains: memories" by Jimmy Carter

REFERENCE

- "McGraw-Hill Yearbook of Science and Technology"
- "Thomas Regional Industrial Buying Guide 2002"
- "World Chamber of Commerce Directory"

- "The American Prison System" edited by Peter G. Herman
- "Campus-Free College Degrees" by Marcie Kisner Thorson

BOOKS ON CASSETTE

- "Coldheart Canyon" by Clive Barker
- "Protect and Defend" by Richard North Patterson
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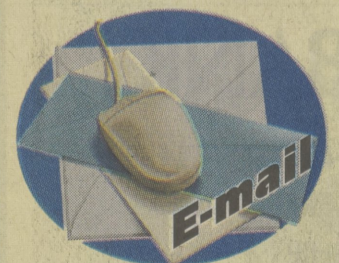
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