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SERVING THE COMMUNITIES OF THE DALLAS & LAKE-LEHMAN SCHOOL DISTRICTS



SPORTS

Mountaineers finally get to swim at home. Pg 11.



SCHOOL

Lehman-Jackson students help others. Pg 16.



COMMUNITY

50-year church members honored. Pg 6.

Rash of accidents attributed to weather, traffic volume

By ERIN YOUNGMAN
Post Staff

KINGSTON TWP. — The Back Mountain has experienced three car accident fatalities and a large increase in the number of collisions in recent weeks.

By December 9, the number of accidents in Kingston Township had already passed the total for all of November; and two accidents in the last three weeks caused fatalities.

During the same period, though, the number of accidents in Dallas Township has not been out of the ordinary.

"It looks like we're going to have another 30 accident December," said Police Chief James Balavage of Kingston Township about the high number accidents that have already occurred this month. In the last 15 years, Balavage said accident totals in December have hit 30 only two other times, in 1993

and again in 2001.

When asked what is normal for this time of the year, Balavage responded "Not this much!"

In the month of November, Kingston Township recorded 18 accidents. By December 9, the township already had more than 20. Balavage attributes the high numbers to the weather and the high volume of traffic.

He said on December 5, the day of a

heavy snow, the township experienced eight accidents. In the following days, when the roads were still icy in areas, at least 12 more occurred.

"It snowed so early in the season, people weren't prepared to drive in it. The forecast was off — it caused a lot of people to venture out and get caught in it."

Balavage said that he and his officers also noticed that a high number of the

accidents during the day of the snow and the days following involved four-wheel-drive vehicles.

He said the high number could correspond to the high proportion of people in the Back Mountain that drive four-wheel-drive vehicles. "Or, people who drive them have a false sense of security because they are four-wheel-drive," said Balavage.

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Minor glitch, major progress reported at middle school

By ERIN YOUNGMAN
Post Staff

DALLAS TWP. — After months of construction project turmoil, missed deadlines and withheld payments, Monday night's reports on the middle school construction project were mostly routine and showed progress on schedule — with the exception of a minor pool setback.

Paul Degillio of Foreman Burkavage and Len Gallo, Project Manager for Reynolds Construction Company, gave the updates that outlined progress and completion dates for classrooms, auditorium seating, and wall tile and tennis courts, all currently on schedule to be completed by April.

"They've gotten a lot completed and stayed on the contractors. They've made sure the project has stayed on the new schedule," said Gil Griffiths, Superintendent of Schools.

A minor setback with the pool was reported. The wheels that hold up the moveable bulkhead, which allows the pool to be changed to different lengths, broke, and damaged tile along the side of the pool.

Degillio said the problem was caused by the installation of wheels that were not large enough to support the weight of the bulkhead. He said larger wheels would be installed and the tile replaced.

Finally, Degillio reported that the new campus sign for the corner of Route 309 and Hildebrandt Road has come back from the manufacturer. When originally discussed in September, the bid amount was \$32,000 for the electronic sign that will be able to flash upcoming events to passing motorists.

According to Michael Speziale, assistant superintendent, the sign will have two components. One section will be static for regular events and another section will flash electronic messages for "those kinds of things we want to draw attention to" said Speziale, such as early dismissals and student activities.

In other business:

• The board accepted the resignations of head varsity baseball coach Stephen Federici and assistant varsity baseball

See DALLAS, pg 3

Griffiths named to state panel

It was announced at Monday's board meeting that Dr. Gilbert Griffiths, Dallas Superintendent, was recently appointed to the Professional Standards and Practices Commission (PSPC).

Griffiths was appointed by Governor Mark Schweiker in the late legislative session before the Thanksgiving holiday. The commission is made up of 13 members from around the state that are administrators, teachers, higher education persons and representatives from the general public.

The commission hears cases dealing with teachers and administrators whose licenses are in jeopardy. The commission then makes determinations on whether their licenses should be terminated.

"I really enjoy school law," said Griffiths about the appointment, "and this is one of the few commissions where I can use my background."



POST PHOTO/CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK

Bright nosed and bushy tailed

Cupid (Michelle Maransky, left) and Rudolph (Denise Swida) rubbed noses before the performance of Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer at the Trucksville Nursery School Friday night. The show is put on each year for the children, by the Parent Enrichment Group. More photos on page 4.

Students pitch in to help fill food pantry

☐ Holidays are covered, but the need doesn't end

By M.B. GILLIGAN
Post Correspondent

The Back Mountain Food Pantry is getting a helping hand from two Lake-Lehman seniors and the staff members of the North East District Office of the Pennsylvania Department of Health.

"I saw the clip on the news about the food pantry and I suggested it for this year," said Mary Beth Farrell, District Executive Director of the North East Office. "Every year our staff picks a charity to support. We have a health center in each of the 10 counties we serve and they will collect food at each of those centers," she said.

Bonnie Donovan of Harveys Lake, a staff member, then volunteered the services of her daughter, Laura, and her friend, Laura Matzel. "They had been collecting food as part of their senior project," Donovan said. "They decorated a big box for our office collection and they'll transport all of the food for us."

The girls started their project with a collection at Our Lady of Victory Church at Harveys Lake. "We put col-

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Misericordia dedicates hall to founders

DALLAS — The College Misericordia family honored the institution's founders and sponsors, the Religious Sisters of Mercy, at an aspecial Mass and dedication ceremony on Sunday, December 8. The College's 78-year-old Administration Building now bears the name Mercy Hall in honor of this group of women who brought higher education to Luzerne County in 1924.

Students, staff and faculty paid tribute to the Sisters, along with alumni, select donors and members of the Board of Trustees and advisory groups.

The day's events began with a Mass at 12:30 p.m. in the Chapel, presided by Most Reverend Bishop James C. Timlin. A choir of students, alumni, faculty and staff added a musical accompaniment.

Following Mass, Bishop Timlin performed a blessing of Mercy Hall, then participated in a special dedication ceremony at 1:30 p.m. in the lobby of the building. Representatives of all areas of college life commented on the contributions of the Sisters of Mercy in the success of College Misericordia.

Sandy Insalaco Sr., Chairman of the



Sisters Core Maria Mulhern, Marie Dolores Moore, Rgina Kiel, and Marina Culp gathered in the new Founders Room in celebration.

Board of Trustees, said about the Sisters, "On behalf of the Board of Trustees, on this, your special day, we honor the Sisters of Mercy, our valiant women. Some are physically here with us today, some are here in spirit only. It was and is you who shaped this College into what it is today, and it is your vision for this institution that drives College Misericordia forward, keeping open the gateway to greatness, to a better life for those we serve."

Rosemary Sigmond, a member of the board of trustees and co-chair of the Advancing the Vision fundraising campaign, unveiled an impressive tile mural ac-

knowledging gifts to the recently completed \$5.3 million effort.

Later, guests attended a special dedication of the Founders Room on the second floor. The Founders Room is a lasting tribute to CM's founders, the Sisters of Mercy, and features artifacts, words and images describing their contributions to the success of College Misericordia. Guests toured the new classrooms and student services areas of Mercy Hall and enjoyed light refreshments and stories about College Misericordia in the past and the present.

The Religious Sisters of Mercy laid the cornerstone in 1922 for College Misericordia, Luzerne County's first four-year college. Overcoming the challenges of World War I and the economic strife that ensued, the Sisters persisted in their vision to establish a college for the betterment of the community. The College was opened to students on Mercy Day, September 24, 1924. One building contained all functions of the College. Known for most of its existence as the Administration Building, the facility was expanded and renovated over the years to accommodate the growing needs of the student body. During

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