

Lehman

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get were taking cuts. The combination of rising costs and a fixed tax rate of 14 mills have put the township in a precarious financial position, Sutton said. He said police department costs such as increases in the cost of salaries, training, vehicles, and equipment have drained the budget.

The township could petition to raise taxes, but Sutton said he doesn't want to go that route. He said the board made a variety of decisions before coming to this point, but that there are no more options.

In July, the police department changed its Blue Cross/Blue Shield medical insurance to avoid a planned 30 percent hike in premiums.

"Last year we didn't have a penny to pave," said Sutton about the 50 or so miles of roadway the township is responsible for. Patching was the only improvement made in the township.

"In 14 years this is the first time that we did not give any pay increases. We're not in trouble, but we could easily be," said Sutton.

Sutton said the final decision to eliminate the position hasn't yet been made.

"It's pretty much decided, but it's not official. We still have to write a letter to the state police," said Sutton. "None of us want to do this."

For the last two years the department has had four full-time officers and eight part-time officers. The change will reduce the department by one part-time and full-time officer.

Kocher said most of the time the department will have an officer on duty. Two shifts a week will be covered by the state police. "It (when state police will cover) will be the times of day when there is the least chance to be a problem," said Sutton.

"Friday and Saturday midnight shifts will still be covered (by Lehman police), they're generally our busiest," said Kocher.

Asked whether he felt one officer is enough, Kocher responded, "Most of the time I would always hope we could beef up some of the night shift. Right now we'd be happy just going back to 24/7."

Sutton said his only concern about state police coverage is response time. "There aren't a whole lot (of officers) on to respond to municipalities," he said.

Lehman Township joined the nascent Back Mountain Council of Governments (COG) at the end of last year. Asked whether the issue is something to be addressed within the COG, Sutton said, "I'm telling you, regionalization is something that's got to happen sooner or later. There is so much duplication of services."



POST PHOTO/CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK

Lake-Lehman cheerleaders, wearing their "milk mustaches," from left, first row: Danny Evans, Tiffany Harris. Second row: Felicia Walsh, Dana Colfey. Third row: Kim Hartman, Ashley Basar, Caitlin Schuler, Erika Steele. Back row: Cheri Ross, Briana Maslowski, Ainsley MacDougall, Missy Simpson.

Cheerleaders

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corporates two health benefits of drinking milk, and a group photo of the girls sporting their milk mustaches was also required.

Cheerleading isn't just a seasonal sport, and being an All Star makes life more intense with extra practices and extra costs. Fundraising activities help in lowering expenses such as camp, purchasing their own uniforms, warm-ups, gymnastic costs, which has been introduced this year to keep the girls on the ever growing competitive level as well as the high cost of travel and the competition fees. The cheerleaders pay for the costs themselves.

Last year Lake-Lehman had a taste of having one of the first co-ed squads in our area, and not only did well but took the 2002 National Championship title at the Battle at the Capital in Washington, D.C.

Absent from photo are: Ainsley Schuler, Maura Dougher, and Kristie Taylor, and Christina Reimard.

BMT Seniors to meet

The Back Mountain Seniors will meet on February 6 at 1 p.m. in St. Therese's Church Hall on Davis St. and Pioneer Ave. in Shavertown.

Members are asked to please attend. The agenda includes the election of officers and collection of dues. Suggestions for the coming year's programs an activities will be welcome.

The club is non-denominational and new members are welcome.

For information call 696-1828 or 696-3095.

Harveys Lake

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defendant. That would raise a host of legal challenges.

Robert Prescott, a defendant in one of Musial's cases, said he definitely plans to challenge his arrest. Prescott was charged with resisting arrest and disorderly conduct in a disturbance with neighbors outside his home in June. His case is scheduled for trial in March, but Prescott said he expects it will be dropped.

For cases that have been resolved, Blum said challenging the case might not be worth the risk, especially if more serious charges were dropped as part of

a guilty plea. In those cases the threat of rearrest remains.

"If they want, they can try to challenge the results of the plea, but it might not be in their best interest to do so because it might bring back the more serious charge," Blum said.

Blum said most of the traffic citations cases also would not be worth challenging because the cost of paying an attorney to challenge the case would far exceed the fine the person paid.

This article appeared in original form in the Times Leader.

Trucksville U.M.W. to meet February 4

The United Methodist Women of the Trucksville United Methodist Church will gather in the Fellowship Hall of the Educational building for their monthly meeting on February 4 at 1:30 p.m. The program, "Deeds in Faith and Faith in Deeds" will be presented by Betty June Mathers. Refreshments will be served by Evelyn Casey and Maude McHenry.

The annual Interfaith Tea will be held on February 18 at 1:30 p.m. at the Luzerne United Methodist Church, Bennett Street, Luzerne.

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Cub Scout Pack 281 upcoming events

Cub Scout Pack 281, Gate of Heaven Church, has scheduled the following events:

"Countries of the World" window display, Besecker's Realty, Main St., Sat. Feb. 1.

Scout Sunday Service, Dallas United Methodist Church, Sun. Feb. 2 10:30 a.m.

Blue and Gold Dinner, Gate of Heaven School, Fri. Feb. 21 6:30 p.m.

Huntsville U.M. holds pizza fundraiser

The second Friday of each month the Huntsville United Methodist Church will be selling "pizza" as a church fundraiser. You may call any church member or the church office phone 675-3375 and leave a message if you wish to contact the church, and your call will be returned to you. This fundraiser will go on each month until the Lenten season. The cost of the pizza is \$6 for 12 large cuts. pastor W. James Pall is the church pastor.

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