

Peruginos

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her family.

"You didn't go out back then and, always, when you would visit there would be a brother or a sister to sit between you," explained Mrs. Perugino.

John Perugino served two years in the Italian army before he was able to marry. His duty included guarding the excavation site at Pompeii that was started by Mussolini.

After his tour of duty, the Peruginos married in a civil ceremony before a justice of the peace in August, but did not start their true married life together until their church wedding in February 1933. They moved to Kingston on December 6, 1934 under the sponsorship of John Perugino's sister who was already living there.

"I got out just in time," he said. "They were trying to call me back into the army when Mussolini attacked Ethiopia."

Victoria Perugino was already a citizen of the U.S. because she was born here. Her family had moved back to Italy when she was only 2 years old, so she didn't know any English. She, her husband, and their five-month old daughter moved into the Pringle Street home of his oldest sister who is still living there and will celebrate her 101st birthday this March.

John Perugino's family members were blacksmiths, which entailed all forms of construction in Italy. So, during the lean Depression years he supported his family with any kind of construction work that was available. They eventually bought an old house on Pringle Street for \$3,000 and remodeled the whole thing.

The couple had four children, Betty, Jimmy, Joe and Sarah, and lived in Kingston until the 1972 flood. After the flood, they

lived in a trailer for three years before moving into the home that John Perugino built in Dallas.

John built up his construction business over the years and at one time had as many as 15 employees. His late son, Jimmy, worked with him as a plumber.

Victoria Perugino sewed all of the clothes for her family and even made outfits for her grandchildren. She spent a lot of time on embroidery and knitting, has made afghans for all of her children, her seven grandchildren, and is now making them for her five great-grandchildren.

This past Christmas was the first holiday that she agreed to leave home for dinner. Up until then, she provided holiday dinners for up to 30 people three times a year. The family always gathered at a long table specially made by Mr. Perugino.

"We were responsible for desserts and cleanup," said her daughter, Betty Levitsky, Dallas. "But she did everything else."

The Peruginos are well known throughout the Wyoming Valley for two other reasons. The family owned and operated the Pocono Drag Lodge in Bear Creek from 1960-1972. "We all worked there," said, son-in-law Dan Levitsky. "And it was nothing for her to prepare dinner for 25 people after the races on a Sunday night."

Mrs. Perugino also worked with her son, Joe, in his potato pancake business. "We started out with a tent and one time the storm was so bad I had to hold onto the tent pole with one hand and the frying pan with the other," she recalled. Later, Joe bought a specially equipped truck that they used to travel from New York to New Jersey to Philadelphia and all around. "It



POST PHOTO/M.B. GILLIGAN

John and Victoria Perugino recently celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary. The couple first met in Italy, and has lived in the Back Mountain for 30 years.

was hard work but I met a lot of lovely people," she said.

Mr. and Mrs. Perugino took their second trip back to Italy three years ago where they celebrated John's 90th birthday. He took the opportunity to visit the ruins at Pompeii. "There are really beautiful things there," he said.

Although the couple has easily earned the right to relax a little

these days, Mrs. Perugino, who will be 90 in April, still offers fresh, home-baked cookies to her visitors. Mr. Perugino still creates beautiful handmade wrought iron furniture like the matching bed and end tables he recently completed for a grandson.

"I like to keep busy," said John. "I want to die with a hammer in my hand."

Scholar

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John's father, Frank Yamrick adds, "It's a system (the Russian school system) that works for smart children; everything is thrown at them, if they get it that's okay."

Frank Yamrick contributes to the gene pool with some strong math abilities himself. He's a machinist who knows the algebra and trigonometry needed to figure those arcs a machinist needs to plot so precisely.

Joan Yamrick, John's mother, agrees that the Russian system is accelerated and can be harsh. "The Russian children are not coddled, things are not repeated over and over again as in this country."

Joan Yamrick has home

"I think because I struggled with the Russian language so much, math became the one thing I could do well."

John Yamrick

Lake-Lehman senior, National Merit Scholarship Finalist

schooled her children on and off over the years, but noticed her son John had a special love of math and numbers from the beginning. "I remember taking him, as a 4-year-old, to a group of college students and they were amazed he could do double digit multiplication in his head while they struggled to figure out if his answers were right."

"I never bought games like Nintendo," she said. "I always rented them because John would figure them all out in a weekend and then be bored with them." The one game he still enjoys is Zelda.

John hopes for scholarship support to schools like the Massachusetts Institute of Technology or Carnegie-Mellon, but he already has a fully-paid

scholarship to Wilkes University. He earned that by winning the junior division of the 54th Annual Luzerne County Council of Teachers of Mathematics no-calculators-allowed test.

John admits he has a special love for the challenge and intellectual excitement mathematics gives him, and an ability to test well. He has never taken a test-prep course to improve his scores. He feels has an innate and special God-given talent.

His advice to students taking the college board exams is simple: "People shouldn't get too nervous about taking these tests, there are different types of intelligence."

Lake-Lehman

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property taxes.

School Board member Joseph Kapitula questioned why the gas station is the only entity to reap the spill's benefits when others, including residential properties, were affected. The leak contaminated drinking water at a volunteer fire company, grocery store, mobile home park, nursing home, at least five residences and the Lake-Lehman Junior High School. The school still uses bottled water because of the spill, according to board President Michelle Coombs.

Members Sheila Gionfriddo, Angelo DeCesaris Jr. and Coombs, all of whom voted against the boycott, questioned if it is proper to punish the new owner because of something that happened prior to him.

"If we have to get gas, I don't have a problem getting it from

him," DeCesaris said. The boycott would include the district's vehicles that now gas up at the station.

Boytin, Kapitula, James Mahon, Moderno Rossi and Charles Balavage voted in favor of the boycott; Lois Kopcha was absent. Balavage also asked that Solicitor Charles Coslett look into what rights the district has to challenge the assessment.

Board members also agreed to table discussion of possibly hiring an additional industrial technology instructor for the 2003-04 school year. Mahon said the board needed to hear specific plans from high school Principal Michael Gokay before discussing the matter. Gokay was snowbound Tuesday and could not attend the meeting.

"I don't want to start reinventing the wheel," said Boytin, who

questioned if the program would overlap classes offered at the West Side Area Vocational-Technical School.

In other business:

- The board authorized the purchase of a softball backstop from Sportsman's of Johnstown for \$1,655; an aerial work platform-type life from NES Rentals of Scranton for \$5,946; and a gymnasium floor cover and storage rack for the senior high gymnasium from M. Putterman & Co., Inc of Chicago for \$8,135.
- The bid for the senior high school stadium seating improvements was awarded to Recreation Resources, Inc., Kennett Square, Pa., at \$158,300.
- Spring coaches for the 2002-03 school year were appointed as follows: Jeris Baranowski, assistant boys volleyball, \$1,150; Jeremy Baranowski, volunteer boys

volleyball; Larry Rittenhouse, assistant girls soccer, \$1,944; Dave Elston, volunteer girls soccer; James Manzoni, assistant track, \$2,160; John Sobocinski and Robert Mitkus, junior high track, \$2,160 each; Jennifer Cross, assistant softball, \$1,810; Lori Mikeleski, volunteer assistant softball; Stacey Stack and Lisa Stack, junior high assistant softball, \$2,160 each; Beth Morgan, junior high volunteer softball; Frank Carey, assistant baseball, \$2,160; Marty Straub, volunteer assistant baseball; Scott Carter and Charles Kopetchny, junior high assistant baseball, \$1,810; and Tim Sutfiff and Mike Carey, volunteer assistant track.

This article appeared in original form in the Times Leader.

Harveys Lake chief steps down, will be patrolman

By DAVID WEISS
For The Dallas Post

HARVEYS LAKE — Police Chief Jeff Butler resigned from his position February 11, after borough officials said he was negligent in handling certification of police officers.

Mayor Richard Boice said the two full-time officers who were not certified will likely have all the proper paperwork processed soon and should be back on patrol in a few weeks.

Boice and council President Betty West announced Wednesday, Feb. 12 that Butler had issued council his letter of resignation the day before. West said Butler will remain a full-time police officer with the borough, making \$1,000 less than the approximately \$30,000 he made as chief.

His resignation comes after reports surfaced showing two borough officers, Charles Musial and John Mendygral, were not certified to be police officers. Later, reports surfaced that three former part-time officers also were not certified in Harveys Lake.

Butler, who became chief in 1996, has said he believed the proper paperwork was sent to state officials and thought there might have been a mix-up at the state commission.

Boice said he has no reason to doubt Butler's statement, but the chief should have followed the certification process more closely to make sure it was completed.

"The fact that he didn't follow through with it is the key to the whole situation," Boice said. "He should have been on the phone. He should have been calling. He should have redone the certification, done whatever he had to do to see that the officer got it."

West said the mayor and council launched an investigation into the reports and found that Butler was negligent in handling the Musial and Mendygral certifications.

They approached him about the findings, and he later resigned.

"He didn't do administrative duties as chief as he should have done," Boice said. "There is neglect. He needs to be punished."

Boice said borough officials recently reprocessed the certification paperwork for Musial and Mendygral. The state will put a rush to get the certifications to the officers, Boice said.

He also conceded the department is still faced with the possibility of having Musial's arrests dismissed because of the mix-up. But, if that does occur, the department could likely refile the charges and call the arresting officer as a witness, Boice said.

West said mayor and council will oversee the department until a new chief is appointed.

"There's no one that's perfect," Boice said. "Everyone's entitled to mistakes."

This article appeared in original form in the Times Leader.



Legion funds military books

American Legion Daddow-Issacs Post 672 recently made a donation to the Back Mountain Memorial Library for the purchase of books pertaining to history and the Armed Services.

In the photo, from left: William Kupstas, Commander; Martha Bulter, Librarian; Tom Reese, Adjutant General; Edward Buckley, Finance Officer.

Master Gardener program for spring

The Penn State Cooperative Extension of Luzerne County will be conducting the Master Gardener program through April 9. Classes will meet every Wednesday from 1-4 p.m. at the office in West Pittston. This program consists of a volunteer training course designed to provide experienced home gardeners with the information and skill necessary to share their experience and knowledge with others.

In exchange for 30 hours of indoor instruction, candidates must agree to donate 50 hours of volunteer service to Penn State Cooperative Extension within the first year. Volunteer activities might include conducting garden clinics, demonstration gardens, answering home horticulture calls in the office and more.

For more information call the Penn State Cooperative Extension at 825-1701.

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- PHILADELPHIA FLOWER SHOW Latin Theme. Daily trips March 2 thru 8
- SIGHT AND SOUND March 15 "Daniel"
- HUDSON VALLEY CULINARY INSTITUTE April 4 Mansion Tour, Meal
- LILY LANGRY'S DINNER THEATRE April 5 "Tribute to America"
- 3 LITTLE BAKERS DINNER THEATRE "Joseph and His Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat" April 6
- ELLIS ISLAND April 12, May 17
- WASHINGTON July 9 DC Sightseeing, Arlington National Cemetery, Union Station

MULTI-DAY TOURS

- SENECA LAKE WINE AND CHEESE WEEKEND April 26-27 Wine-tasting with Treats, Boat Tour on Seneca Lake, 3 Meals
- CAPE COD "SHIP AHOY" May 15-18 Martha's Vineyard, 10-Mile Ocean Drive to Newport, Battleship Cove, Hyannis
- MYRTLE BEACH AND CHARLESTON May 18-24 Full Tours of both cities, Shopping, Paddlewheel Boat Cruise, 3 Musical Shows
- BOSTON POPS AND FUN June 19-21 TV's "Cheers" Pub, Stage Play, Pops Concert, Boston Tour, Cambridge Tour, Fenway Park
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