

Mom pleads for her son's return to school

By KALEN CHURCHER
For The Post

LEHMAN TWP. — At the November 18 Lake-Lehman School Board meeting, Joy Cragle asked members to reconsider the punishment levied against her son, Josh, one of four students who participated in an incident that left a fellow football teammate with a fractured jaw, among other injuries.

Josh Cragle and the other three students were handed temporary expulsions until Jan. 16. Joy Cragle made her impassioned plea before a seemingly unsympathetic board.

"My son has been through a lot of criticism, a lot of public humiliation, and he has recently been released from a detention center after 14 days," Joy Cragle said, frequently wiping her teary eyes.

The high school is sending work home for the students to complete. Time absent because of the expulsion will not count against days required for graduation, said Robert Roberts, acting superintendent.

Cragle read a letter her son wrote to Luzerne County Court of Common Pleas Judge Mark Ciavarella, who presided

over his assault charges. In the letter, Josh wants to be back in school and have the opportunity to talk to younger students about hazing, school violence, drug and alcohol abuse and detention centers. He said he and the other boys punished, Ryan Arcangeli, Brandon Wren and Chad Derhammer, are prepared for community service and want to coordinate a dance to benefit Toys for Tots.

"I am really not a bad kid," he wrote.

Cragle had the backing of several people who support a change in punishment.

Ed Chesnovitch called the incident a "prank gone wrong." The Jackson Township resident criticized how Roberts responded to Harris' injuries. Chesnovitch said 911 should have immediately been called instead of Roberts waiting until the next day.

"I think you should be held accountable," he yelled, pointing at Roberts, who did not comment. "I think you should go; I think the coaches should go."

There is a possibility part of that statement will come true.

Board members voted 6-3 in favor of opening the head football coach position for the 2004-2005 school year. Bob



FOR THE POST/DON CAREY

Joy Cragle pleads Tuesday with the Lake-Lehman School Board to have her son, Josh, reinstated in school. Josh was temporarily expelled until Jan. 16 for his participation in the assault of a fellow football player.

Langan has not been asked to resign but must reapply for the position.

Roberts said he met with Athletic Director Rich Gorgone, who said Langan's position should not be posted based solely on the Harris incident.

Board member Chuck Boytin said part of Langan's duties as coach is to supervise the football team.

"If proper monitoring was done, in my opinion, this incident would not have happened," he said.

Boytin, along with Charles Balavage, Lois Kopcha, Sheila Gionfriddo, Moderno Rossi

and Joe Kapitula voted in favor of the job posting. Angelo DeCesaris, James Mahon and Michelle Coombs voted against the motion.

The School Board convened an executive session after the regular meeting to discuss the matter. Privacy laws prohibit public discussion.

Solicitor Charles Coslett said parents could have opted weeks ago for a hearing before the School Board instead of agreeing to the proposed punishment. He dismissed accusations parents were forced into signing the punishment agreement for fear of permanent expulsion.

Township wants liability protection on cell tower

By CAMILLE FIOTI
Post Correspondent

DALLAS TWP. — The cellular phone tower that will be erected on township land in Kunkle by Van Guard Cellular, also doing business as AT&T Wireless, was one of the main subjects discussed at Tuesday night's Board of Supervisor's meeting.

Michael Melnick, attorney for the township said the contract between the township and Van Guard needs to be revised. The revisions will be to release the township from responsibility if anyone gets hurt on the property.

"Van Guard will be paying \$1,000 per month rent and they will carry liability insurance. If anyone gets injured, they have to indemnify us if we get sued," said Melnick. Van Guard must also receive township approval if they wish to sublet the property.

In other business
• Glenn Howell, Treasurer, said he has received many calls since advertising for bids on the construction of a steel pole building that will be used to house the township maintenance equipment. The dimensions

will be 44 ft. by 64 ft. x 16 ft. high, with two garage doors and a concrete floor. There will be no utilities. The board will review the bids at the December 12 meeting.

• An ordinance was passed that will prohibit any resident from keeping broken down, junk cars, trucks etc. on their property for more than 30 days. Fines will be issued and will keep increasing with each notification.

• Frank Wagner, Vice Chairman, said that he made a trip to Harrisburg November 17 where he learned that grants are available through the state to help fire and ambulance departments cover the cost of special equipment and training. Currently, fire and ambulance workers must travel to Scranton or Luzerne County Community College in Nanticoke for special training classes.

Wagner said that if enough people need specific training in a given area, the state will arrange to provide the training in a local fire or meeting hall. He is awaiting additional information on what grants are available and how to apply for them.

Addresses

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ments.
"I'm on a limited budget," Clark said, and he worries that payments sent by mail to his old address might be delayed.

Masias said the suggested addresses were given to Harveys Lake Borough three years ago. The borough is now verifying the addresses, a process that hasn't been foolproof, said Carole Samson, borough secretary.

"911 couldn't locate all the people," Samson said. "We're filling in the blanks."

Samson guessed about half the borough had been covered. The project has been delayed by a shortage of volunteers. She said the 911 center did some verification and the Harveys Lake Women's Club, the road crew and the fire department have done more. The borough will finish up.

At this point, Samson said, borough officials have requested a meeting with 911 personnel to iron out problems.

It's important to the borough that the addresses be corrected to avoid liability if an emergency responder is delayed by inaccurate information, Masias said. "If we change it, it's most likely there's a reason."

Each numeral corresponds to a uniform distance. While the national standard is 52.8 feet, it is much less at Harveys

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Carole Samson
Borough Secretary

Lake, because homes are so close together.

Renumbering is only one aspect of minimizing response time. If a property owner does not use the new number when calling 911, or fails to change the number on the building or mailbox, there could still be delays and confusion. That will be alleviated soon when the county begins using new software that will identify a location based on its phone number. Masias said in most cases, the system will provide a map and directions.

Clark said he understands the need to give specific addresses to homes and businesses on rural routes. But, "I have a permanent street address," he said, on a street that he believes hasn't seen any new construction since 1948.

He says homeowners on 50 or 60 streets in the borough face the same situation, with long-time addresses being changed unnecessarily.

Complaints raised again about smoke, noise

By ERIN YOUNGMAN
Post Staff

HARVEYS LAKE — For the second time in two months, Arlene Sulewski pleaded for help from Harveys Lake Borough Council about what she termed continuous heavy smoke coming from a neighbor's home.

Sulewski, who told council last month she could no longer endure the constant heavy smoke coming from a neighbor's home, explained the burning had slowed down after her initial council visit, but has now resumed.

"I'm being locked up and force fed smoke in my own house," she said. "I don't know or care how to fix it, but it just needs to be fixed."

Sulewski has described around-the-clock burning that produces acrid smoke. She said the owner was bringing in loads of material and burning it on the front lawn and in his garage.

Betty West, council president, explained Tuesday that since Sulewski brought the problem to council's attention, the property owner's burning permit had been revoked.

Sulewski said, however, that the property owner had begun to burn from what she called a homemade incinerator in his garage.

"The borough doesn't have the authority to revoke burning

inside," said borough solicitor Charles McCormick.

"Do we have any power over excess smoke?" inquired Sulewski.

"We've tried everything we can," responded McCormick. He explained the property owner had cleaned up the property and that the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) had visited.

"Once he's inside with a wood burner we don't have any jurisdiction," said McCormick.

He suggested that Sulewski again contact DEP about the problem.

Sulewski said she found an ordinance that addresses the issue of excess smoke and odors. She asked whether that could be used to reduce the amount of smoke coming from the property.

"Let's try everything we can, up until that point," said McCormick.

Mark Carmon, DEP spokesperson, said Thursday that staff from air quality and waste management inspected the property within the last couple of weeks and found "no activity that we would regulate." The determination means that Sulewski's recourse will have to come from the borough, perhaps through a nuisance law, said Carmon.

"If they were operating a business out of their home or

garage, that might be something we'd get involved with." But, he said, the staff that visited the home found no evidence of such activity.

Janice and Rick Myers of Lakeside Drive told council, also for the second time in two months, about 24-hour-a-day noise coming from a neighbor.

Several residents attended last month's public meeting to ask for help with the situation.

The Myerses said for two months the resident has been using a loud generator to provide electricity to his home. They asked what council planned to do about the nuisance.

West explained the police had been instructed by Chief Jeffrey Butler to cite the resident every time there was a complaint. "As far as the generator, that's all we can do," she said, "just keep citing him."

She added that eventually the situation would go before the magistrate where a judge would decide what to do.

"We can't go up there and make him remove it," said West.

The Myerses and another neighbor complained about junk and debris throughout the property.

Milton Lutsey, borough zoning officer, said he sent non-traffic violations down to the magistrate's office. He said he

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