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# THE POST

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

## Developer buying Sunoco

Will pave way for 'big box,' and perhaps roundabout

By ERIN YOUNGMAN Post Staff

DALLAS — The developer of the proposed "big box" retail development in Dallas Township is purchasing the closed Sunoco gas station in the center of Dallas Borough.

Not only does the purchase pave the way for the Dallas Township development, it also means PennDOT will have the necessary room to construct a roundabout at the congested intersection.

According to PennDOT's acting district executive, Bob Doble, the purchase is written into the permit the developer is required to obtain before he can move forward with construction of his development.

"He'll do it, I have no doubt about that," said Doble, about developer J. Naparło purchasing the

property.

Naparło will also be responsible for demolishing the structure and removing the underground gas tanks, said Doble.

The purchase will satisfy PennDOT's requirement that Naparło keep traffic levels in Dallas Borough from worsening as a result of his development.

Doble said once Naparło purchases the property and turns it over to PennDOT, it could either be used for construction of the roundabout, "or to eliminate it as

See SUNOCO, pg 8

## L-L junior wins Miss PA Teen

By M.G. GILLIGAN Post Correspondent



Chelsea MacDougall's reaction when she was named winner.

HUNTSVILLE — "I just did it on a whim. I never really expected this," said 16-year-old Chelsea MacDougall, the newly crowned Miss Pennsylvania Teen.

"I had so much fun and I met a lot of people. The girls were all amazing, talented and full of charisma." Chelsea was one of 169 girls in this year's competition.

The Miss Pennsylvania Teen USA pageant was held from November 28-30 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel at

See TEEN, pg 4

## Business tax gets mixed reviews

By RONALD BARTIZEK Post Staff

KINGSTON TWP. — A proposed new tax might raise funds in the short run, but could have a detrimental affect on businesses — and tax receipts — longer term.

"Oh, my goodness!" was the first reaction of Dr. Anthony Liuzzo, a professor of business and economics at Wilkes University, when told of the "Business Privilege Tax." Liuzzo lives in Kingston Township and is part owner of a business there.

Liuzzo and his wife, Trudy, along with another partner own Travel Junction at North Main and East Center streets. Trudy Liuzzo said the small business, already hit hard by a general decline in travel activity in recent years, would have a tough time absorbing the proposed tax.

A legal notice published by the township last week proposed a tax of \$500 to \$600 annually.

Trudy Liuzzo said that amount would cause her to think about moving the business to another location. "We could easily go to Dallas," she said, once her present lease runs out. "That would definitely be an incentive to move."

During a month of discussion on the 2004 budget, supervisors also had mentioned the possibility of restoring a property tax, which was abolished in

See TAX, pg 3



POST PHOTOS/M.B. GILLIGAN

## All for a good cause

Chloe Kalna, right, enjoyed putting that whipped cream pie in Paulette Barney's face last week at the Lake-Lehman Junior High School's celebration of exceeding the Thanksgiving food drive collection goal. More photos on page 4.

## Library girds for state aid cuts

Programs, not personnel being looked at first for savings

By ERIN YOUNGMAN Post Staff

DALLAS — Under the present state budget plan for 2004, the Back Mountain Memorial Library is likely to lose nearly \$50,000 in funding. Inter-library loan and book purchasing are among the areas to be curtailed if the Pennsylvania budget passes as it now stands.

The cuts will put the state's contribution near what it was before annual funding increases began in 2000. Improved services made since the increases began will likely suffer.

Martha Butler, the library's director, said the 2004 budget will likely endure a 50 percent cut in what was the state's \$95,100 contribution. That would put next year's contributed amount at \$47,550. The figure, she said, is near what the library was receiving annually prior to increases that began with the 2000 budget year.

Before the increases, the state provided \$40,808, an amount, she said, that was not sufficient.

"For at least five years, \$40,808 is where we'd been at. We were underfunded," she said.

According to Butler, beginning in 2000, Governor Tom Ridge's administration began raising the state's contribution annually. So much so, that by 2003 the figure had more than doubled.

She said along with the increases came requirements that the library improve services, which it did.

It increased the number of books pur-



POST PHOTO/ERIN YOUNGMAN

Leona Titman, Sweet Valley looked through the library's audio book collection last week. With a looking cutback in state funding, library officials are considering cutbacks in some programs.

chased annually, added children's programs and on-line internet access.

As a result of the proposed 50 percent cut, some of those same items may be targeted for reduction.

"It's a little too soon to say what we'll do (cut back) specifically," said Butler, "(However) With a loss of funding, there's going to be an effect."

She said the areas that will definitely be affected are inter-library loan, the number of books being purchased and magazine and newspaper subscriptions. On-line services are also being considered for reduction.

Butler said she doesn't anticipate any of the library's 11 employees will be laid off. "Hopefully, it won't affect the staff," she said.

"I think it's (the reduced amount is) going to put us at a standstill. It will kind of freeze us where we're at," she said.

The library's total operating budget is \$340,000. It gains income from several other sources, including Back Mountain municipalities and school districts. Municipalities generally give, she said, anywhere from \$500 to \$5,000.

Some municipalities are having its own budget woes. Kingston Township, which regularly donates to the library, had to cut its contribution due to its own unbalanced budget. At \$4,500, Kingston Township's subsidy was the largest of any municipality.

The school districts are also in the See LIBRARY, pg 8

## Gocheol appointment questioned

By ERIN YOUNGMAN and MARK GUYDISH Post Staff

DALLAS TWP. — The Dallas School District Board of Directors voted unanimously December 2 to appoint Dennis Gochoel to fill the vacancy left by a board member's November 1 resignation.

Now it will be up to Judge Joseph Augello of the Luzerne County Court of Common Pleas to decide if Gochoel will actually be the one to serve.

The appointment was a surprise to many, including Gochoel, who thought the opening could only be filled by the court.

"I'm excited, surprised and shocked, as much as anything," said Gochoel about the appointment.

School board members, including outgoing president Ernest Ashbridge, had said over the last several weeks that if the board didn't appoint a replacement for the vacancy within 30 days after it originated, the decision would be made by the courts.

However, after newly elected board members Russell Bigus, Bruce Goring, Gary Mathers and re-elected board members Deborah Morgantini and James Richardson were sworn in by Luzerne County Judge Hugh Mundy, Frank Natitus made a motion to open the meeting to new business.

Natitus then made the motion to appoint Gochoel to fill the vacancy left

See DALLAS, pg 3

## Rec group interested in Cassie Green

By ERIN YOUNGMAN Post Staff

LEHMAN TWP. — The township has decided to hold-off on vacating Cassie Green Road. The board of supervisors said in October they would hand over ownership of the road to the owners of the adjoining properties.

Instead, the township will wait to see if Back Mountain Recreation, Inc. will be able to acquire the road and turn it into a walking trail.

Brian Grove, executive director of Back Mountain Rec, said Wednesday that a number of legal questions have to be answered before the organization can take over the road.

He said several lawyers are looking at three main questions pertaining to the idea, and that all of them have different opinions.

"My big question is, if we take ownership of it, how much do we control it, in preventing owners' access of it?"

He said the lawyers are assessing whether the road could be used for both a trail and as a vehicular access-way to adjoining properties and if so, whether the group would bear the responsibility and cost of maintaining the road for the vehicular traffic.

The bottom line is, Grove said, the

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