

Lions help keep kids safe. Page 6



THE POST

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

Stores thrive with service

Local pharmacies meet threat of national chains

By ERIN YOUNGMAN
Post Staff

BACK MOUNTAIN — As customers streamed into Fino's Pharmacy in Dallas, Dominic Fino pulled out a dusty, leather ledger dated 1897. An onlooker read some of the items: "Turpentine, epsom salt, aspirin..."

"This building has been a pharmacy for well over 100 years. My father has had it for 40," explained Fino.

Fino's is one of five independently owned pharmacies in the Back Mountain whose owners say they're thriving despite competition from three of the largest chains having come to town,

with another rumored to be looming.

That's not the case, however, in much of the state. According to statistics compiled by the National Association of Chain Drug Stores (NACDS), the number of independently owned drug stores has dropped 24 percent in Pennsylvania since 1997. In the same period, the number of chain stores has increased 7 percent, mostly due to the proliferation of supermarkets and big-box chains like Wal-Mart and Target with in-store pharmacies.

Fino's story is much like others in the area. The family bought the building and renamed the store in the early 1960s. But as far as anyone knows, and as much as the dusty yellowed ledger can substantiate, the little brick building on the corner of Main Street and Route 415 has always sold lotions, potions and remedies.

See PHARMACIES, pg 3



POST PHOTO/IRON BARTIZEK

Cook's Pharmacy clerk Sheree Senausky showed Joan Reilly of Tunkhannock where to sign for a prescription. Cook's and four other independent drug stores are holding their own in the face of chain-store competition.

Sewer system problems identified

Leaky manholes, broken pipes allow water in, pushing raw sewage out

By ERIN YOUNGMAN
Post Staff

HARVEYS LAKE — Ongoing inspections of the lake's sanitary sewer system have found 60 leaking manholes, said engineers working to repair the malfunctioning system.

The finding is one of several identified problems that appear to be sending groundwater into the system, contributing to raw sewage overflows.

At its January meeting, Harveys Lake Borough Council approved a Corrective Action Plan aimed at fixing the system. The plan was submitted by the borough's engineering firm, Borton-Lawson.

Doug Smith of Borton-Lawson said the leaking manholes are not in any particular section, but are spread throughout the borough. More could still be found in disrepair when the balance of the borough's 600 are inspected.

Smith said the Harveys Lake Municipal Authority plans to devote half its staff to fixing them, in hopes they'll have all 60 repaired by the end of spring.

"For them to do the repairs while taking care of the rest of the sewer system, that's aggressive," commented Smith.

Inspections have also found evidence of broken piping. Ridge Avenue is an area that has been identified as needing what could be costly excavation and repairs. More suspected problem areas will be narrowed down when cameras are sent

See SEWER, pg 2

Checks on volunteers suggested

By ERIN YOUNGMAN
Post Staff

DALLAS TWP. — As other schools in the county begin to require background checks on volunteers, some school board members are saying Dallas should follow suit.

The board currently approves nearly 200 unchecked volunteers each year to work with children at the district's four schools.

"I just think it's proactive, not reactive," said board member Deborah Morgantini about the need for the reviews. "We have to be very careful who comes in our schools anymore."

Morgantini, who is also a principal in the Wyoming Valley School District, first brought up the need for background checks at a board meeting last November. She said the idea drew no real response from other board members and was essentially "swept under the rug."

She argued background checks are a safety issue and as a principal of an elementary school, she requires volunteers there to undergo the reviews.

"Whenever my school has had people come into the building on a fairly regular basis, we've had to be sure there's not a criminal background, bottom line it's kids' safety."

Dallas currently requires all employees and student teachers to undergo criminal and child abuse checks, but volunteers like those for recess and class activities, do not.

District Superintendent Gil Griffiths said background checks are not currently required for volunteers because they are always supervised by employees.

Board Member Russell Bigus said he first became aware of Dallas' procedure when at the last board meeting he asked if the incoming group of volunteers had their clearances in order.

See VOLUNTEERS, pg 2



FOR THE POST/CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK

Thar he blows

Andrew Santora of Dallas, a member of Cub Scout pack 281, put some wind in the sails of the Bonhomme Richard during the pack's annual Raingutter Regatta, held January 23. He was getting pre-race tips from Michael Tarminko, a pack leader. More photos and list of winners on page 3.

Program takes aim at math achievement

By ERIN YOUNGMAN
Post Staff

DALLAS TWP. — Dallas Middle School students struggling with math can now get some extra help. The school has started an after school remedial math program.

By doing so, the administration hopes to eliminate a more than 10 percent drop in standardized test scores that occurs between the time students

leave the 5th grade and are tested again in grade 8. The remedial help is one of a number of changes the administration has made in an effort to stay ahead of federal No Child Left Behind legislation.

"There is a sense of urgency that teachers, parents and students have got to get on board so that they (students) are successful," said middle school Principal Anthony Martinelli.

According to Assistant Superintendent Dr. Michael Speziale, 2003 test scores showed 5th grade students scored 72 percent proficient in math, but by 8th grade, only 60 percent did. The number jumped back up by 11th grade, though, to 70 percent proficient.

The two-day-a-week program is modelled after a similar course offered

See MATH, pg 2

Harveys Lake Ice Golf Tournament

Penguin, not Tiger, could win

By ERIN YOUNGMAN
Post Staff

HARVEYS LAKE — The lake's protective association is always looking for a good fundraiser, but ice golf?

The group will hold its First Annual Ice Golf Tournament Sunday, February 8 on the lake. Proceeds will go towards association sponsored community projects.

"I heard a saying from a guy one time," said Mark Sobek, the group's president and one of the organizers behind the event; "There's no poor weather, just poor clothing."

He and the other organizers are betting golf enthusiasts will gladly strap on their boots, put on the extra layers and come out for what they say is the area's only winter golf tournament.

"If people can sit at a football game in 8 degree weather for three or four hours, they can certainly play golf for an hour," he suggested.

The nine-hole event will take place on a part of the lake commonly called Grotto Bay, a shallow several-acre inlet behind Grotto Pizza. The area is the best option because "that way, if someone falls in, they'll only be up to their knees," Sobek joked.

Some of the association's members came up with the idea after a day of hitting balls on the ice eight years ago.

"We thought 'This would be a fun thing to do — to go out on the lake and have a golf tournament at a time of year when no one else is,'" said Sobek.

Last September, seven and a half years later, the group decided to put the tournament together.

With about 45 players signed up, the association is halfway to its goal of 90 participants.

Two weekends ago, association members played a practice round. Sobek said

See ICE GOLF, pg 2



Members of the Harveys Lake Protective Association braved the cold to try out the several-acre ice golf course set up on Grotto Bay at the Lake. The Ice Golf Tournament is set for February 8. Pictured from left: Jim Sperling, Matt DePrimo, Pat Adonizio.

INSIDE THE POST



Jessica Duddy will take a close look at DC power brokers.

Page 10

12 Pages, 1 Section	
Calendar.....	12
Church.....	11
Crossword.....	8
Editorials.....	4
Obituaries.....	5
School.....	9-10
Sports.....	7-8

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