

Pharmacies

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The roads have been widened, chain after chain has come in, but independently owned stores selling their mixture of greeting cards, chocolates and over-the-counter solutions have weathered the changes.

"It's not just business," said Fino's customer George Jorda about why he gets prescriptions filled only at Fino's. "Honest to God — it's like family. I've never come in and they haven't said hello."

Rumors have been running rampant about a Walgreens coming to the area. When queried, all the pharmacists already know about the possibility.

Mark Development Company, which has applied to build one of the mega-drug stores in Clarks Summit, Lackawanna County, has purchased the Pizza Hut and adjoining Valentine's Sales and Service properties in Dallas Borough.

"We depend on customer service, the chains don't."

Gary Karwaski
Medicine Shoppe

Dallas Borough Manager Joe Moskovitz said a Pittsburgh firm representing Walgreens stopped by last fall to do an environmental survey of the property.

Walgreens is the largest drug store chain in the country. In 2003, the company built 430 new stores. There are 29 in Pennsylvania; most have drive-thru windows and are open 24 hours.

Owners of Back Mountain pharmacies say they are undaunted by the possibility. They have already met the challenge of three of the four largest pharmacy chains — Rite Aid, Eckerd and CVS — and think they've figured out the key to doing it again.

"We depend on customer service, the chains don't," said Gary Karwaski, owner of the Medicine Shoppe located across the street from where the Walgreens may be built.

"We do our business a little bit differently here — we cater to our patients."

From opening the store in the middle of the night for a sick customer, to delivering a prescription free-of-charge to someone who is homebound, the owners say they offer services the chains do not.

"Most chains are like a four letter word, C-O-L-D," said Jorda as he got up, went behind the counter and chatted with pharmacist Michael Fino.

"I would absolutely not," responded one of Fino's customer when asked whether she would patronize a Walgreens should it come to the area.

"Fino's is wonderful. When you come here, you feel like family."

Back Mountain customers are not unique in their love for the small corner drug store.

A recent survey published in the October 23 issue of Consumer Reports magazine showed more than 85 percent of the 32,000 sampled were "very happy" or "completely happy" with their experience at independent pharmacies, compared to 58 percent for chain drug store customers.

"You could put a chain right across the street and we'd still have our customers — I have no concerns," said Kristen Billek, pharmacist at Trucksville Pharmacy.

Lehman Twp selling 911 signs

The Lehman Twp. Fire and Ambulance Co. is selling 911 address signs. Each sign will be made at the fire hall, 25 Firehouse Rd., for every address in the membership area at a cost of \$12 each.

The reflective sign can be mounted to the mail post or house. This will assist emergency personnel in locating a residents.

Members will available from 6-8 p.m. on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings, or call 675-5654.

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POST PHOTOS/CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK

Masters and commanders

Cub Scout Pack 281, Dallas, held its annual Raingutter Regatta January 23 at the Dallas Middle School. Pack members each customized their own sloops, made from a uniform kit, then provided the wind power to send them down a gutter in side-by-side races.

In photos, clockwise from top: Joe Kapolka, 10, approached the finish; Brian O'Donnell, 8, checked out the entries as they were lined up for inspection; Nancy McDonald gave the once-over to the boat entered by Christopher Tamanini, 10.



Cub Scout Pack 281 Raingutter Regatta Winners

Fastest in Pack

- 1st - Adam Goeringer
- 2nd - Ryan Hogan
- 3rd - Dante DeAngelo
- 4th - Steven Kirk
- 5th - Thomas Lynch
- 6th - Carl Baxter

Best of Show

- 1st - Andre Santora
- 2nd - David Madl
- 3rd - Jarad Hoats
- Best in Wolf Dens**
- 1st - Aaron Napkora
- 2nd - Ryan Frania
- 3rd - Josh Evans
- Best in Bear Dens**
- 1st - Cory Parsons
- 2nd - Jeremy Peters
- 3rd - John Murray

Best in Webelos 4

- 1st - Matthew Blom
- 2nd - Alex Zubko
- 3rd - Andrew Arnoldi
- Best in Webelos 5**
- 1st - Christopher Dillon
- 2nd - Mark Luksa
- 3rd - Travis Culver

Judges were members of the Harveys Lake Yacht Club.

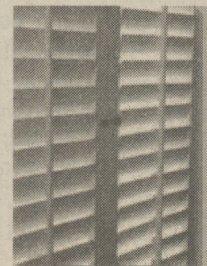
Lions seek members

The Dallas Lions are looking for new members. Anyone interested in joining the club should contact any club member or they can contact Frank Rollman at 675-4485.

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Area libraries work to weather funding storm

By CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK
Post Correspondent

Area libraries are gamely trying to maintain services at current levels, despite anticipated cutbacks in state aid.

"We are thankful for the continued community support for all our fund raising efforts and we are always looking for more creative ones," said Martha Butler, head librarian. The library received \$95,100 from the state last year, to fill out a \$340,000 budget. State aid is expected to be cut by 35 percent this year.

Community support plays a big part in the library's operations as well, said Butler. "We have a wonderful volunteer program, with weekly volunteers in the library and at the bookstore. Our 'Friends of the Library' group has come up with selling reading glasses, a Haunted House, and a Giving Tree this year."

The library does not anticipate any cutbacks in hours or services.

"Cut back our hours? Are you kidding? We're trying to get more volunteers and add extra hours," said Mary Hopfer, volunteer librarian at the Schenck Memorial Library in Noxen.

The library receives only \$1,000 each year from the state, books are donated, and 30 percent of the proceeds from a used clothes closet helps buy copier toner, supplies, heat and electricity.

The library is staffed by volunteers three half-days a week and Saturdays. They are hoping for increased interest and participation in the library from the restoration of the nearby Noxen train depot.

"We have a great time and don't forget there's 'Tea at Three' each day we're open," said Hopfer.

Susan Turrell, head librarian at the Tunkhannock Public Library, winces when budget cuts are mentioned. "We are desperately trying not to cut hours or services. Personnel cuts would

"Cut back our hours? Are you kidding? We're trying to get more volunteers and add extra hours."

Mary Hopfer
Volunteer librarian
Schenck Memorial Library

be very hurtful," she said. The relatively new 12,500 square foot building with plenty of parking, 25 new computers, and a busy community room has become a cultural center for Tunkhannock.

Tunkhannock is proud of the new library, and circulation is up 30 percent over last year. "We petitioned and petitioned — wrote letters to the legislature — this library is so very important to a rural community," Turrell explained. The Tunkhannock Public Library is the only state-funded library in Wyoming County.

"We're always looking for something new in fund raising. We do a Christmas show, a garden show, a golf tournament, and now a wine tasting. We're considering a square dance this year," said Turrell.

One third of the library's annual \$209,084 budget — about \$78,000 — comes from state funding. "That amount we're told could be cut by 36 percent," Turrell said.

While desperately "holding the line" and searching for new fund raising activities, librarians suggest the State of Pennsylvania may have to consider waiving funding standards. The amount spent on books, continuing state-mandated education for staff members and minimum number of library hours staffed, are all on the table for possible exception.

The Luzerne County Library System has filed a request with the state to allow for these exceptions, and the Pennsylvania Public Library Association is considering doing the same.



FOR THE POST/CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK

Stefani Manzoni of Dallas checked out books Wednesday with Back Mountain Memorial Library staff member Brian Fulton.

AT THE MOVIES

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— Steve Rhodes

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ART CLASS FOR PRESCHOOLERS (Age 4-5)
Feb. 9, 16, 23, Mar. 1 • noon-12:45 pm • \$20

QUILTING FOR KIDS (Age 6+)
Wednesdays through Apr. 14 • 3:30-5 pm • \$10 per project

CREATIVE WRITING FOR EIGHTH GRADERS
Thursdays through Feb. 12 • 4-5 pm • \$20

CLASSES FOR ADULTS

DRAWING FOR ADULTS (Age 13+)
Feb. 5, 12, 19, 26 • 10-11:30 am • \$40

DRAWING AND PAINTING FOR ADULTS (Age 13+)
Feb. 4, 11, 18, 25 • 6:30-8 pm • \$40

DECORATIVE PAINTING FOR ADULTS (Age 13+)
Wednesdays through Mar. 24 • noon-3 pm • \$15 per class

WATERCOLOR FOR BEGINNERS (Age 13+)
Feb. 10, 17, 24 • 10 am-noon • \$15 per class

YOGA FOR YOU (Age 9 to adult)
Wednesdays Feb. 18 to Mar. 24 • 10-11 am • \$10 per class or \$50 for all six

POTTERY AND SCULPTURE (Age 13+)
Feb. 4, 11, 18, 25 • 8:30-10 am or Feb. 9, 16, 23, Mar. 1 • 6:30-8 pm • \$40

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