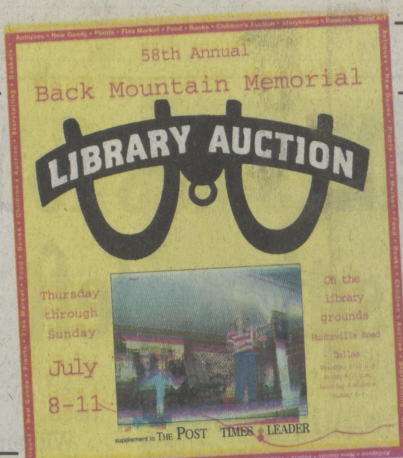


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16 page guide to the auction



THE POST

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

Fire company begins search for property

Trucksville volunteers would like to add social hall, and perhaps move

By RONALD BARTIZEK
Post Staff

TRUCKSVILLE — After 86 years, members of the Trucksville Volunteer Fire Company would like to have some fun. Or, more accurately, they'd like to have a place to hold fundraising events, and perhaps eventually move their station.

The fire company once owned a good chunk of property that straddled Carverton Road at the intersection with Route 309. But the parcel where the Uni-Mart convenience store stands was sold years ago. Then, in the early 1950s, the company gave to Kingston Township the entire lot that now holds the fire station and offices for District Justice James Tupper and the North Branch Land Trust. In return, the fire company received a 99-year lease.

While there was to be a nominal fee for use of the space, "They haven't charged us in years," said Robert Sarley, president of the fire company.

Even with that favorable arrangement, Sarley listed several reasons why the department is looking for property.

"The fire hall, that's all we have here," is the first. While members have access to a large meeting room in Tupper's area, it can't be used for events because at any time it might be needed for an unscheduled hearing.

Sarley said a social hall could be a source of funding both through fire company activities and rental to outside parties. The company now relies almost exclusively on an annual mailing to solicit donations, along with modest fundraisers and the revenue from filling swimming pools. Boot drives, in which members collected donations from people stopped at the nearby Route 309 intersection, have been suspended because of the danger posed by the increasing volume of fast-moving traffic.

There also are concerns about the

See FIRE COMPANY, pg 2

State Route 1001 in Tunkhannock Township closed

PennDOT advises drivers that a section of State Route 1001 in Tunkhannock Township, Wyoming County will remain closed to traffic until further notice because of damage to a bridge.

A section of the bridge collapsed after heavy rains. Traffic is being detoured on US Route 6 to PA Route 92 to State Route 1002, a distance of about seven miles. Detour signs are posted.

PennDOT is accessing the damage to determine whether the bridge can be repaired, or whether it will be necessary to replace it.

The latest PennDOT traffic count shows an average of about 1,000 cars and trucks normally travel on that section of State Route 1001 each day.

Drivers can get updates on roadwork in Northeastern Pennsylvania by checking out www.neparoads.com, PennDOT's Northeastern Pennsylvania transportation website.

He'll have a happy 4th!

Bryar Raspin, Lake Township picked out his favorite Fourth of July missile last week at the fireworks tent in Dallas Township.



FOR THE POST/ CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK

58th Annual Back Mountain Memorial Library Auction

Volunteer veterans welcome more help

By M.B. GILLIGAN
Post Correspondent

There is still time to help make this year's Back Mountain Memorial Library Auction run smoothly and successfully.

"I ask everybody. You have to participate in a thing to really appreciate what it is," said Pauline Kutz, a volunteer for 35 years, whose special interest has been the antiques committee. "I always emphasize the kids. It is a wonderful tradition for the children to

become part of. My own children helped out as volunteers and like to come back home for the auction."

The auction committee, as with most volunteer organizations these days, has found it increasingly difficult to recruit new volunteers. "The people who have been doing it for years and years are getting up there in age and it's getting difficult to replace them," said

"It is a wonderful tradition for the children to become part of."

Pauline Kutz
35-year volunteer

Ernie Ashbridge, a volunteer for 46 years. "People have so many other things to do. The core group of volunteers remains about the same year to year but we keep trying to get new volunteers."

Each year the committee seeks people to assume co-chair or assistant chair duties so they can learn the ins and outs of the job in hopes of taking over the following year.

"One of our problems has been that when they see all the work that's involved, they don't always come back," said Barbara Lemmond, who has been active with the auction for over 30 years. "A lot of us are getting older and tired. It's exhausting work, but I don't know what we'd do without the library. In addition, the auction is a great meeting place. That's the fun part."

Sybil Pelton agreed. Her special in- See VOLUNTEERS, pg 3



FOR THE POST/ CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK

Merle Thomas set out a crate of sweet corn at his produce stand, off Route 415 across from the Twin Stacks Center.

Merle Thomas is living local history

Starting something new in 1940 called a "produce stand"

By CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK
Post Correspondent

The only thing Merle Thomas really wanted was to have his own ripe tomatoes for the Fourth of July. "I've never been able to get any 'til a few weeks after the fourth," he says.

But he has seen the Back Mountain

community ripen and grow over the eight decades and seven years of his life.

Merle Thomas is something of a legend, simply by virtue of his location and longevity. His 10-month seasonal produce stand with greenhouses, across from the Twin Stacks complex on Route 415, is well-known for vegetables and fruits in the spring and summer, Christmas trees and wreaths around the holidays.

"Oh, I don't have an official name

for it — never found a name good enough. What would you call this?" he teases. The colorful hand-painted signs and a few cars are the only clues the produce stand is there. "People know I'm here. I have the best prices around for the Christmas trees — \$20 to \$25. I get them from Joe Pramick in Loyalville."

Born in Dallas on Rice Street, where he still lives, as a young man Thomas farmed fields around the Back Mountain with his Welsh father,

Arthur. "We grew corn and tomatoes in the fields around Huntsville dam, at the top of West Center Hill Road, in the VanHorn's field where BiLo is now. That field was a good southwestern facing slope that got sun the first thing in the morning."

Thomas at one time worked for Danny Richards' Economy Store, a brick building on Main Street that is the now-closed White's Appliance store. The First National Bank of Dal-

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