

## Getting in the swim

Suzanne Youngblood, a water safety instructor and trainer for the American Red Cross, helped Camden Charnitski, Shavertown, learn to float during a lesson held at Sunset Beach Club, Harveys Lake. Audrey Aristeo, Monroe Township, worked on her strokes, and Kyrrah Yurko, Harveys Lake, was cold but curious.



FOR THE POST/CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK

## Old house

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Pat Paci drew the line at horses, though. "Nothing against horses, but they are pretty large."

The couple sees the house as a learning experience for their two home-schooled children, P.J. and Amanda. "Our son is getting the best experience; they don't see it as work, or the house as a fixer-upper. It's fun for them. If they want to rip off the old wall paper or bang out the wall, we say, 'Go ahead.'"

On a recent afternoon, P.J. Paci rolled in on his bike and proudly showed off the flagstone walkway and pool patio he helped his father build.

Work goes on outside and within the century old house. While Paul Paci has comfortably done his own electrical and plumbing work, he has left roofing and siding to contractors.

Known as the Bottoms House, the inside reveals secrets layer by layer as the canvas backed wall paper is peeled off to show 17-inch-wide wall panels. "I think this might be chestnut," says Paci of the planks.

The first two original front rooms are planked, leading to the name of the construction style. "It's called a plank house," says Besecker.

A Luzerne County deed book numbered 328.2 from 1894



FOR THE POST/CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK

Paul Paci demonstrated the width of the plank walls in the home he and his family are renovating. The planks, which he thinks might be chestnut, are up to 17 inches wide.

mentions the property and size of the lot, with the back of the lot extending to Spring Street, but the first title transfer is dated 1906, when the lot and dwelling were first sold by a widow named Alice Dolan to William Capwell. Around the 1920s it was sold to Thomas Bottoms, who resided there with his uncle, until the 1980s.

The Pacis wonder just how old the original two front rooms and loft area could be.

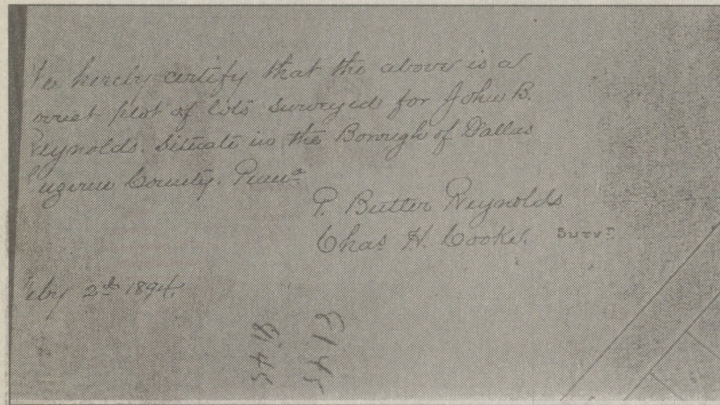
Wondering doesn't make daily life in a fixer-upper any easier. "We're shooting for September," says Pat Paci when asked

about a completion date for the interior reconstruction.

"Not many people could live like this," she laughs, and offers a word of caution. "We never knew what we were in for when we bought this house."



The modest house on King Street in Dallas is one of the oldest in the borough.



A deed from 1894 showed the plots of land in Dallas.

## Tax collection

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to about two-thirds of that expense.

And it could get worse if the township is forced to bear the expense of printing and mailing its tax bills. Facing a deficit in its budget, Kingston Township imposed a local property tax of 10 mills this year, after relying on its income tax for 10 years. As a home-rule municipality, Kingston Township collects a 1 percent income tax, while most townships and boroughs are limited to half that rate.

Tax bills, which are now printed and mailed by the county, include separate lines for county and township taxes, and the local tax collector allocates payments to the proper

account as they come in. School taxes are handled entirely separately, and are collected on a different schedule.

If the county stopped printing and mailing local tax bills, the postage alone would cost the township several hundred dollars.

The county took over tax collection from the City of Wilkes-Barre in 2003. DePolo said the result was a savings of more than \$170,000 that year, since the county had been paying \$10.77 per tax bill. While the city lost that revenue, it was also able to shift personnel to pare some expenses. Unlike Kingston Township, the city was already in the habit of

preparing and mailing its own tax bills, so there was no additional expense.

Other counties and municipalities use different approaches to collecting taxes efficiently.

Lancaster County has been cited as a model. The county collects local taxes for 25 of its 60 municipalities, but only if both sides agree to that system.

"It's up to the local municipality," whether or not to employ or elect a tax collector or to let the county do it, said Treasurer Craig Ebersole. Either way, the entity that does the collecting is paid a flat 75¢ per bill by the other, an amount that has stayed the same for at least six years.

Township Manager Eddie O'Neill said he was told about the proposed change just a couple of days before the July meeting of the county commissioners. After he protested, the item was dropped from that meeting's agenda. But it is not dead.

When he asked if the idea was still viable, "They (Commissioners Greg Skrepenak and Todd Vonderheid) said they hadn't changed their minds," DePolo replied last week.

O'Neill has sent letters to each of the commissioners requesting a meeting to go over the plan. So far, there has been no response, and one is not necessary. DePolo said the

## Officer from Shavertown is named best of year

HERSHEY — Liquor Enforcement Officer Thomas J. Sweetz of Shavertown has been named Liquor Enforcement Officer of the Year.

Sweetz, 55, serves in the Pennsylvania State Police Bureau of Liquor Control Enforcement's Wilkes-Barre District Office. Members of the bureau are responsible for enforcing the state liquor laws.

Sweetz, a 33-year veteran of liquor-law enforcement, is known for creating a model system for property management within the bureau and for expert training of liquor enforcement officers, said state police Commissioner Jeffrey B. Miller.

Sweetz, an enforcement officer 3, served as acting district office commander for three months in 2003 and completed all assignments in a noteworthy and exceedingly professional manner, Miller said.

Sweetz received a bachelor's degree in economics from Moravian College in Bethlehem in 1971 and a master's degree in organizational management from College Misericordia in 2001.

He and his wife, Patricia, have a daughter, Melissa.

Sweetz was nominated for the award by Sgt. James E. Degnan, Wilkes-Barre office commander.

## Festival

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Temple Country Club on Saturday. "It's going to be like a homecoming dance and the Starfires are going to play." Tickets must be purchased in advance and ticket information will be announced as it becomes available.

Plans are also in the works for Sidewalk Sales Days. "We're hoping that all of the businesses up and down Routes 415 and 309 will participate," said Fufaro. Mary Ann Ochman is coordinating that segment and will discuss it at Wednesday's meeting.

Last year's festival was limited to one afternoon. An estimated 4,000 to 5,000 people attended, taking advantage of a break in from a long stretch of rainy weather.

This year's events are all still in the planning stages and volunteers are always welcome. "We'll start meeting more fre-



Rich Fufaro, chairman of the committee planning the second Dallas Harvest Festival, kept a close eye on the proceedings during last year's event.

quently as we get closer to the festival," said Fufaro.

Anyone interested in helping is invited to attend the meetings, held at the Dallas Borough Building. Call 675-1389 or check the borough's website, [www.dallasborough.org](http://www.dallasborough.org) to get the next meeting date.

## Main Street closed for repair

Main Street in Dallas Borough will be closed at the intersection with PA Route 415 while crews rehabilitate a stone arch under the roadway.

According to PennDOT, the section of road, near the Dallas Borough Building, will be closed for up to 10 days. A detour will be in effect and signs will be posted.

Updated information on roadwork in Northeastern Pennsylvania is available at [www.neparoads.com](http://www.neparoads.com) PennDOT's Northeastern Pennsylvania transportation website.

## Benefit

(continued from page 1)

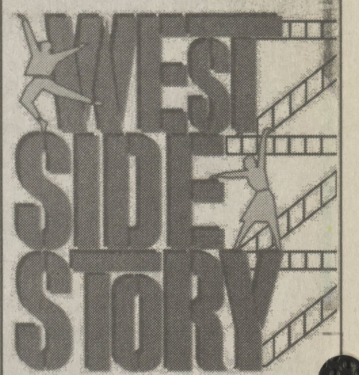
Team, came up with an idea to raise funds by having a benefit on Thursday, August 5 at Tom Leary's Cork and Keg on Division Street in Kingston.

The evening will begin with Jared Campbell from 6 to 7 p.m., Big Daddy Dex from 7:30 to 9:30, and Crush will be playing from 10 p.m. to closing. All artists have donated their time and talent for the event. A min-

imum donation of \$6 at the door will go directly to the MS Society to aid in funding research and to provide services to those suffering from this debilitating disease.

For further information about joining the race or making a donation or pledge, contact Stephanie Baloh at 574-0464.

The Performing Arts Institute of Wyoming Seminary presents



FM Kirby Center

8:00 pm

Thursday, Aug. 5th & Friday, Aug. 6th

\$14 adults - \$7 seniors/students  
Tickets can be purchased at Kirby Center or at Wyoming Seminary 270-2186

### NEWS

**Coverage Area:** The Post covers the "Back Mountain" area of Luzerne County, including the Dallas and Lake-Lehman school districts, and southern Wyoming County. We try to get to as many events as possible, but staff and space limitations make it impossible to cover everything. If you have news about your family, town or organization, please send it to us and we'll try to get it in. Photographs are welcome. You may send items to the address above, or drop them off at the Uni-Mart in Dallas near the intersection of Routes 309 and 415. E-mail is the best and most timely method for submissions. Send items (digital photos, too) to: [thepost@leader.net](mailto:thepost@leader.net). Deadline is noon, Wednesday prior to publication.

**Corrections, clarifications:** The Post will correct errors of fact or clarify any misunderstandings created by a story. Call 675-5211.

**Have a story idea?** Please call, we'd like to hear about it.

**Letters:** The Post prints letters of local interest. Send letters to: Editor, The Post, 15 N. Main St., Wilkes-Barre PA 18711. All letters must be signed and include a phone number at which we can reach the author.

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The Post (ISSN - 1551-1650)

Published weekly by Cypress Media, LLC. \$26 per year, in Luzerne and Wyoming counties (PA). Call 829-7141 for rates to other areas.

Periodicals postage paid at Wilkes-Barre, PA 18701-9998  
**POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to The Post, 15 N. Main St., Wilkes-Barre PA 18711

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