

HILLSIDE FARMS

All spruced up for opening day



Lenny Markoch helps with chores around the stables at Hillside Farms in Shavertown by brushing a donkey, Gretchen.

KINGSTON TWP. - The Lands at Hillside Farms, a nonprofit group aiming to create a tourist destination and education center in the Back Mountain, continues to prepare its sprawling property for next weekend's grand opening celebration.

Area residents are invited to visit the landmark farm on Hillside Road to take horse-and-wagon rides, watch craft demonstrations such as blacksmithing and do-si-do during a Saturday night square dance. Activities are planned throughout the holiday weekend.

Special parking arrangements will be provided to accommodate Saturday afternoon's expected turnout.

The group announced last year that it entered a lease-purchase agreement with the Conyngham family, which had owned the 400-acre tract for more than a century. Promoters outlined long-term plans to create a living farm museum, complete with a dairy herd and other barnyard animals. The property also will be used as a teaching site to impart lessons on organic growing and other earthy topics, they said.

Already, organizers have held a handful of events such as nature walks, gardening workshops and musical performances. Meanwhile, farm employees and community volunteers pitched in this spring to prepare barns for new livestock, beautify the grounds and overhaul greenhouses.

Proceeds from the farm's existing dairy store benefit the organization's ongoing mission, promoters said. Ultimately, organizers want to convert a former summer cottage into a bed-and-breakfast facility that also would help to sustain the project.

Anyone interested in volunteering at the farm, or in contributing money or supplies, is asked to call the dairy store at 696-4500. More information is available at the Web site www.TheLandsatHillsideFarms.org.



Staff member Andy Loughney rakes leaves into a pile during a clean up at Hillside Farms in Shavertown. Staff members and community volunteers were hard at work sprucing up the property before the May 27 grand opening of The Lands at Hillside Farms.



Art Spencer, 16, of Jackson Township rolls an old rusty barrel along the ground to a trash pile during the clean up.

FARM FESTIVITIES

Friday, 7-9 p.m.

Folk musician Jay Smar.

Saturday, noon-6 p.m.

Activities such as nature tours, wagon rides and historical exhibits.

Craft demonstrations by a cooper (barrel maker), blacksmith and wool spinner. Children's games, product sales and food (including pasture-raised chicken dinners and Hillside Farms ice cream).

6-8 p.m.

Music by Joe Tellie.

8-11 p.m.

Family square dance.

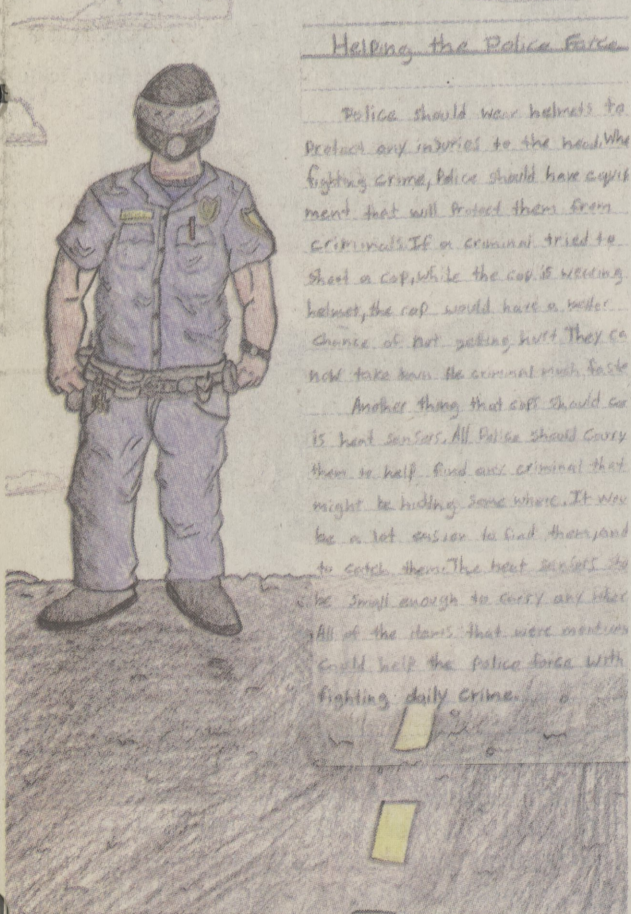
Sunday, noon-2 p.m.

Music by Jim Kimball and Dick Bolt.

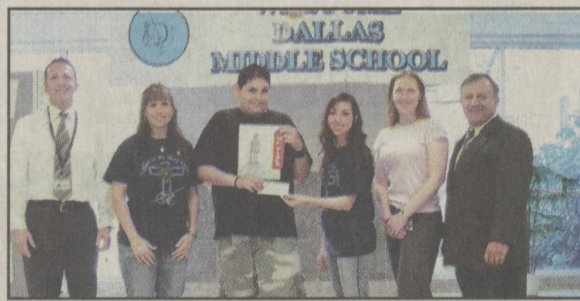
Area artist Sue Hand to create oil painting for future auction.

TIMES LEADER STAFF PHOTOS/PETE G. WILCOX

Students find creative way to show their support



The creative drawing of Anthony Samek of Dallas Middle School won a second-place award.



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Presenting second-place winner Anthony Samek with an award at Dallas Middle School, from left, are assistant principal Tom Duffy, Gina Poceschi Boyle, Anthony Samek, Jaclyn Poceschi Mosley, teacher Rebecca Matus and principal Anthony Martinelli.

Students at Dallas Middle School and Ross Elementary School recently participated in the second annual Rodney F. Poceschi Support Our Law Enforcement cultural arts contest. The students were asked to come up with a fiction or nonfiction ways to help law enforcement.

The contest was held in conjunction with National Police Week and students from the Wyoming Valley participated. Dallas Middle School student Anthony Samek took second place, while Korey Fegely of Ross Elementary School was the third-place winner. Both students drew pictures for the contest. One of the event organizers was Jaclyn Poceschi Mosley of Fallen Officers Remembered. Mosley's brother, Rodney F. Poceschi, was killed in the line of duty June 23, 2003. The Pittston native was a member of the Virginia Beach Police Department.



Ross Elementary School student Korey Fegely's drawing earned third place.



Presenting third-place winner Korey Fegely with an award at Ross Elementary School, from left, are principal Donald James, teacher Melissa Sorber, Jennifer Fegely, Nicholas Fegely, Korey Fegely, Jaclyn Poceschi Mosley, Gina Poceschi Boyle.