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Pizza Paul to light up sky again

By REBECCA BRIA
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If it's up to Pizza Paul, stars and stripes will be forever celebrated every year in the Back Mountain.

Pizza Paul's fireworks show returns for a second year tonight at the Back Mountain Harvest Assembly Church grounds.

As much as he'd like to keep the fireworks spectacular going annually on his own, Pizza Paul doesn't have the finances to make that happen so he is seeking donations to help keep the fireworks a yearly, free activity for everyone to enjoy.

Paul Adamchick, a 39-year-old lifetime Trucksville resident acquired the nickname of "Pizza Paul" working for 27 years at his parents' business, Pizza Perfect, located on Carverton Road in Trucksville.

Adamchick's fascination with fireworks began as a young child when a neighbor, Paul Gregory, brought home a truckload of fireworks every year and set them off. As Adamchick grew older, Gregory allowed him to assist with the fireworks and, by age 12, Adamchick was buying his own fireworks. He has since taken a class in pyrotechnics and has a fireworks display license.

For several years, Adamchick set off a private fireworks display at Traver's Auction in Dallas Township. But the annual event drew so many spectators that Adamchick needed to find a new location. While talking to Pat Colladay, assistant pastor at Back Mountain Harvest Assembly Church, one day, Colladay offered the church grounds for the fireworks.

"I don't drink; I don't do drugs," Adamchick said. "This is my high and what I enjoy to do. I like to put a smile on people's faces. That's what it's all about. Every year they say I can't beat last year and every year I do it."

Last July was the first time Adamchick's fireworks show was held at Back Mountain Harvest Assembly.

"When God called us to come here 15 years ago, before we even owned this property, the Lord spoke to my heart and said, 'You are going to have fireworks here one day,'" said Dan Miller, pastor of Back Mountain Harvest Assembly. "I said, 'How are fireworks going to happen?' And He said, 'You let that up to me.'"

Miller says at least 5,000 people gathered on the church's property for the fireworks last year. However, crowds of people also watched from Frances Slocum, Dug Road and Bunker Hill. Miller says a police officer told him he estimates about 12,000 to 18,000 spectators saw the display.

"Sunoco station loved it," Miller said. "Checkerboard loved it. There was a 25 minute wait for coffee at the Sunoco station. It was like 45 minutes of a grand finale and there were three grand finales. It was absolutely nuts. He did an unbelievable job."

Adamchick plans to outdo himself this year and bought bigger fireworks because of the great response from last year's event.

Miller says food vendors have been expanded six or seven times

See FIREWORKS, Page 10

From seed to kitchen his adage

By CHRISTIE DELICATI
For The Dallas Post

Just what does it take to be a Master Gardener?

It's not a simple process by any means but Ron Petro, 62, of Dallas, makes the job seem effortless.

By definition, a Master Gardener is a highly-trained community volunteer who assists the public with horticultural and environmental projects. They often provide hands-on training through demonstrations for home gardeners, clubs and organizations.

Being one of 50 Master Gardeners in Luzerne County, Petro is the region's senior volunteer. In order to retain the certification, he is required to complete eight hours of continuing education and 20 volunteer hours annually.

On a sweltering, 90-degree Saturday morning in the blaring, hot sunshine, the last in a series of five, 1 1/2 hour gardening classes

was facilitated by Petro. As the Master Gardener Instructor for Penn State University's Cooperative Extension Program, the retired, self-employed photographer used his personal organic vegetable garden to display his knowledge and hands-on technique to a class of passionate gardeners, none of whom were deterred by the hot temps.

Petro's class teaches the how to's of organic gardening from the seed's start to finish, including canning, freezing and preserving the harvest. Even in his own yard, Petro has the ideal situation for organic gardening, having a natural area that includes pollinators and beneficiaries to repel pesky insects. Additionally, all of his upright supports are recycled materials, contributing to a healthy and productive garden.

"Ron is extremely generous with his knowledge," says Mary Pat Appel, 45, of West Wyoming, the Master Gardener Coordina-

tor and Horticultural Programming Assistant for Penn State's Cooperative Extension. She has been working with Petro at Penn State for five years and refers to him as a "veteran" in the field of gardening.

"I've been an intense gardener for most of my life," she adds. "While most kids were hanging posters as teenagers, I was propagating plants in my bedroom."

Mastering the art of gardening can be quite demanding of one's time. Using only the best practices, Petro spends between seven and eight hours per day gardening.

"From seed to kitchen," is his adage. Petro speaks proudly of the fact that he takes no shortcuts and can boast that his veggies are truly homegrown and done so single handedly in his 34' x 100' garden.

From the very start of the Sat-

See GARDENER, Page 10



CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK/ FOR THE DALLAS POST

Clarence Michael, chairman of the 62nd Annual Back Mountain Memorial Library Auction that opens Thursday, strongly emphasizes that the event is much more than just an auction and invites people of all ages to attend. The auction runs from 6 to 11 p.m. on Thursday, July 10 and 6 p.m. to midnight on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, July 11, 12 and 13 on the library grounds on Huntsville Road in Dallas. In addition to the many items that will make their way across the auction block, the event offers children's activities, entertainment, plants, books and all kinds of items for sale as well as many, many varieties of different kinds of food. See the special Library Auction section inside today's Dallas Post.

L-L grads savor their day



AIMEE DILGER/ FOR THE DALLAS POST

Lake-Lehman grads chuckle during Senior Class President Michael Caffrey's opening remarks.

Members of the Class of 2008 from Lake-Lehman High School had to wait longer than other area graduating classes to receive their diplomas but they did just that during commencement ceremonies held June 27 in the high school gymnasium. For story and additional photos, please turn to page 8.

'Smencils' help send many to summer camp

By REBECCA BRIA
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The Norris Family believes every child should have a fun summer. That's why mom, Pat, and her sons, Ben, 17; Josh, 15; and Nicholas, 11, all of Center Moreland, are raising money to send children who, otherwise, couldn't afford to attend the Noxen United Methodist Church's summer camp.

"That's basically how the camp started," Norris said. "Parents didn't want the kids home by themselves, but they couldn't afford these more expensive camps charging \$100 or more a week."

Noxen United Methodist Church's summer camp began in 1998. Norris took over as director in 2001.

The Norris family began selling Smencils, scented pencils made from recycled newspaper, in late

winter. The Smencils sold for \$1 each and raised almost \$1,000.

"I didn't even know they existed until one of the kids at school gave me one for Valentine's Day (this year)," said Norris, who is a special needs aide for the Dallas School District. "What we felt fit the camp really well is we encourage the kids to recycle at home and we reuse many butter tubs and things at the camp."

In October, children from the camp held a dinner theater show at the church, raising \$287. It costs \$1,800 to run the camp each summer. Having accumulated about \$1,300, Norris is confident weekly fees of \$10 from each participant will be enough for the program to sustain itself this year.

"For the area that we're in, that's a pretty decent amount," Ben Norris said. "This way, we don't have to raise our costs and we keep our



CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK/ FOR THE DALLAS POST

Pat Norris, Center Moreland, and her sons Nick, left, and Joshua sell \$1.00 scented pencils made from recycled newspaper to help their summer camp in Noxen.

costs down."

In previous years, the camp relied on money from its sponsor, Child Development Council.

At camp, children participate in

games such as kickball and tag, make crafts, or swim in Bowman's Creek, which runs alongside the church. They also take field trips to nearby places in-

cluding Ricketts Glen.

Even though camp is held at the church, Norris says it is more of a regular summer camp than a religious camp. Membership to the Noxen United Methodist Church is not required to attend camp.

Camp is held from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Friday on a week-by-week basis. The limit is 25 children under 12 years old per week.

Children bring bagged lunches and snacks are donated by parents while campers are involved in snack time and help prepare the treats.

Camp kicks off with teen week from July 7 through July 11 where children ages 11 and older are welcome. Camp will be held for ages 5 through 11 from July 21 through July 25 and August 4 through August 8. Many children too old to attend camp serve as volunteers.

