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"There are not that many callers left. I've been trying to get the kids interested in calling, but no luck so far. Square dancing, I think, is kind of a lost art."

Roger Furman
Square dance caller



CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK/ FOR THE DALLAS POST

Roger Furman, a 70-year-old retiree from Retta, has been drumming and calling square dances for more than 50 years. The Roger Furman Band rocks Back Mountain venues, including the old Noxen Schoolhouse, Northmoreland Fire Hall in Centermoreland and Nativity Hall in Tunkhannock, several times a year.

Fifty years of rockin' the BMT

Switching from trombone to drums in high school band proved to be long lasting

REBECCA BRIA
rbria@timesleader.com

Roger Furman was asked by band leader Peter Cortese to switch from the trombone to the drums in the mid-1950s when he was a member of the Tunkhannock High School Band.

That turned out to be a good move for Furman, who now plays drums and calls in "The Roger Furman Band." The 70-year-old retiree from Retta has been calling and drumming for more than 50 years.

"I was in about the 10th grade and got with some guys playing with a bass drum and a snare drum," Furman said. "I started playing with them and the guy doing the square dance calling died. I couldn't find a square dance caller, so I did it with the drums."

But Furman can't read music. In fact, he learned to play drums and trombone entirely by ear.

A number of people have played in Furman's band, formerly known as "Autumn," over the years. In addition to Furman, current members are

Cathy Recykowski, of Dimock, on organ and vocals; and Art Ondish, of Beaumont, guitar and vocals. Ondish has been a member of the band for 20 years and Recykowski has been in the Roger Furman Band for five years. The group rocks Back Mountain venues, including the old Noxen Schoolhouse, Northmoreland Fire Hall in Centermoreland and Nativity Hall in Tunkhannock, several times a year.

"We don't play much in bars," Furman said. "I don't like it. I don't like the smoke although most are now smoke-free. We do play in some of the legions and private weddings and parties. We haven't played for any divorces yet," he joked. Furman and his band even got to play at the 2008 Harford Fair in Kingsley, Pa and were also asked to perform at a Highlights for Children magazine illustrator's party in Beach Lake.

"We went up and we asked, 'How did you find out about us up here?'" said Mary Ann Furman, Furman's wife. "And they said, 'We Googled you.'"

"I didn't even know we were on the Internet," Roger added.

A typical square dance for the Roger Furman Band includes three squares, each con-

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Two couples square dance on Saturday, Nov. 22 at the old Noxen Schoolhouse as Roger Furman, back center, plays the drums and calls the dance. Roger Furman Band member Cathy Recykowski, back right, sings and plays the organ.



Brian Burkhardt, of Dallas, touches his daughter, Skylar, while she is in an incubator. Skylar and her late twin sister, Rylee, spent time in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at Lehigh Valley Hospital after they were born prematurely at the hospital in May.

Offering support

Community help overwhelms couple

REBECCA BRIA
rbria@timesleader.com

Nobody expected Brenda Burkhardt to go into early labor. But that's exactly what happened in late April.

Burkhardt, of Overbrook Road, Dallas, was only six months pregnant with twin girls when she started having contractions. She and her husband, Brian, drove to Lehigh Valley Hospital in Allentown and the babies, Rylee and Skylar, were born on May 4.

Both babies had chronic lung disease and were underweight because of their premature births. The girls endured various infections, blood transfusions and Rylee underwent platelet transfusions. They were placed in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at the hospital.

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Three members of the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at Lehigh Valley Hospital in Allentown drove to Dallas to plant a Tulip Polar Tree in Brian and Brenda Burkhardt's backyard in memory of their late daughter, Rylee. The Burkhardts' twin daughters, Rylee and Skylar, were born prematurely at the hospital in May. Rylee passed away in late June. From left, are Brian Burkhardt, LouAnn Corkey, holding Skylar, Ann Snyder and Wendy Cramsey, staff members of the Lehigh Valley Hospital NICU; and Brenda Burkhardt.



CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK/ FOR THE DALLAS POST

Andy Bentley, a professional hoof trimmer, trims cow hooves at the Lands at Hillside, allowing the animals to live many more years in the pasture.

Trimming cows' hooves allows for more milk and longer lives

REBECCA BRIA
rbria@timesleader.com

The dairy cattle at The Lands at Hillside Farms in Trucksville create more milk because their hooves are trimmed regularly.

Increased milk production is just one of the benefits experienced by cows with cared-for hooves.

Andy Bentley, a certified hoof trimmer from Westtown, N.Y., has been the hoof trimmer for the

dairy cattle at the Lands at Hillside Farm in Kingston Township for about a year now. Bentley says trimming hooves at least twice a year allows cows to stand more comfortably and produce more milk. Hoof trimming also prevents problems such as warts and ruptures. Hooves grow at different rates, but Bentley says the process is faster in a wet environment.

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ZACHARY CONNOLLY GETS FIRST DEER



Twelve-year-old Zachary Connolly, of Dallas, bagged his first deer while hunting on the first day of deer season. The 8-point whitetail buck was feeding on acorns when Zachary downed it from 40 yards away, using his dad's .30-06 with 150gr Nosler Ballistic Tip bullets. Zach was hunting with his dad, Richard, a PGC Hunter Safety Instructor. Richard celebrated his birthday on the first day of hunting season and said his son's deer was the best birthday present he could have received. Zach, son of Richard and Kristin Connolly, is a sixth-grade student at the Dallas Middle School. He has an 8-year-old sister, Kaitlyn, who is in third-grade. Although he has spent a lot of time outdoors, this is Zach's first year hunting.



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