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CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK/DALLAS POST FILE PHOTOS

Sergeant Douglas Higgins, right, of the Dallas Township Police Department, is awarded the 2007 Police Officer of the Year Award by the Dallas Rotary Club as State Representative Karen Boback looks on. Higgins served as a member of an interagency investigating unit that investigated the homicide death of Dallas Township resident Brian Kocis.

Honoring first responders

By REBECCA BRIA
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ON THE WEB

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They're the welcome faces that greet people who have called 911 for help.

Emergency responders work long, varying hours and risk their lives to save those of others. Some of them even do it for free while holding full-time jobs or going to school.

Members of the Dallas Rotary Club are gearing up to once again honor the top individuals who respond to Back Mountain incidents. The Second Annual Dallas Rotary Club First Responders of the Year Awards will be held at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, May 14, at Appletree Terrace at Newberry Estates in Dallas.

The guest speaker will be Michael Huff, deputy secretary of health planning and assessment for the Pennsylvania Department of Health, who is responsible for monitoring, tracking and analyzing the health status of communities in the state.

Rotary Club members first came up with the idea for the awards two years ago as a way to recognize associates of the 14 fire departments, 13 emergency medical services departments and six police departments of the Back Mountain.

"We really have some wonderful peo-

ple in the Back Mountain community that dedicate a lot of time to make the community a whole lot safer for us," said Art Peoples, a Rotarian and chairperson of the event.

The event honors the police officer, firefighter and emergency medical technician of the year, as well as the first responder of the year. In addition, a lifetime achievement award is given to recognize someone who has served an extended period of time as a police officer, firefighter or emergency medical technician.

Sen. Lisa Baker (R-Lehman Township) and Rep. Karen Boback (R-Harveys Lake) are co-sponsors of the Rotary's First Responder of the Year Awards.

"They have been extremely instrumental in the success of this project and getting guest speakers," Peoples said of the two elected officials.

In order to be eligible for the First Responder of the Year Award, the recipient must have been in a situation where he or she risked his or her life for someone else. Members of the Pennsylvania State Police, Pennsylvania Game Commission and the Luzerne and Wyoming County Sherriff's offices are



Tim Rismondo, left, of Dallas Fire and Ambulance, is awarded the 2007 Firefighter of the Year Award by his good friend and Dallas Rotary member Gary Booth. Looking on is Senator Lisa Baker.

qualified for the award as long as the act for which they are nominated occurred in the Back Mountain.

The initial Dallas Rotary Club First Responders of the Year Awards was held on May 22, 2008 at Appletree Terrace. Troopers Truman Brandt, William Gross and Robert Rogers, of the Pennsylvania State Police; Dennis Dobinick, of the Pennsylvania Game Commission; and members of Lehman Fire and Ambulance Company received the

award for heroic action in 2007.

The 2007 First Responders of the Year Award winners were honored for an incident involving the pursuit of a vehicle on State Route 29 in Lake Township. The suspects crashed head on into Brandt's cruiser, engulfing both vehicles in flames. Knocked unconscious from the crash, Brandt was unable to exit the car. Gross and Rogers

See RESPONDERS, Page 9

LAKE-LEHMAN SENIORS HONORED BY GFWC HARVEYS LAKE



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Senior students from Lake-Lehman High School honored by the General Federation of Women's Clubs Harveys Lake are, from left, James Dalkiewicz, Andrea Butchko, Bryan Poepperling, Kayla Fine, John Sweeney, Natasha Ud-zella, Matthew Boyle, Michael Ryan, Catherine Sullivan and Kallie Root. For a story and more photos, please turn to page 3.

DALLAS BOROUGH

Bridge project will not be done

By REBECCA BRIA
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A bridge replacement project on Orchard Street in Dallas will be eliminated due to insufficient funds from the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Borough council voted unanimously at Wednesday night's monthly meeting to commence work on FEMA-approved alternate projects instead of the bridge replacement. Council President Patricia Peiffer said the borough could not secure enough money from FEMA to complete the bridge replacement and meet PennDOT specifications.

The alternate projects include demolition and removal of the existing bridge on Orchard Street, repair of the municipal building and maintenance garage, purchase of a police cruiser and dump truck and improvements for storm water and storm sewer systems. The projects are budgeted at a cost of \$227,194.22.

Public comments

Willard Newberry, of Main Street, complained of a junk vehicle he says has been parked on property along that street for two years. Newberry says the vehicle violates the borough's junk vehicle ordinance because it is not registered and has flat tires.

"I will bring it to the police department's attention first thing tomorrow," said township manager Tracey Michael Carr.

Newberry also asked council if rumors about the borough police department disbanding are true. Peiffer responded that the rumors are not factual.

Spring cleanup

Council approved regulations regarding the borough's annual spring cleanup, which will be held Monday, May 4 through Saturday, May 9 at the borough municipal building. The

See BRIDGE, Page 9

DALLAS TOWNSHIP

Undeveloped subdivision creates problems

By REBECCA BRIA
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Anthony Usavage says he's dealing with stormwater runoff and a hole behind his Midland Drive property, thanks to a subdivision that was never completely developed.

Usavage attended the Dallas Township Board of Supervisors bi-monthly meeting Tuesday night seeking an update on the status of the land, which is allegedly owned by Michael Garrity of Garrity Realty in Harveys Lake.

"I've got people on my property - surveyors, engineers - and they don't have no permission," Usavage said.

According to township zoning officer Leonard Kozick, construction on the subdivision on East Fallbrook Avenue was halted after the township revoked the permit. Kozick says the permit was pulled when it was learned that Garrity used expired subdivision plans from the early 1980s.

Township solicitor Attorney Thomas Brennan said the matter had previously been in magisterial court and that the township has given the property owner 60 days to produce a grading plan and to restore the land back to its original state.

"We didn't stop the litigation; we continued the litigation," Brennan said, explaining that if the property owner doesn't do what needs to be done within 60 days, the borough will take him back to court.

Thomas Doughton, the township engineer, advised Usavage that surveyors are allowed a certain amount of space over their client's common property line in order to do their job. However, they are not allowed to trespass on private property.

Usavage, who purchased his home in 2006, says the botched subdivision has been a problem since he signed the deed.

Back Mountain Community Partnership

Brennan presented the supervisors with a draft of an ordinance that would enter the township into the newly-formed Back Mountain Community Partnership.

"What it's trying to do is set up a structure that would cause people to sit around and meet to discuss matters," Brennan said. "The perception I have is it never hurts to talk."

Kingston Township Supervisors approved their own ordinance regarding the partnership on April 8, making them a member municipality.

Lehman, Jackson and Franklin Townships and Dallas Borough have also expressed interest in joining the partnership.

Dallas Township supervisors will vote on adoption of the ordinance at their next meeting on Tuesday, May 5.

Road materials bids

The supervisors opened bids for various road materials including modified stone, stone, patch, anti-skid, calcium chloride, crack sealer and superpave. Rather than awarding bidders for the materials, the supervisors decided to study whether or not they could receive lower bids from a supplier with COSTARS, the state's cooperative purchasing program.

"The COSTARS approach to cooperative purchasing uses the purchasing power of local entities to obtain more competitive pricing and choice than individuals might be able to obtain on their own," says a description of the program on the Pennsylvania Department of General Services' Web site.

Supervisor Frank Wagner questioned the legality of obtaining lower bids from a COSTARS supplier. Although Doughton said it is legal, Brennan said he will

See SUBDIVISION, Page 9



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