



JONATHAN J. JUKA/DALLAS POST FILE PHOTO

Shane and Gus Panagakos, of Dallas, take a break for ice-cream during the 2008 Back Mountain Relay for Life.

RELAY

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base of teams for the Back Mountain Relay. Participation in the event dropped after Commonwealth was purchased in March 2007 by Citizens Communications Co., now Frontier Communications, for \$1.29 billion.

"The American Cancer Society felt it was time for them (the Back Mountain Relay) to come back to their roots and it seems a lot of people are happy with that idea," Marino said.

The Wyoming Valley Relay for Life will be held from 10 a.m. on Saturday, June 13, to 10 a.m. on Sunday, June 14, at King's College Betzler Fields in Wilkes-Barre Township.

In celebration of the 25th Relay for Life, this year's theme is "Trinkets, Trash and Treasures." A yard sale will be held from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. on June 13 at the event.

Despite the end of the Back Mountain Relay, several Back Mountain teams are making the move to the Wyoming Valley Relay.

"The students from Lake-Lehman who did the Harveys Lake Plunge are filtering their proceeds into the Wyoming Valley Relay on behalf of the Boris family," Marino said.

Started in 2005, the annual Polar Bear Plunge at Harveys Lake is held in memory of Dr. Frank "Buddy" Boris, an area dentist who died from colon cancer in 2003. The plunge is coordinated each year as the senior project of several Lake-Lehman Junior/Senior High School students.

Michelle Cassetori, of Harding, was one of the first participants of the Back Mountain Relay for Life and the chair of the event in 2005 and 2006. She knew a few people working for Commonwealth Telephone who had a team who were willing to come to the Back Mountain, as well as Arlene Besecker, a teacher at Dallas Elementary School and a cancer survivor.

"The biggest challenge we had was when Frontier bought Commonwealth; they just dropped out of it," Cassetori said. "We used to get 11 teams from them."

Cassetori first got involved in Relay for Life in 1999 when her sister-in-law, Linda Lopez, of Pittsburgh, was sick with breast cancer.

IF YOU PARTICIPATE:

Wyoming Valley Relay for Life
Saturday, June 13, at 10 a.m. to Sunday, June 14, at 10 a.m.
King's College Betzler Fields, Wilkes-Barre Township
Cost per team is \$100. Teams must consist of eight to 15 people.
All proceeds benefit the American Cancer Society.
Teams can register and donations can be made online at www.relayforlife.org/pawyoming-valley or by calling the Wyoming Valley Unit of the ACS at 562-9749 ext. 3339.

SCHEDULE

Schedule of events
Saturday:
10 a.m. - Opening ceremonies
11 a.m. to 4 p.m. - Yard sale
5 p.m. - Survivors celebration
Dusk - Luminaria (luminaries can be purchased for a donation in honor or memory of someone)
Sunday:
10 a.m. - Closing ceremonies

Lopez died from the disease, as did another sister-in-law, Jackie Cassetori. The Cassetori Cancer Crusaders will continue their fight against cancer once again at the Wilkes-Barre Relay for Life.

"I do it because I feel it is her (Lopez's) legacy, my way of continuing to honor her," Cassetori said. "Plus it's lots of fun."

Gus Panagakos, of Dallas, lost his 42-year-old wife, Judy, to breast cancer in 2007. He and his children, Shane and Kallysta, and the Back Mountain Middle School Catholic Youth Council, comprised of children in grades six through eight in Back Mountain Catholic parishes, formed the Panagakos Pacers in 2007 to walk in Judy's memory.

Judy Panagakos was an adviser for the youth council, of which her son, Shane, is a member. She was also very active at Wycallis Elementary School and played bells and worked the bazaar at Gate of Heaven Church.

"Last year we had around 10 people on our team stay the whole or close to the whole 24 hours of the relay," Gus said. "It was a real good time and everyone enjoyed themselves. We look forward to doing it again this year and hope it is as good or better at the new facilities."

Other upcoming Relay for Life events in Luzerne County are the Greater Hazleton Relay for Life, 5 p.m. Friday, May 29, to 5 p.m. Saturday, May 30; and the Mountain Top Relay for Life, 10 a.m. Saturday, May 30, to 10 a.m. Sunday, May 31.

were never installed after the field was redone.

Hires

The board reappointed Attorney Benjamin Jones III as the solicitor for the school district for the 2009-10 fiscal year at a yearly rate of \$36,000.

Mary Jo Hromchak was hired as the head girls basketball coach for the 2009-10 season at a compensation of \$6,235.

Mike Chesterfield was approved as the coordinator of athletic training and weight lifting facilities at a salary of \$39,500 with single health benefits.

Rebecca Bria, a staff writer for The Dallas Post, may be reached at 970-7436.



CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK PHOTOS/ FOR THE DALLAS POST

Receiving a lifetime award for their work with the Sweet Valley Fire and Ambulance Co. were Alice and Bob Walsh.

RESPONDERS

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Township
George Snyder, Fairmount Township Volunteer Fire and Ambulance Company, Sweet Valley

Robert G. Smith Sr. responded to more than 25 percent of all ambulance calls made by his department in 2008. In addition, Smith served as an instructor in CPR, first aid, automated external defibrillator and electrical safety to his department, other ambulance companies, fire departments, Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts and the private industry.

George Snyder responded to more than 33 percent of all ambulance calls to his department in 2008 as a vehicle driver and EMT. Snyder also served as treasurer for the department and maintained the facilities. It is estimated that Snyder spends 700 hours per year at the department.

Lifetime Achievement Award

Robert Besecker, Dallas Fire and Ambulance

Robert Besecker has served as a member of the Dallas Fire and Ambulance Company for more than 52 years.

Besecker served as the department's fire chief from 1984 to 1988 and from 1991 to 1993. He was also the assistant chief from 1980 to 1983. Besecker was elected as a department trustee in 1994 and continues to serve in that capacity. Besecker has responded to thousands of emergency calls over the years.

In 1970, he responded to an active premature labor. The child was lifeless with the umbilical cord wrapped around his neck. Besecker instinctively placed two fingers on the three-pound baby's chest and began compressions.

During the celebration of Besecker's 50th year of active membership with the depart-

ment, Leonard Roginski, treasurer, personally thanked Besecker for saving his life.
Chief Robert B. Walsh and Lt. Alice D. Walsh, Sweet Valley Fire and Ambulance Association, Inc.

Chief Robert B. Walsh started his career with the Sweet Valley Volunteer Fire Department in 1949 when he reached the age of 16. He became assistant fire chief in 1962 and fire chief in 1972.

In 1968, he was one of the founders of the Sweet Valley Ambulance Association. Walsh has run approximately 250 ambulance runs a year for the past 20 years. On many of these runs he was assisted by his wife, Alice. He rarely missed a call whether it was a minor ambulance call, motor vehicle accident or structure fire.

Lt. Alice D. Walsh has served as a member of the Sweet Valley Fire and Ambulance Association, Inc. for more than 30 years. She served 221 patients during 2008.

She serves as treasurer of the association and has held this position for 30 years. Prior to the implementation of the 911 system, Walsh served as the dispatcher for the Sweet Valley Ambulance and Sweet Valley Fire Department for almost 30 years.

She was also a member of the Sweet Valley Fire Department's Ladies Auxiliary for about 40 years and served as its president until the auxiliary disbanded.



Carl Puskar, of the Jackson Township Police Department, is awarded the First responder of the Year Award by the Dallas Rotary Club. Shown with Puskar is his wife, Katey.

Walsh continues to be an active member of the Sweet Valley Ambulance Association and goes with her husband, Robert, on 90 percent of the department's calls.

Richard R. Bartholomew, Franklin-Northmoreland Township Ambulance Association

Richard R. Bartholomew has served both as a member and fire chief of the Franklin Township Fire Department and as ambulance chief for the Franklin-Northmoreland Township Am-

bulance Association for more than 40 years.

Bartholomew retired from the fire department after more than 40 years of service. He is still very active in the ambulance association and serves as chief.

The financial secretary for the ambulance association, Bartholomew is also a member of the National Association for Search and Rescue and the International Fire Training Association and is certified in water rescue and in first aid in dive accidents.

ELECTION

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Tax collector - Leonard Kozick (R)
Auditor - K. Gary Kirk (R)
Inspector of elections, District 02 - Sarah A. Wagner (R)

FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP
Supervisor - William Miller (R)
Tax collector - Brett B. Slocum (R)

HARVEYS LAKE BOROUGH
Mayor - Richard H. Boice (D); Clarence Hogan (R)
Council - Larry C. Lucarino, Ed Kelly, Jason R. Boice (D); Larry A. Radel, Francis J. Kopko, Boyd Barber (R)
Tax collector - Terry Jones (D)

Judge of elections - Laurie Kehler (D)

JACKSON TOWNSHIP
Supervisor - Thomas Tim Evans (R)
Tax collector - Jacqueline Latosek (D)
Auditor - Todd E. Paczewski (R)
Judge of elections - Carol Belmont (R)
Inspector of elections - Barbara Young (R)
Constable - John Jay Wilkes Jr. (R)

KINGSTON TOWNSHIP
Supervisor - Frank G. Natitus, Shirley A. Moyer
Judge of elections, District 01 - Patricia J. Luke (D)
Inspector of elections, District 01 - Leonard W. Krispin (D); Alice B. Solinsky
Judge of elections, District 02 - Nicholas J. Michalisin Jr. (R)

Inspector of elections, District 02 - Dianne M. Adamitz (D); Ronald A. Viglone (R)

LAKE-LEHMAN SCHOOL DISTRICT
School director, Region 01 - Kevin J. Carey (D) (R)
School director, Region 02 - Michael A. Sikora (D); Christopher Bo Kreller (R)
School director, Region 03 - Drew Salko, David Paulauskas (D) (R)

LAKE TOWNSHIP
Supervisor - Robert Grey (D)
Tax collector - Donna Kocher (D); Mary Lou Kocher (R)
Inspector of elections - Alice Jean Martin (R)

LEHMAN TOWNSHIP
Supervisor - Raymond Iwanowski (R)

Tax collector - Peggy D. Moyer (R)

Judge of elections, District 01 - Patricia Paraschak (D)
Judge of elections, District 02 - Barbara G. Simms (R)
Judge of elections, District 03 - Harold J. Haelele (R)
Inspector of elections, District 01 - Michael Paraschak (R)
Inspector of elections, District 02 - Florence Niezgoda (D); Althea Clark (R)
Inspector of elections, District 03 - Anne M. Flasser (D); Jayne S. Haelele (R)

ROSS TOWNSHIP
Supervisor - William Ferrey Jr. (R)
Tax collector - Kimberly A. Holcomb (R)
Auditor - Frances Gensel (R)
Inspector of elections - Jane A. Smith (D)

DALLAS

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Visitor comments

Tom Dombrowski, of Kingston Township, a grandfather of a district student, said the children in the elementary schools and middle school are receiving too much homework on weekends. Dombrowski suggested the teachers receive the same workload on weekends and holidays, which he offered to monitor.

Dombrowski also notified the board that the dugouts at the baseball field behind the old Dallas Township High School