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Proposed bills call for counties to govern locals

By SARAH HITE
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Hearings will be held in Harrisburg next week to discuss two bills in state Congress that aim to dissolve local government.

The Pa. House Committee on Local Government will hold public hearings on Aug. 17 and 18 concerning House Bill 2431, which aims to make counties the governing bodies for municipalities, and Senate Bill 1357, which would reorganize and change the borders of townships, boroughs, towns and cities.

Proponents of the bills believe

this measure would help local governments better serve residents and businesses.

"Municipal governments have a lot of fiscal stresses and demands," said Leo Kucewicz, executive assistant to state Sen. Ray Musto, D-Pittston Township, a primary sponsor of Senate Bill 1357. "(This measure) would try to help them to have more tools to bring them up to speed in the 21st century."

Senate Bill 1357 calls for the reorganization of the government with an 11-member boundary change commission to examine and suggest changes to the borders of the commonwealth's municipalities. Seven of these members would be

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Sen Lisa Baker
R-Lehman Township

appointed by the governor and four would be appointed by legislators.

The commission may order for the restructuring of a municipality if it meets at least three of the following criteria: inability to pay debt, inability to adequately pay employees, inability to follow proper financial procedures, inability to provide for health and safety of citi-

zens, stagnant or declining property values, population less than 400 or declined by 25 percent within the last 10 years and inability to elect governing officials.

State Sen. Lisa Baker, R-Lehman Township, believes bigger government isn't always better.

"While it may make sense in some of those metropolitan dis-

tricts, townships have worked really well in my legislative district."

Baker says she has good working relationships with the municipalities within her district, but she has also seen the benefits of partnerships such as the Back Mountain Community Partnership, an inter-governmental cooperation between Dallas, Franklin, Jackson, Kingston and Lehman townships and Dallas Borough.

"I think that the concept is something perhaps worth looking into," she said.

House Bill 2431 aims to establish Pa.'s 67 counties as the primary overseers of local governments with jurisdiction over personnel,

law enforcement, land use, sanitation, health and safety.

In an e-mail statement, state Rep. Karen Boback, R-Harveys Lake, disagreed with House Bill 2431, which was first proposed in April by state Rep. Thomas Caltagirone, D-Berks County.

"Some communities may feel they would be better served by mergers and some may need to remain independent, but it should be the choice of the people in those communities, not a mandate from Harrisburg," Boback wrote.

Kucewicz says the bills will not likely pass in the 2009-10 legislative session and will need to be reintroduced in January 2011.

HERE'S OUR WINNER, FOLKS!



CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK/ FOR THE DALLAS POST

Levi Perillo, of Hunlock Creek, is declared the winner of the cake-eating contest during the Harveys Lake Homecoming Celebration by Brian Smigelski, a Harveys Lake Fire and Ambulance volunteer. For more photos of the Harveys Lake Homecoming Celebration, please turn to page 4.

New program will honor L-L alumni

By SARAH HITE
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The Lake-Lehman School District crest features two crossing swords, symbolizing the past and the future. This year, that emblem will come to life for high school students with a program called Knights of the Round Table.

"What we're trying to do is pay tribute to graduates or contributors to Lake-Lehman post-graduation," said Superintendent James McGovern. "And the whole theme of it is going to be to inspire the future, we honor the past."

The program, spawned by McGovern, will feature presentations by Lake-Lehman alumni professionally successful and active in their communities. A selection committee will review nominations made by the public and those chosen will be a part of a celebration during homecoming.

"It's a wonderful way to show people examples of successful people who have come from (this) school."

Jim McGovern
Lake-Lehman superintendent

"It's a wonderful way to show people examples of successful people who have come from (this) school," said McGovern.

Members of the Knights of the Round Table will be judged on four qualities: belonging, or community involvement; mastery of skills; generosity; and fostering independence, or character.

McGovern says this gives students a chance to see what academics can do for one's future and how to maintain one's personal beliefs in an internationally

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Former CTE employees catch up, share memories at first-ever reunion

By SARAH HITE
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"Do you remember me?"
"How could I forget?"

This was a common exchange between former employees of Commonwealth Telephone Enterprises (CTE) who gathered to reminisce and relax on Friday, Aug. 6 at Konefal's Grove.

Tom Davis, past Vice President of Sales at CTE, and a few others organized the reunion of over 220 employees, but it wasn't easy.

"We compiled a list by memory," he said. There were no records of all of the company's former Northeastern Pennsylvania employees, so Davis, with the help of fellow CTE alums Don Dolfi and John Stubeda, made many phone calls and kept a running tally themselves - for 21 years.

"I'm getting emotional right now. It was like a family."

Margaret Baloga
Former CTE employee

"We started planning in February 1989," said Stubeda, a former engineer with the company.

The result of the trio's labor was a day of fun, food and sharing memories under the pavilion at Konefal's Grove. Employees who hadn't seen each other in years hugged, kissed, laughed and cried as they reminisced with their past co-workers.

"I'm getting emotional right now," said Margaret Baloga, a former inventory control director for Commonwealth Communications. "It was like a family."

That "family" bonded over one thing - the constant changes in technology as the evolution of telecommunication changed the career paths of many of the company's employees.

Stubeda, who now owns a telecommunications sales

company, said the advancement of technology has the ability to reach more people without the heft of more positions.

"Companies are leaner now," he said. "On a telephone circuit, you would have six parties on a line. With fiber optic cables, it's millions of people. Now there are (fewer) jobs."

Dolfi also reflected on the changes in technology since his tenure at CTE where he worked as a Director of Engineers for 30 years. He and his team planned and designed the voice and data components of telephone networks.

"When I started, circuits could hold 300 baud, or bits, per second," he said. "Now, they can hold one gigabyte of information - millions of billions of bits."

Dolfi, who at one time worked in the former Com-



CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK PHOTOS/ FOR THE DALLAS POST

Spending time together at the Commonwealth Telephone Company Employees Reunion are, from left, Carlene McCaffrey, Harveys Lake; Joan Konnick, Kingston; Tanya Christ Factoryville; and Pat Giordano, Harveys Lake.



Reminiscing are, from left, Judy Lemmond Hamm, of North Carolina, Skip Martin, of Dallas, and Jerry Brown, of Towanda.

