

DALLAS SCHOOL DISTRICT

# Residents still questioning fundraising debacle

By SARAH HITE  
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The Dallas School Board answered questions and received comments from nearly 50 attendees about the recent state Auditor General's report released last month at Monday night's regular meeting.

The report revealed more about former guidance counselor John Wolensky's actions in misappropriating funds from practice SAT tests and other fundraisers within the school.

Wolensky pleaded guilty in March 2009 to a theft charge and was sentenced to two years probation. He admitted to taking

\$24,683, but the recent report found that he had taken more than twice the amount originally reported.

The report also stated that Superintendent Frank Galicki was aware of the fundraiser.

Residents' comments ranged from asking Galicki to resign to praising him for his service to the district.

Those who spoke at the meeting were mainly in search of answers. Ellen Hunter, who had two children graduate from the district and another one currently attending school in the district, asked the board questions such as who was responsible for the money, who had access to the accounts where it was placed and who

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Joseph Leonard  
Dallas School District resident

made the decisions concerning the money.

She said, as a parent, she would have liked to have known where the money was going and what fundraiser she was donating to.

She asked some board members who had children in the district at the time of the scam whether or not they knew of the fundraiser.

"I didn't know at the time," said

can get."

Palfey also said he wasn't sure what was earned on the tests within the six-year span of the fundraiser, but he said the tests cost the district \$10 in 2007 and students were charged \$25.

Resident Joseph Leonard said he was "frustrated" with the ordeal, and that the district could not ensure it would not happen again.

"Policies and rules are only as good as the people who enforce them," he said. "Crooks don't follow rules."

Robert Glicini, of Dallas, said he felt Galicki was not adequately punished for his involvement with the fundraiser.

Other board members, includ-

ing Charlie Preece and Catherine Wega, admitted they were aware that the mark up was part of a fundraiser, while board member Richard Coslett said he was not.

Stef Thomas, of Dallas, said he was concerned for those who weren't able to afford the test because they weren't aware that they did not have to pay for it.

Candyce Fike, a district theater teacher, praised Galicki, saying she had never once questioned his integrity during her time at the school.

*In other news ...*

• Resident Laurie Russell brought to the board's attention that the cameras on school buses

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KINGSTON TOWNSHIP

## Property taxes will increase

By SARAH HITE  
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The board of supervisors hammered out the 2011 township budget last week, and taxpayers will see an increase in property taxes and costs for community services.

Two special meetings were held Wednesday, Nov. 3 and Thursday, Nov. 4 to discuss the township's financial status. As a result, just over \$38,000 was left for the capital improvement fund, and officials say this will have a negative effect on paving projects.

Property taxes will be increased by .00006 mills, a measure officials say should have occurred last year. Due to an incorrect 2010 county property assessment, taxes were actually decreased for residents. The increase will cost taxpayers an average of \$5.87 more per residential unit.

Supervisor John Solinsky voted against the tax raise. Supervisor Jeffrey Box reminded the rest of the board that the additional revenue, which will generate just over \$15,500 for the township, is

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sorely needed.

"We're watching our infrastructure crumble around us," he said.

One thing the board cannot count on is earned income tax revenues. Township Manager Kathleen Sebastian, who prepared the budget, said she could not even estimate what the town would receive from this tax.

"The number is so volatile," she said. "People don't have work."

Community programs such as the annual spring cleaning and summer recreational programs will see an increase in fees and a decrease in manpower in an effort to save some dollars.

The spring cleaning program may have its hours tweaked in addition to cutting back on overtime for workers to stay afloat. The program will also see an increased fee for permits.

The summer recreational pro-

gram will have an increase in registration fees. The eight-week program for resident children ages 5 to 12 will cost \$75, up from \$60, for the first child and \$50, up from \$40, for the second child within a family.

The raise will cover the cost of transportation for program field trips, which the township had completely absorbed in the past.

Chairman James Reino Jr. said he would rather tweak the program than eliminate it completely because of the benefits for resident children.

"I've spent 35 years working with kids," he said. "This is a service to the whole community."

The township will also decrease its donations to local organizations for the 2011 year, and may also do the same for this year's contributions, which will be decided upon at the next meeting on November 17.



CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK PHOTOS/ FOR THE DALLAS POST

PA state representative Phyllis Mundy talks to Chet Mozloom, executive director of The Lands at Hillside Farms, about future plans for the educational center named in her honor.

## Mundy Ed. Center is dedicated

State Representative Phyllis Mundy was on hand Saturday to celebrate the dedication of the Phyllis Mundy Education Center at The Lands at Hillside Farms.

Because she was the catalyst for grants being allocated to the "412-acre Classroom Without Walls," the newly re-elected state representative now has a building named in her honor.

The center, located at 65 Hillside Rd., Shavertown, boasts 1,800 square feet on the ground level floor and another 1,800 square feet in usable basement space. Along with other renovations to the farm, the cost was nearly \$500,000. The Lands at Hillside Farms received \$1 million from the Redevelopment As-



Alexia and Isaak Frauntetter, of Chase, enjoy the new Phyllis Mundy Education Center at The Lands at Hillside Farms during a dedication ceremony of the new facility.

sistance Capital Program in November 2009, funding that was secured by Mundy.

Nearly half the money was used toward the construction of the schoolhouse and refurbishment of the Olde Farm

Manager's House located near the Dairy Store while the balance was used to acquire the farm from its previous owners.

ROSS TOWNSHIP

## Proposed 2011 budget is prepared

By EILEEN GODIN  
Dallas Post Correspondent

Looking ahead to a new year, Ross Township supervisors announced the 2011 proposed budget is prepared. New meeting dates were also announced at Tuesday night's regular meeting.

The proposed 2011 budget, totaling \$499,080, is available in the township office for review. The budget boasts of no tax increases and chairman Stan Davis said the

.23 mill rate will remain the same. A mill rate is \$1 for every \$1,000 assessed tax value.

A plan for possible road work, pending grant approval, is reflected in the proposed budget. Davis said the township applied for a \$100,000 Community Development Grant. Although approval on the application has not yet been received, supervisors are required to include costs for the work in the proposed budget.

*In other news ...*

• Davis announced that super-

visors have received a letter from the Trustees of Pennsylvania Municipalities Retirement Plan stating their contribution for pension will be \$29,986 due in 2011.

• The 2011 proposed budget will be voted on during the end-of-year meeting scheduled for 7 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 28 in the municipal building.

• Supervisors approved a motion to change the regular December meeting to 7 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 1 in the municipal building.

HARPIN' ON THINGS

## The 'change' I hoped for was that the election would come to an end

Raise your hand if you were "Hoping for Change" last Tuesday and are happy the election is over.



Heffernan

You will now be able to eat dinner without the phone ringing which will be nice if you don't have a talking caller ID.

I was expecting a call last Monday evening when the phone rang while the cat and I were eating dinner alone (missed curfew again). I briefly considered asking the Mrs. to get it, then remembered she was currently hanging upside down in the cellar on this back

stretching contraption which, oddly enough, looks like the rack of olden days but without the chains. Sideswiping the second cat and sending the third scampering into the bedroom, I made the mad dash for the other room and grabbed the phone.

"This is Jim from the so and so organization and we are endorsing blah, blah, blah" came from the receiver before I could say "Hello." The off button was pushed while I tried to strangle the phone. I made my way back towards the kitchen when there was a muffled sound emanating from behind the cellar door. Knowing from experience that the Mrs. was talking to me, I gave the standard response of "Yes Dear."

Obviously that was the wrong answer this time since the sound grew louder and the syllables a bit sharper. How anyone is expected to understand

anything spoken from a distance of 30 feet through two layers of flooring, several walls, a stairwell, the washing machine running and a solid wood door is beyond me. Especially with these ears which have spent way too much time shooting guns and listening to loud music and the sweet roar of a highly-modified 427 Chevy inches from the headers.

Opening the cellar door, I was hit with a machine gun-like burst of speech echoing up the stairs. I could definitely hear her now but the words were coming so fast all I could catch were a few syllables. Making it down the steps without stepping on a cat, I turned the corner to see her hanging upside down by her ankles, face all red with her hands keeping pace with the words like an experienced conductor leading Wagner's Fifth Symphony.

When I was spotted, the words slowed and I said, "No, no, nothing important. Just some kid asking if we had Sir Walter Raleigh in a can."

Luckily, the bindings were tight on her ankles and there were no objects light enough to throw close at hand so I escaped unscathed. Looking forward to finishing cold mashed potatoes, one of the cats had the same idea and got to the plate ahead of me. It only had a corner of the mound of potatoes gone and there were no footprints in the congealing gravy so ... we ate.

To make up for my attempt at humor, we (the Mrs. and I, not the cat) went to the Arts at Hayfield Craft Show in Lehman last Sunday. That is such a good event and, with the cooler weather upon us, the area's craft shows are a big draw. From melted wine bottles made into cheese and cracker platters to

handmade Christmas ornaments and key hangers made from old spoons, gifts for everyone abound while local artisans show off their skills and imagination.

We met Richard Beck from Benton, a blacksmith and woodcarver. His custom bowls with the hand-rubbed finish that bring out the grain are beautiful and very practical. Artist Lorraine Petyo Elias, who hails from Plymouth but spends her summers at Harveys Lake, had many of her locally-flavored watercolors on display while Jack Monick, Director of Athletics and Recreation Department at Penn State Wilkes-Barre and an accomplished photographer, had many photos on display.

It's nice being able to get out and renew old acquaintances while making new ones. It's more fun than sitting in front of the TV all day. Just last week I

ran into fellow Stanley Cooper Sr. Trout Unlimited member Joe Gruszkiewicz who was at the craft show with Patty Kramer, Attorneys Joe Kluger and Tom O'Connor while in Wilkes-Barre and Dan Nargoski while at a balloon-launching ceremony in Wilkes-Barre.

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The Atta Boy of the Week goes to Chris, owner of Back Mountain Tobacco. For a little store nestled in Dallas, he has a great selection of the finest cigars. Be sure to ask Pam if you need any help picking out your favorite. Atta Boy, Chris.

Harp Heffernan was the associate publisher, outdoor editor and chief photographer of the Sunday Independent, a newspaper that was in his family for 87 years in Wilkes-Barre. You can e-mail him at news@mydallaspost.com.