

BACK MOUNTAIN REORGANIZATIONS

Municipal governments look toward new year

Most Back Mountain municipalities held their annual reorganization meetings on Monday, Jan. 3. Below is a recap of those meetings, with the exclusion of Dallas Borough, which is only required to hold a reorganization meeting every two years.

Dallas Township

Supervisors maintained leadership positions for 2011. Phillip Walter will remain as chairman, Frank Wagner as vice chairman and Glenn Howell as secretary and treasurer.

All other township officials were reappointed to their respective positions.

The board also approved a 25 cent per hour raise for road department workers and part-time police officers. A \$500 per year raise was approved for Zoning Officer Leonard Kozick.

The board held a regular meet-

ing after the reorganization meeting to clarify June 2008 meeting minutes.

Franklin Township

Supervisors were reappointed to their positions, including Ted Dymond as chairman, Michael Prokopchak as supervisor, William Miller as supervisor and Rick Melvin as secretary and treasurer.

All other township officials remained in their respective positions.

Harveys Lake Borough

The following positions were reappointed: council member Francis Kopko as council president, council member Larry Radel as council vice president, Susan Sutton as borough secretary, council member Rich Williams II as EMA coordinator, Andrew Luzetski as zoning officer, attorney Charles McCormick as borough

solicitor, John Belles as sewage enforcement officer, John Brokenshire as borough accountant, Prociak and Associates as borough auditor and Pasonick as the borough engineers and third-party UCC inspectors.

Jackson Township

John Wilkes Jr. will remain as chairman, despite offering a nomination to Supervisor Al Fox.

The following positions were also appointed: Denise Rittinger as township secretary, public information officer and assistant treasurer; Fox as vice chairman and treasurer and Richard Rose as vacancy board chairman.

Supervisors also created positions for the Back Mountain Regional Emergency Management Agency, which will partner Jackson Township, Lehman Township and Dallas Borough. The appointments are as follows: Harry Vivian, of Dallas Borough, as co-

ordinator; Wilkes as deputy coordinator; James Welby, of Lehman Township, as assistant coordinator.

Supervisors authorized a 1.75 percent raise for non-union and non-contracted employees. The mileage rate for 2011 is set at 51 cents per mile.

The supervisors will meet at 6 p.m. on the first Monday of the month at the municipal building with the exceptions of May 2, November 7 and December 22 when meetings will be held at 9 a.m. for the purpose of budget voting.

Kingston Township

James Reino Jr. will continue to serve as chairman of the board of supervisors and Jeffrey Box was re-elected as vice chairman. Shirley Moyer was elected to replace Frank Natitus as secretary. Natitus and John Solinsky were appointed to serve as supervisors.

All other township officials were reappointed to their respective positions.

Lake Township

Supervisors were reappointed to their positions, including Lonnie Piatt as supervisor chairman and Supervisor Amy Salansky as vice chairman and Carlene Price as secretary and building permit liaison.

All other township personnel were reappointed to their respective positions.

Lehman Township

Supervisors remained intact, including David Sutton as chairman and Ray Iwanowski as vice chairman. Jon Rogers was re-elected secretary at a salary of \$15,500 per year and Alvin Cragle was re-elected treasurer at an annual salary of \$16,000.

The board also appointed seven part-time police officers at a

rate of \$13.60 per hour.

Ross Township

Supervisor Stan Davis will remain as township chairman and emergency management coordinator, David Williams as township vice chairman and road master and William Ferry as secretary and treasurer. All other township positions were maintained, as well.

In addition to reappointing officials, supervisors also voted to change the 2011 meeting schedule.

The Ross Township supervisors will meet at 7 p.m. in the municipal building on the following dates: January 4, February 8, March 8, April 12, May 3, June 14, July 5, August 2, September 6, October 4, November 8 and December 6. Any changes to the meeting times or dates will be advertised.

Algebra teacher finds easy transition to becoming advisor of new hiking club

By SARAH HITE
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Mary Beth Zardus teaches algebra at Dallas High School, but it wasn't a difficult transition for her to become an advisor for the new Hiking Club at the school.

"I was a runner," she said. "I've been hiking for five years now."

The 31-member club meets every Friday at 2:30 p.m. to discuss future hikes, learn about hiking safety and trade trekking experiences. The group plans to hike at least once a month.

Zardus the club is trying to keep kids active while learning more about nature.

"It gives kids an opportunity to get out and hike and share their love for outdoors," she said. "It's an opportunity to do it more often."

Ann McAllister, a Dallas ecology teacher and another club advisor, is able to explain natural tidbits while getting some fresh air. She said too many students often play video games and are sedentary outside of school, and the club makes venturing outdoors more of a social occasion.

"I like (hiking) with all of my school friends - the kids I see every day," said Jenna Morgan, 15, president of the club.

Morgan, of Dallas, said she's hiked in the past with family, but the club lets her share her passion for the outdoors with like-minded friends her age.

She said she got her hiking start when she attended a camp in Bear Creek, and now hopes to expand the club even more and extend her interest in ex-



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Mary Beth Zardus
Dallas Hiking Club advisor

ploring the woods to others.

Andrea Parmelee, 15, club secretary, said she got tips from her brother, a Boy Scout, to teach the rest of the class.

"We do research (about safety), and my brother has talked to me about hiking safety because he's a Boy Scout," said Parmelee, of Dallas.

The hike routes are planned in advance. Zardus prints out a map of the selected park and members get themselves familiar with the area. Hunting zones are also taken into consideration.

For example, the club planned a hike for November 21 at Frances Slocum State Park, a

date that is in-between hunting seasons.

Zardus expressed plans to take a bus trip for a future expedition though the club has no fundraising plans at this point in time.

"I'd like to go to the Delaware Water Gap," she said. "It's a neat place to hike."

HARVEYS LAKE BOROUGH

More townhouses may be coming to borough

By Eileen Godin
Dallas Post Correspondent

The site of an old riding stable in Harveys Lake Borough may become the new home of 44 townhouses.

Harveys Lake Zoning Hearing Board voted Tuesday night to approve a special exception variance, a zoning classification variance and a front yard setback variance for a townhouse development proposal by Homeworks Inc. of Sweet Valley.

Homeworks Inc. owners Rick Amy and Brad Nilsson requested the variances on 9.83 acres of land off Old Lake Road. The property is located near Bill's Café and Amy said there was a riding stable in that vicinity at one time.

The approvals do not give Amy and Nilsson permission to start building but are the first step in a long process. Zoning Hearing Board Chairman Michael Garrity said the property owners have to receive the variance approvals before moving onto the planning and design of the townhouses.

The next step is to provide the planning commission with a detailed townhouse plan where issues of sewer lines, traffic and roads will be discussed in detail.

Due to a variation in elevation, the proposal calls for 28 townhouses to face away from Old Lake Road. Sixteen townhouses will be placed about 44 feet higher on the hillside off Park Street, which currently is a dirt road, according to Tim Connolly of Connolly Engineering.

The 28 townhouses are to be placed in what is currently zoned as a commercial district and Garrity said a hardship must be declared to obtain a variance for this area. Amy explained that several vacant cottages still stand in the area.

"It was once used as a residential area," he said. "I think it was zoned commercial years ago due to a riding stable on the property."

Connolly said the parcel would not be able to be used as commercial property such as a strip mall due to lack of parking and because the property grade is too

steep.

Voicing her opposition, resident Irene Brislin did not agree. She objected to the change, stating the area was zoned commercial and should stay as so.

"Just because you cannot use it as you want, you want a variance change," she said. "So much variance changing is changing the atmosphere of the lake."

The other 16 townhouses are proposed in an S1-R district, meaning a special residential district. Under the current zoning, townhouses are allowable in the S1-R district but need a special exception approval, according to Andy Luzetski, zoning officer.

Resident Santo Agati expressed concern over the townhouses creating a crowding problem in this area. Connolly explained the 13 cottages in the area are about 10 feet apart and right on the road. The townhouses would have a bigger footprint but would be 25 feet away from the road.

The two-man Zoning Hearing Board members awarded a five-foot variance for the front yard setback for all 44 townhouses. The required front yard setback was 30 feet from the right of way to the front of the structure. The variance approval allows the townhouses to be 25 feet.

Agati asked the developers how sewer connections to the townhouses would be obtained since the borough has had a hold on sewer hook-up permits for years. Amy responded he planned to start with the 16 townhouses first and use the current hook-ups from the old cottages.

Gloria Bilder, who lives near the site, said she has lived in this area for about 30 years.

"I would rather have townhouse residences there than a business," she said.

After the hearing, Amy and Nilsson said they are eager to begin the planning and design phase of their first townhouse project. Amy said the two have been general contractors for townhouses constructed at the Village at Greenbriar in Dallas.

"We have a preliminary drawing," he said. "Now, we can move onto designing."

HARPIN' ON THINGS

Wasn't it just yesterday we were frantic about the coming of 2000?

Welcome to the ninth day of the second decade of the 21st century in the year of the Rabbit.

Where have the last 10 years gone?

It seems like just yesterday everyone was frantic about the start of the year 2000 with supposed computer crashes and other calamities about to befall the human race. People were filling their

pantries with canned goods while others were stocking up on survival gear. They were installing generators for power failures and other such nonsense.

In 2000, the Mrs. and I were living in the Florida Keys and we had a neighbor who made it a ritual for several years to start blowing his bugle at the stroke of midnight and continue until about 2 a.m. or whenever his beer ran out. It would not have been that bad had his back patio been more than the allowed setback of 25 feet from our bedroom

window or if he could actually play something other than the mating call of a bull elk in rut.

In any case, that year he was really wound up and kept coming out and bugling until almost 4 a.m. Every time we drifted off to sleep, his screen door would slam, beginning yet another barrage of musical madness.

I had a fishing charter that morning and would have gotten up in half an hour anyway so I told the Mrs., since she was up and not too happy, that I was going to the marina early. There

would, however, be more noise before I left.

Going to the back porch, which was 10 feet closer to the neighbor's patio than our window, I noticed that his house was dark. I ripped open our sagging aluminum door, which made a grating noise worse than fingernails on a chalkboard as it dragged across the concrete, steadied myself in the dark and then slammed it shut as hard as I could.

The porch howled in protest of metal meeting metal at such a

high rate of speed. The noise was tremendous as the concussion echoed from under the aluminum roof. And I was happy.

It took approximately four minutes of rip open, smile and slam shut for his porch light to come on which was my cue to get into the truck and get on the road. We had no sleep and had to work that day so I figured I would just give him a head start on his hangover.

The Mrs. and I spent a quiet evening out here in Lehman this year as the new decade began,

talking about friends we had seen or heard from the past year, new ones we have made since moving back to the area and dreams for the future.

We hope everyone has a happy and healthy new year.

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