

# The DALLAS POST

50¢

WILKES-BARRE, PA.

www.mydallaspost.com

AN EDITION OF THE TIMES LEADER

## BMCP wins two awards, sets standard for others

By SARAH HITE  
shite@mydallaspost.com

The Back Mountain Community Partnership recently won two awards for its ability to bring together communities in the name of cooperation, and state Sen. Lisa Baker, R-Lehman Township, visited the partnership at its meeting Thursday to congratulate the group.

The partnership was commended two weeks ago for inter-governmental cooperation at the Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors at the

organization's annual conference.

James Wheeler, PSATS Township Planning Association member, said the group's efforts to coordinate emergency management services and notify each other concerning land development issues made the partnership stand out above other organizations in the state.

"We get a lot of the traditional multi-municipal comprehensive plans, so we were looking for something different," said Wheeler.

The Back Mountain Community Partnership was presented

"I think it means that all the hard work and cooperation all the towns have done together over the last two years is finally being recognized for what it is, a successful organization that is enhancing Back Mountain communities in real time and with real solutions."

James Reino Jr.  
BMCP chairman

with the Third Annual Excellence in Township Planning Award, and Wheeler said the partnership's efforts will be a

precedent for the planning association to consider for next year's award recipient.

He said the partnership mem-

bers will be invited to the PSATS 2012 Annual Conference to discuss with other supervisors multi-municipal coordination.

"That's what we hope comes out of it - other townships may tweak it a little different, but we constantly build from the past," said Wheeler.

The group also accepted the 2011 Community Progress Award from the Greater Wilkes-Barre Chamber of Commerce at the organization's legislative breakfast on April 29.

The award, sponsored by PNC Bank, aims to recognize communities that "improve the quality

of life and general welfare of their residents and institute programs that better utilize government resources on a regional or multi-community basis."

"I think it means that all the hard work and cooperation all the towns have done together over the last two years is finally being recognized for what it is, a successful organization that is enhancing Back Mountain communities in real time and with real solutions," said partnership chairman James Reino Jr.

While the awards come as a re-

See BMCP, Page 11

## 'Tear down' is a go for May 29

By SARAH HITE  
shite@mydallaspost.com

Chris Gillis, of Shavertown, has had some setbacks along the way, but the Dallas High School all-class reunion he and others have been planning for months will become a reality at the end of May.

The reunion, called "Tearin' It Up for the Tear Down," will be held at the Luzerne County Fairgrounds from 1 to 10 p.m. on May 29. The reunion is geared toward those who have graduated from Dallas High School, but Gillis said the event is open to anyone from the Back Mountain.

Fun, food and music are planned for the big event, originally planned to take place on the Dallas School District campus off Hildebrandt Road.

Gillis, a member of the Dallas High School Class of 1977, and other class members first met before the end of the year to discuss plans to take tours of the current Dallas High School building, set to be torn down after graduation this year. The group also hoped to have tours of the new building at the same time.

The event was to have taken place over three days and would have included a talent show, a bonfire and other activities to reminisce about the old school.

The board deemed the area as an active construction zone at a March meeting and said the district would have too many liability concerns for a celebration of this magnitude. Board members also said there would be staffing issues, as the events were planned for a holiday weekend, and asbestos removal would be concurrent with the proposed fete.

Gillis and other members of the reunion planning committee returned to the drawing board, having created a Plan B just a week or two prior to Gillis' board presentation. Because the idea of the event piqued the interest of hundreds of Dallas grads from all over the country, Gillis felt the reunion should not be completely canceled.

The group toured the Luzerne County Fairgrounds just to have an alternate location, and now the festival is in full force at its new site. The event will feature

TEARIN' IT UP FOR THE TEARDOWN

**What:** The first-ever Dallas High School all-class reunion, featuring music, food, games and fun for the whole family.

**When:** 1 to 10 p.m. Sunday, May 29

**Where:** Luzerne County Fairgrounds, Route 118, Dallas

**Who:** Dallas graduates from 1962 and on, as well as anyone else from the Back Mountain community

**Admission:** Children 12 and under are free, children ages 12-18 are \$10 in advance and \$15 at the door and adults are \$15 in advance and \$20 at the door. Family passes are available for immediate family members (parents and children) for \$40. Graduates of the classes of 1962 and 2011 are free. It is strongly recommended that tickets be purchased in advance.

**Extras:** Seating is available in the amphitheater, but attendees can feel free to bring blankets and chairs to enjoy the festivities. Patrons can also bring coolers filled with their own refreshments.

**Contact:** Elizabeth Martin at lizmartbiz@hotmail.com, or via mail at Tearin' It Up For the Tear Down, P.O. Box 272, Dallas, PA, 18612. Check out the event Facebook page, Tearin' it up for the Tear Down 2.0.

bands with Dallas alumni playing music that spans five decades, and vendors will be able to use the booths available at the site. Gillis also said a fireworks display may be in the works.

Money from ticket sales will be donated to the Make-A-Wish Foundation, of which David Williams, also a member of the Class of 1977, is chief executive officer.

Admission will be free for members of the 1962 and 2011 graduation classes.

"It's a fantastic organization, and we wanted to celebrate David's success," Gillis said of the Make-A-Wish Foundation.

Portions of the vendor sales will also be donated to Make-A-Wish. The non-profit organization's local chapter has agreed to sponsor the event, creating signs, banners and logos for the "once-in-a-lifetime" reunion.

Gillis hopes 50 years of Dallas High School will be represented at the festival, from the first class that attended the current Dallas High School and graduated in 1962 to the last class to occupy the third building on Conyngham Avenue, graduating on June 3.

"I think the festival will generate the same feeling of nostalgia," Gillis said of the changed location. "It's about the people - with that sense of community, you can do it anywhere."

## SHIVER ME TIMBERS, MATEY!



CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK/ FOR THE DALLAS POST

Ryan McDermott, Liam Farrell and John Betzko enjoy the life of a pirate for a few minutes during a fourth-grade musical production at Wycallis Elementary School. For more photos, please turn to page 4.

## Weather and bad luck won't stop HL Walking Club members from lacing up

By SARAH HITE  
shite@mydallaspost.com

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact Sandra Serhan at 639-3299 or sunset17@aol.com for more information about joining the Harveys Lake Walking Club.

Sandra Serhan, of Harveys Lake, is lacing up for good weather and walking as she reconvenes the Harveys Lake Walking Club this spring.

Serhan started the walking club two years ago, but bad weather and bad luck played a role in discouraging club members.

"For two months, we were rained out," Serhan said of the club's first year. The club didn't get its foot out the door last year due to a leg injury that kept Serhan off her feet.

Now Serhan wants to re-establish the walking group that would meet at 9 a.m. every Saturday near Pole 155. Starting at Ash Street and walking three times around that block equals a mile.

The group once had as many as 22 members, and Serhan hopes it will grow again this year. All ages and ability levels are welcome, including pets and children - Serhan's two dogs were the group's mascots. The

route is wheelchair-accessible, so anyone looking to get some fresh air is encouraged to join the walkers.

Serhan believes walking outside is a great way to de-stress, and she feels there is no better place to take in scenery than near her home on Harveys Lake.

"The only places to go to work out are the gyms in Dallas," she said.

Serhan wants to start the group again not only as a supportive exercising club, but also to raise awareness of the beauty of Harveys Lake.

"This has to be the most beautiful place to live and exercise," she said.

Serhan lives in a neighborhood called Barnum Place, near the former Hanson's Amusement Park grounds. Her 107-year-old Victorian home was part of the Barnum Farm owned by Charles T. Barnum, former clerk of courts of Luzerne County, who procured the Luzerne

County courthouse construction.

"There are deep historical roots in Harveys Lake," she said.

She hopes that inviting community members to walk near local waterways will encourage clean water awareness.

"We dread drilling here, but we still need to be aware (of its effects)," she said of the ongoing gas drilling issues plaguing the Back Mountain.

Most of all, Serhan believes the club is an opportunity for like-minded folks to get together once a week to walk around her historic neighborhood near the lake.

"You're more likely to commit to it if there's a group," said Serhan. "I need them."

Libby Moran takes a walk-run around Harveys Lake. Residents are considering organizing a walking club at the lake.



CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK/ FOR DALLAS POST



6 09815 20079 9