

Noxen Historical Society volunteers fight back over changes to building

Supervisors change rules regarding old school, including primary manager.

UP NEXT

The next Noxen Township Board of Supervisors meeting will be held at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 6 at the Old Noxen School on School Street.

By SARAH HITE
shite@mydallaspost.com

The old schoolhouse on School Street has been a part of the Noxen Township community for more than a century.

The building was a high school and elementary school before becoming a community center that housed a library, clothing donations, art lessons and the Noxen Historical Society. Its rooms are available for residents who wish to host parties or events, and organizations can rent space for meetings and activities.

A scheduling conflict has caused the primary overseers of the building to change, and those who put sweat and money into the building's restoration are fighting back.

At a township meeting this

summer, the board of supervisors voted to "change some rules" in relation to the community center, including its primary manager, according to Supervisor Denise Hosey.

Cathie Pauley, former head of the historical society and the building's former manager, said the issue was started when a wrestling group wanted space on the second floor for practice.

"I said we had one room available," she said. "They brought in the wrestling mats (in both rooms) anyway."

Pauley had worries about the effect wrestlers would have on the 114-year-old building's structure, as the historical society has raised more than \$150,000 restoring the facility within the last 10 years. She said much of the work

was done by volunteers, and money has always come from donations and grants.

Hosey said now the township will be in charge of handling construction in the building.

She said when the scheduling conflict occurred, the supervisors wanted to take a closer look at how the building was managed. She said the supervisors worked with a lawyer to see how the township-owned building should be operated.

She said the township pays for the building's heat, electric, insurance and taxes, so the township should have a say in how rooms are rented. Monies from room rentals have always benefited the township's recreation fund.

"No organization has been

kicked out," said Hosey.

Pauley thinks differently. She said the historical association was given until the end of August to remove its assets from the premises. Some items include tables, chairs, a refrigerator and the group's collection of historical artifacts.

"Now we're housed in my daughter's garage," said Pauley. "It's been really hard."

Chuck Kovalick, a local artist, hosted painting classes at the community center for years. He charged students just \$5 a month and donated the proceeds for scholarships at Luzerne County Community College.

He's heartbroken by the building's change of hands and is still thinking about whether or not to continue his classes. All his paintings on display on the second floor had to be removed due to the wrestling group's rental of two rooms.

"They (the township) want my money," he said.



CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK/ FOR THE DALLAS POST

The former Noxen Elementary School has become a community center for events and library as well as a clothes closet.

Pauley is especially concerned about the future of the building because she wanted to make it a place for "kids to get off the streets" and hopes the programs she's begun will continue despite the change in management.

"Years ago, the township didn't want the building so we formed and made it so this wouldn't be on the taxpayers' backs," she said. "Now they (the township) think they're going to make money off of this."

Hosey said back when the building was donated to the township by the Lake-Lehman School District, there were no rules placed or any official actions documented on the building.

Now supervisors just want to ensure the township, which is responsible for the upkeep of the structure, maintains the control bestowed to it.

"We just need to follow a different set of rules," she said.



CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK/ FOR THE DALLAS POST

Marc Wolverton, left, explains how this new speed check traffic unit operates as Dallas Twp. Chief Bob Jolley listens. The machine will be shared by towns in the Back Mountain Community Partnership.

Speed trailer is first purchase of partnership

By SARAH HITE
shite@mydallaspost.com

Police chiefs and road crews from Dallas Borough and Dallas, Jackson, Kingston and Lehman townships attended an informational training session on August 25 at the Kingston Township Municipal Building to learn about a radar speed monitoring trailer.

The speed trailer, called the RU2FAST 8000 Radar Speed Display Trailer, is the first joint purchase of the Back Mountain Community Partnership. It was bought through the state's coop-

erative purchasing program, called CO-STARs.

The cost for the device was \$8,625 split five ways, or \$1,725 for each participating municipality. Franklin Township opted not to join the venture as it does not have its own police department.

Partnership Vice Chairman John Wilkes Jr., representing Jackson Township, said the trailer training signifies the completion of the first project members of the partnership have worked on together. Talks of the joint purchase began late last year,

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Scouts collect used Halloween costumes

By SARAH HITE
shite@mydallaspost.com

Here's a Halloween riddle for you: What do a pizza slice, a NASA helmet and fatigues have in common?

More than you think.

It's no trick — three local Girl Scouts are collecting Halloween costumes, including the aforementioned getups, to ensure underprivileged children have the opportunity to celebrate the girls' favorite holiday.

Megan Galasso, of Shavertown, Katie Gushka, of Swyersville, and LeeAnn Mahalick, of Kingston, have started to collect children's costumes and other goods in order to organize a Halloween party on September 25 for children of the Marion Terrace Boys & Girls Club in Wilkes-Barre.

The girls are working on the service project to earn their Silver Award, the highest award a Girl Scout Cadette can earn. Creating a project to earn the award is optional for the Scouts, who are part of Troop 3912 in Kingston.

Galasso, Gushka and Mahalick earned their Bronze Award with the rest of their troop two years ago when they worked together to collect toys and food for animals of the S.P.C.A. of Luzerne County.

This year, the three girls are working together for the Silver Award, and they hope to work towards the Gold Award, the highest Girl Scout achievement, soon after.

"If you get all of them, it helps you," Gushka said of the awards. "People will think, 'She's a good person.'"



CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK/ FOR THE DALLAS POST

Megan Galasso, Katie Gushka and LeeAnn Mahalick try on donated Halloween costumes. The Girl Scouts hope to collect more costumes.

The girls chose a Halloween-themed project because it's their favorite holiday (tied with Christmas) and the timing was right.

The party will be held in late September so costumes can be distributed to the children to use during the entire month of October when schools usually hold Halloween activities.

"We chose to do this because some kids can't afford costumes and when their classmates are all dressed up, they might feel left out or people will make fun of them," said Gushka.

Galasso's mother, Meredith, also said the girls aren't sure

"There's no budget for this. Any donations will help."

Meredith Galasso
Mother of Girl Scout collecting Halloween costumes

how many children will be in attendance at the party, so the more costumes, the better. Only a few costumes have been collected for the project so far.

The girls will also collect decorations, paper products, pumpkins, games, food, drinks and candy for the party.

"There's no budget for this," said Meredith Galasso. "Any

donations will help."

Mahalick said the project fits in line with what Girl Scouts has provided for her over the years. She's been a part of the organization for three years, Galasso for nine and Gushka for 10 years.

"You get to help people, go places and learn new things," said Mahalick.

HARPIN' ON THINGS

Now that we have power, we can grill for the Labor Day weekend

After this past weekend's weather event, I'm sure everyone is looking forward to Labor Day weekend and some time off with friends and family cooking burgers and dogs on the grill.



Heffernan

Hopefully, power is back on for all and cleanup and repairs are either completed or in the final stages so that the last holiday of the summer may be enjoyed.

Our Sunday morning started at 3 a.m. with one of the cats landing on my head in bed after being startled by something hitting the window. As it was trying to be-

come my new gray toupee (I don't need any help since the gray is getting thick enough), I peeled it off before the claws were firmly sunk in and told the Mrs., who was already awake, that I forgot to put up the hurricane shutters.

"You're not in Florida any more, dear," she said as I furiously clicked my heels together to make it come true. "And why is the cat stuck to your head?"

One of the last hurricanes we endured in the Keys struck in the middle of the night. The Mrs. had asked me to put up the shutters but, according to the weather service, the storm was going to track to our east and we would only get 35 mph winds (a mere inconvenience down there), so I declined.

I recall it being around 4 a.m. when a coconut bounced off the side of the house, announcing that the storm had decided not to

follow the pattern the weather people had suggested. I went outside into a driving rain with steady 50 mph wind and higher gusts, head lamp on, vise grips for the wing nuts, wrestling 24 by 72 inch pieces of aluminum to cover the windows.

The car was being beaten by a Gumbo Limbo tree and a tree had fallen on the neighbor's porch. What a morning.

Following the rude awakening last Sunday, the Mrs. was worried about her car which had sustained severe hail damage earlier this summer. I told her not to worry because Ken at Quality Collision already had it and was fixing the hail damage. It's funny what you think about after being awakened from a heavy sleep.

"What about your car?" she asked.

The new, used car (an '04 with

only 116k miles, barely broken in) was safely stored in the garage after recently being purchased from Wyoming Valley Motors and Huntsville's car salesman extraordinaire Ed Brighthaupt.

A few days before the storm, I took the Mrs. for her first ride in the vehicle out to the Red Rooster for a late dinner. Brittany was our waitress and informed us that the drive through was closed as was evident by the hand painted CLOSED sign on the inside of the restaurant. It's nice to see they have a sense of humor about what could have been a tragedy after a car plowed through their walls. It was also nice to see local people help out a good restaurant patch things up so they could continue to operate.

Asked about her plans for the Labor Day weekend, Brittany said she was getting ready for

classes at Misericordia and spending time with her daughter, Kenzie.

Checking on people's plans for the holiday, I stopped at Steve Shannon Tires where Len Krispin was planning to stay at home and John Moran was going to have a party at home to celebrate family birthdays.

Rich at Dallas Hardware was having a family day with wife, Misty, and kids, Johnnie and Spencer, going to the Waverly train station in the morning and spending the afternoon at home. Dave Fleury of the Dallas Gun Shop was going to spend time at home but reminded everyone of the Dallas Harvest Festival later this month and that Dallas merchants would be open.

I also ran into Judy Eby and Bonnie Kunkle at Roth Jewelers. Judy was staying close to home

with her husband, Barry, since they had already vacationed in Jamaica this summer and Bonnie and her husband, Bruce, were hoping to get to their cabin in Dushore for the weekend.

The Atta Boy of the Week goes to all the volunteer firemen and women who gave their time and effort in assisting people following the storm. The only entertainment we had for the better part of two days was the scanner and it was nonstop with calls for help and volunteers responding. Way to go and thank you.

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.