

The DALLAS POST

50¢

WILKES-BARRE, PA.

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AN EDITION OF THE TIMES LEADER

67th Library Auction spot-on from the start

But a little tick gets in along the way



Photos by Charlotte Bartizek | For The Dallas Post

Composite painting of the library auction auctioneers painted by Sue Hand's student Mike Hiscox, second from right, brought in \$2,000. It was the first year that Hand, third from right, was not able to paint a painting herself since she had been in the hospital with a fever brought on by a tick bite at the 67th Annual Back Mountain Library Auction. On stage also are, from left, Joe Hand, Steve Traver, who purchased the painting; Sue Hand, Mike Hiscox and Andrew Santora.

CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK
Dallas Post Correspondent

By the Tuesday of the week of the 67th annual Back Mountain Memorial Library Auction, the auction grounds were covered with lawn chairs, as volunteers set out their folding chairs and a crowd of auction-goers quickly did the same.

Gina Major posted on Facebook "It's already a record. Tuesday night and 12 rows of chairs set up from the neighborhood."

The security guard had all he could do to politely discourage auction fans from swamping the area on Tuesday night, said auction chairman George Finch.

Opening night brought in a cold front which made it comfortable for the audience and a new food vendor, Anthracite Café from Wilkes-

Barre, fed the crowds. Thursday is designated Family Night. It also is "Let's see who's in town night," said Barbara Lemmond.

Noticeably absent from her usual painting perch was Sue Hand, who was sick with a fever from a tick bite that hospitalized her until Sunday. Her students Mike Hiscox, Kayla Wanek and Maggie Fannick stepped in to paint for her. Hand's painting typically brings in \$4,000 to \$10,000, yet the students' painting brought in \$2,650 over the block in live bidding and, perhaps more, as it was announced that limited prints would be available for \$50 each after the auction.

"I'm so proud of them. They did it without me this year," gushed Hand about her students after the bidding.

Overall and despite rain showers on Friday night, the unofficial consensus was that auction proceeds



Professional volunteer auctioneer Steve Traver auctions off a very life-like flexible antique doll on the block.

would about equal last year. In past years the auction's net profit (after deducting expenses) has been anywhere from \$40,000 to \$72,000 (in 1997).

The Saturday morning children's auction did well, said James

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How do you stay cool?



Photos by Bill Tarutis | For The Dallas Post

Seven-year-old Matthew Sciara, of Long Island, N.Y., who is visiting his grandparents in Sweet Valley, comes down the spiral slide.

With temperatures soaring into the high 90s last week, activity at the Frances Slocum State Park pool increased as people tried to stay cool. Dallas Post photographer caught some of those

swimmers as they tried to beat the heat and humidity.

The National Weather Service is calling for cooler temperatures this week.



ABOVE: Zackary McDaniels, 3, slides into the waiting arms of his grandmother, Sandy McDaniels. RIGHT: Lifeguard Lindsay Brown, of Mountain Top, watches over activity in the pool.



Jammin' for Jen

SARAH HITE
Dallas Post Correspondent

Jen Arellano was ready to face the music at Jammin' for Jen, a benefit concert in her honor at the Boathouse in Harveys Lake on July 14.

After a third cancer diagnosis, there's not much Arellano isn't ready to face.

The 37-year-old Harveys Lake resident battled the disease in 2007 and 2010, and learned that she had cancer in her lymph nodes in March of this year. Two months later, her husband, 41-year-old Scott, lost his job.

"To be honest, it's been hell," said Scott. "It's been six years of nonstop, one thing after another."

One thing weighing on the family is the crushing amount of debt that accompanies long-term illness. Shannon Bogart, one of Jen's closest friends, decided to find a way to help.

"I've known Jen for a long time," said Bogart, of Nanticoke. "Our husbands went to school together, our kids went to Lehman together. We've been through all of this together. I said, 'Why not do it?'"

The day-long benefit featured eight live bands and countless raffle prizes, with proceeds helping the Arellano family with incoming bills.

"You think insurance covers a lot, but it doesn't," said Scott Arellano. "My insurance with my old job was pretty good, but those co-pays add up. Cancer patients have more than one doctor. At one time, Jen was seeing three doctors every week."

After her first diagnosis of stage two breast cancer at the age of 29, Jen had a double mastectomy and full hysterectomy.

"I thought that because I got it so young it wouldn't be so bad," she said. "But in 2010, I knew it had come back, and the doctors didn't believe me. It's like when you have a broken leg and you break it again - you know what it feels like."

Jen, who finally bought the house of her dreams in Harveys Lake Borough in 2007, has fears of having to move away from the community that has supported her all these years due to increasing medical expenses.



Bill Tarutis | For The Dallas Post

Amanda Reeder, right, of Harveys Lake, and Nina Perom of Old Forge blow up balloons at the Jammin' for Jen fundraiser at Boathouse Bar & Grill for Harveys Lake resident Jen Arellano who is battling cancer.

"I lived in apartments all my life and finally bought my house off the lake," she said. "I love this house. I want to live the rest of my life in this house. And I'm afraid I'm going to lose this house."

Scott is trying to find ways to squeeze the family's budget during these trying times.

"Everyone says to tighten the belt another notch, but there aren't enough holes in my belt anymore," he said. "We don't go anywhere anymore. We don't do anything. This is it."

Jen is currently undergoing chemotherapy until doctors can retest her in August to find out if the cancer has spread to her lungs. It's a difficult time for the family, especially for Jen's youngest daughter.

"She tries to be strong but I know she goes up to her room and cries," said Jen. "Another part of it, too, is that she worries she will get it. My cancer wasn't genetic but she's still worried."

Jen said she can see how hard it is for the family to cope, but everyone is doing their part to help.

"My daughter and husband do all the housework," said Jen. "I am just focusing on healing. I have to."

During the event, Jen had to take a few breaks, as she has been having difficulty breathing lately. She said most of the time she rests or sleeps.

"Thank God I have dogs, because otherwise I'd have blood clots in my legs," she said. "I sleep and then I take them outside."

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Country bridge fix too expensive for council, mayor

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Can a little country bridge built by a farmer a half century ago really cost nearly a half million dollars to repair?

That's exactly the case, according to the borough manager and council.

Sylvia Hughes, a borough resident for 55 years, asked council members at their July 17 meeting what their plans are to repair a bridge on Reservoir Road between West Center Hill Road and state Route 118. The bridge was damaged during a major storm two years ago and is impassable.

"I don't think we need

the Brooklyn Bridge, but it would be nice to have access to that road. It's very inconvenient. It can't be that bad of a project, can it? Have we ever gotten a bid on how much it would cost?" Hughes said.

Council President Lee Eckert said the borough has an estimate for repairs and "it's staggering. We just don't have the money."

Borough Manager Tracey Carr said the

borough engineer estimated the cost at \$350,000 to \$400,000. It's so high because, for one thing, the bridge crosses a Class A wild trout stream. Streams with this designation and their associated wetlands are entitled to greater regulatory protection.

The need to have a crane brought also adds to the cost and overhead power lines further complicate the job.

Hughes said she heard that there are grants available from the Mohegan Sun Casino and suggested offering to name the bridge after the casino if it paid for the repair.

"Could we have a little contest and name the bridge after them or something? Is there nothing we can do? Must we settle for the rest of our lives to have that bridge unrepaired?" Hughes said.

Carr explained that the state taxes gaming revenues from the Mohegan Sun and other casinos and those gaming funds are awarded as grants to municipalities by the Commonwealth Financing Authority. The casinos have no say in how the grants are awarded, and there is a lot of competition for the grants.

Carr said the borough has been awarded a \$1.34 million grant

towards the downtown revitalization project and, partnered with five other municipalities in the Back Mountain Community Partnership, was awarded \$200,000 for emergency management vehicles.

"I don't know how well a single bridge in a single municipality on a road that's not very traveled, how well that would be seen competitively.

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