

The DALLAS POST

50¢

WILKES-BARRE, PA.

WWW.MYDALLASPOST.COM

AN EDITION OF THE TIMES LEADER

Remembering firsts – many, many years later

Lake-Noxen, Lehman-Jackson classmates gather to share memories

SARAH HITE
Dallas Post Correspondent

The Lake-Noxen Class of 1960 and Lehman-Jackson Class of 1959 went through a lot of firsts together.

They voted to choose the first mascot and school colors for the Lake-Lehman School District when it combined in 1958.

That tradition continued when many of those classmates celebrated their 71st birthdays during a casual reunion at Grotto Pizza on Friday, Aug. 9.

"This is our third time meet-together," said Gordon Dershimer, a 1960 Lake-Noxen alumnus.

The 70-year-old from Harveys Lake said the group got together for its 50th anniversary reunion and then everyone decided to gather for a birthday celebration last year, as many of the classmates turned 70 years old.

Now the tight-knit group keeps in touch throughout the year, thanks to modern technology and it wasn't long before another reunion was planned.

Dershimer enjoys socializing with his former classmates and had only kept in touch with a few before the 50th anniversary reunion.

Beverly Wandel, 71, of Harveys Lake, said she keeps showing up to the reunions "like a bad penny."

"It's fun to see all the old people - or should I say, past classmates," she laughed.

Wandel, a Lake-Noxen Class of 1959 grad, said one of her favorite high school memories was meeting her husband, Ray Wandel, when he came to the school for the first time in ninth grade.

"He was cute," she said. But her husband remembered the romance a little differently. "(She) liked my '49 Mercury," he said.

Frank Dudinski, 70, of Greentown, met his wife Donna later in life and out of the area, but the two share roots in the Back Mountain.

"My wife lived in Dallas, so we always have a little rivalry about which team has had the (Old) Shoe more times," said Dudinski.



Members of the Lake-Noxen Class of 1959 and Lake-Lehman Class of 1960 have a night out at Grotto Pizza at Harveys Lake.

The coveted trophy is a key point of rivalry between the two school districts, and the varsity football teams duke it out every November to see who will win the Old Shoe for that year.

Dudinski remembers voting to pick the school colors and the outcome was one he didn't want. "I liked maroon and gold," he said. "But I got used to black and gold eventually."

Al Niezgod, 70, of Dover, Del., said the Lehman school's class colors were once red and blue, and the district's well-known Black Knight mascot was once another fierce black character.

"We used to have a Scottie dog as a mascot," laughed Niezgod. Seventy-one-year-old Jim Roberts, of Sweet Valley, was hand-picked to draw the new



Mary Ann Sevnski Martin, left, and husband Al Martin, both alumni of Lake-Lehman Class of 1960, wait for more pizza.

mascot in the class yearbook. The 1960 Lehman school alum said he was always a good artist, and he even etched in a little dedication in the drawing to his sweetheart at the time, hoping no one would notice.

"I was dating a girl at the time named Flo," he said. "I wrote the name 'Flo' in the knight's cape or on the horse somewhere for her. Now it sticks out like a sore

thumb when you look at it." Other classmates had similar goals in high school when it came to impressing the ladies. Don Steltz, 74, of Sweet Valley, was no exception.

"I just remember cutting class all the time to go hunting," said Steltz of his extra curricular activities. "I was in the chorus, but I wasn't a good singer. I just joined to meet girls."



Lake-Lehman Class of 1960 alumnus Al Niezgod, back, talks with classmate Jim Roberts and his wife Nancy at Grotto Pizza at Harveys Lake.



Gordon Dershimer, left, and Norm James chat during the reunion.



People crowd the Franklin Township Volunteer Fire Co. Hall for a spaghetti dinner to benefit Fire Chief Harry Sweppenheiser.

Support for the chief

Fundraiser dinner benefits Franklin Twp. fire chief who was injured in accident

Members of the Back Mountain community came together on Aug. 10 in support of Harry Sweppenheiser III at a fundraiser spaghetti dinner held at the fire hall where Sweppenheiser spends so much of his time.

The Franklin Twp. fire chief was critically injured in a July 22 vehicle accident during a hard rainstorm. There were warnings of flash flooding as the chief and his 11-year-old son, Kyle, traveled on Eighth Street. State police who reconstructed the scene said Sweppenheiser was not speeding but pooling water on the windy road was enough to hydroplane his SUV into a tree.

Kyle Sweppenheiser, who was not injured in the accident, helped to staff tables at the fundraiser.

Sweppenheiser is currently at a Philadelphia hospital undergoing therapy to regain use of his legs. He is expected to be there for several weeks.

Maureen Oremus, who organized the fundraiser dinner, said Sweppenheiser has an uncanny ability to handle more than one thing at a time. She said, although it is difficult, the firefighters are carrying on in their chief's absence.



Sue Redmond, left, and Robert Kile, Sr. of Mt. Zion Fire Company dish out spaghetti in the Franklin Township Fire Company kitchen.



Family of Franklin Township Volunteer Fire Co. Chief Harry Sweppenheiser III chat at his benefit spaghetti dinner. From left, are Erik Sweppenheiser, son; Harry Sweppenheiser Jr., father; Sharyn Davis, sister; and Sarah Davis, niece.

Are you ready for some football?

As the 2013 high school football season gears up, Dallas High School head football coach Bob Zaruta, left, and Lake-Lehman High School head football coach Gerry Gilski are preparing their squads for tough competition. For previews and more photos of this year's Mountaineers and Black Knights, please turn to Page 9.



Zaruta



Gilski

Back Mountain Regional EMS & Fire named EMS Agency of the year

Back Mountain Regional Fire & EMS has been awarded the 2013 EMS Agency of the Year.

The award is issued by the Pennsylvania Department of Health, Bureau of Emergency Medical Services, with the assistance of the Pennsylvania

Emergency Health Services Council (PEHSC) to recognize organizations that have made a significant contribution to Pennsylvania's EMS System.

The local organization was selected because it has worked cooperatively with surrounding community organizations and municipalities to make many changes that included increasing the level of service and facilitating a change from traditional EMS protocols to a new standard that brings a higher level of service to the community with quicker response times.

The public announcement of this year's award recipients was scheduled to occur on Thursday, Aug. 15, and again on Thursday, Sept. 26, during opening ceremonies of the 36th Annual Pennsylvania State EMS Conference at the Lancaster County and Blair County Convention Centers respectively.

The actual award presentation will occur on Nov. 23, in conjunction with the annual Pennsylvania Fire and Emergency Services Institute Dinner in Camp Hill.

