

Letters To The Editor

Community Organizing Is Hard

To The Editor:
I've listened to a lot of people make fun of being a "community organizer." I heard a York resident on the radio say that no one had ever explained to him what a "community organizer" does. As a voter, he should have taken the responsibility to find out.

I once had a job that was supposed to involve community organizing. I say "supposed to" because I was not very good at it. I think community organizing is one of the hardest jobs there is.

A community organizer is just what it says. It is a person who goes into a community to help the people organize to accomplish some goal. It is hard, because most people will resent an outsider who comes in and tells them what to do. So, as a community organizer you don't do that. Instead, a community organizer has to have the patience and skills to:

1. Develop trust, so that the people will listen and work with you. Because on the community level, people soon know if you are lying or exaggerating or blowing hot air. So, a community organizer has to be honest from the get-go with himself and with the community he is working in.

2. Listen. Because a community organizer believes that the people of the community themselves know what they want and need and what is best for themselves. The community organizer is not there to tell the people what they should want; he is there to get the people to start thinking and talking for themselves.

3. Understand the community. Because the community has the re-

sources that have to be used to accomplish the goal. As a community organizer you are usually working in communities that have very little money. So, you know that the main resource of the community is its people.

4. Assist the people to help themselves. A community organizer doesn't accomplish the goal for the community, he assists the people by teaching them skills and tactics that they can use to accomplish it themselves. Because a community organizer is not only concerned about accomplishing the immediate goal. In accomplishing the one goal, the organizer wants to create leadership and skills in the community itself that can continue on to work for the good of the community after the organizer leaves. It is the very nature of the job that a community organizer is an agent of change.

Community organizing is hard. It is a lot easier to tell someone what to do and then do it for them. Leading people to start looking to themselves for help and to get them to start working to accomplish their own goals is hard and dangerous. Because, if you fail, you can set back a community for years. That is a real responsibility to have on your shoulders. Once you start, you have to have the strength of character to see it through.

I leave it to the individual to decide if a successful community organizer has good executive experience. But I, for one, think it is one of the best training experiences for leadership a person can have.

Dwight C. Harvey
McConnellsburg

Teacher Help

From Page One

tricts, it was determined that teachers were not paid extra," Scott told the board.

Scott stated not long after the conversation with Gilliland, he received a message via e-mail April 21 from the PSEA UniServe representative stating, "The current position of SFEA is all terms and conditions of employment for dual enrollment instruction using SFEA teachers are bargained with the Association. Also ... 'compensation paid directly to the employee as in the past.' Finally ... 'There must be a signed memorandum of agreement with SFEA if SFEA instructors are to be utilized.'"

Scott mentioned the district's solicitor advised the administration not to respond to any type of proposal or to ask for volunteers from the teaching staff as it would be acknowledging the issue as negotiable. "I did not contact SFEA until a request for a meeting about several other items was made on May 14. On May 16, at my request, the issue of dual enrollment was identified as one of the issues. This is the 'second' request identified by the letter writer (Karen Solomon)," said the superintendent. "On May 19, the issue was discussed at the

end of the meeting, but the SFEA president (Solomon) was told the district did not consider this a bargainable issue and would not bargain it because the teachers were already being paid salary and benefits by the taxpayers by that class period. However, if the SFEA could furnish proof that a number of other districts reimbursed their teachers with extra money, then the information would be considered. None has been provided," he added.

In spite of the fact that SFEA and the administration were not able to agree on the financial issue, ACM has brought in an instructor to teach 29 English students this fall during the course of the regular schoolday thereby topping former registration numbers recorded over multiple years.

"If the SFEA supported the dual enrollment program, it would encourage its members to volunteer and/or immediately put into writing it has no objection to the administration recruiting teachers to become adjunct professors for ACM in order to teach a dual enrollment class during the schoolday. At this point the district will continue to rely upon ACM faculty until/unless an SFS teacher volunteers on his/her own," stated Scott.

"The problem: money," he concluded.

Gov. Rendell Visits Pittsburgh Senior Center

Announces school taxes eliminated for 113,000 senior homeowners statewide

PITTSBURGH - Gov. Edward G. Rendell announced last week that an estimated 113,000 senior homeowners have had school property taxes completely eliminated as a result of Pennsylvania's historic property-tax relief law.

"Seniors, many of whom live on fixed incomes, struggle the most with rising property taxes," Gov. Rendell said during an event at the Homewood Senior Center in Pittsburgh. "After more than 30 years of debate and failed property-tax relief efforts, we have succeeded in bringing real property-tax relief to all Pennsylvania homeowners, and now some 113,000 seniors can live without the burden of paying school property taxes."

Pennsylvania is providing a total of \$786 million in property-tax relief this year, including expanded rebates from the state's senior citizen Property Tax/Rent Rebate program and first-ever general property-tax relief for all homeowners that was distributed through school districts this past summer. As a re-

sult, an estimated 113,000 seniors had their entire school property-tax bill eliminated.

In Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Fayette, Indiana, Greene, Washington and Westmoreland counties, more than 27,000 seniors had their school property taxes completely eliminated.

About 600,000 seniors are expected to benefit from rebates this year, compared to 314,000 before the program's expansion in 2006. Last year, 564,000 seniors received more than \$240 million in rebates. So far this year, more than 580,000 people have applied for a rebate and, as of Oct. 10, rebates totaling nearly \$254 million have been sent to more than 529,000 homeowners and renters.

"More than half a million seniors already received rebates this year, but we know there are about 140,000 more people who qualify but haven't applied yet, including nearly 8,000 seniors here in southwestern Pennsylvania," the governor said. "I encourage everyone who thinks they may be eligible for a rebate to get their application in by the Dec. 31 deadline. I don't want one senior to miss out on receiving the help they need in paying their school property taxes."

Heating Costs

From Page One

If you need help

For those without the resources to stay warm this winter, Gov. Ed Rendell has announced \$280 million in funding for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). The LIHEAP program is designed to help Pennsylvanians having trouble paying their heating bills and facing heating emergencies such as shut-offs.

In addition to the funding commitment, Pennsylvania has expanded eligibility for LIHEAP to Pennsylvanians earning up to \$44,443 for a family of four - an increase from 150 percent of the federal poverty level to approximately 210 percent of the poverty level. Rendell has said that with the new eligibility guidelines "80,000 more state citizens will be eligible for a LIHEAP grant - 30,000 more Pennsylvanians will be able to receive crisis grants when they are in danger of losing their heat, meaning a total of 450,000 families are now eligible for

LIHEAP grants."

A household of one person may be eligible for the LIHEAP grant if their income does not exceed \$23,110.

In addition to expanding eligibility, the amount of the LIHEAP grants will increase from a minimum of \$100 to \$300. The maximum grant will rise from \$300 to \$800.

If a person is eligible for LIHEAP a payment will be sent directly to the utility or fuel dealer and the payment will be credited to the person's bill.

To apply for the grants, applicants will need the names and dates of birth of people in the household, the Social Security numbers for all household members, proof of income for household members and a copy of a recent heating bill.

LIHEAP will begin on November 3, 2008, and interested parties may either call or visit the Fulton County Assistance Office located on Fulton Drive in McConnellsburg. The telephone number is 1-800-222-8563. Applications will also be available online effective November 3, 2008, at www.compass.state.pa.us. You may be eligible for other energy assis-

Act 1 of Special Session 2006 delivered the largest property-tax cut in Pennsylvania history, using proceeds from slots gaming. In addition to the expanded rebate program, the law provides state-funded tax relief through reductions in the tax bills that school districts send out each summer. The broad-based property-tax relief started this year at an average of nearly \$200 per household across the state.

The rebate program benefits eligible Pennsylvanians who are 65 years old and older; widows and widowers age 50 and older; and people with disabilities age 18 and older. The program expansion increased the income limit from \$15,000 to \$35,000 (which excludes half of Social Security income) for homeowners, and raises the maximum rebate for both homeowners and renters from \$500 to \$650.

The expanded household income limits and base rebate amounts are: \$0 and \$8,000 - \$650 rebate; \$8,001 to \$15,000 - \$500 rebate; \$15,001 to \$18,000 - \$300 rebate; \$18,001 to \$35,000 - \$250 rebate.

Renters with incomes between \$0 and \$8,000 receive a \$650 rebate and those with incomes between \$8,001 and \$15,000 receive a \$500

rebate. "In the past two years we've delivered historic property-tax relief to those who need it most, but we're not done yet," said Gov. Rendell. "Once all 14 slots facilities are up and running in Pennsylvania, annual property-tax relief will reach more than \$1 billion and an estimated 200,000 senior homeowners will have their school property taxes eliminated."

Fulton County received 683 rebate applications. The estimated number of eligible people who have not applied for rebates is 322. The amount of rebates distributed is \$275,467, and the estimated number of people with school property taxes eliminated was 162.

The deadline to apply for Pennsylvania's Property Tax/Rent Rebate program was extended from June 30 to December 31. Property Tax/Rent Rebate claim forms (PA-1000) are available online at www.papropertytaxrelief.com or by calling toll free 1-888-222-9190.

The Property Tax/Rent Rebate program, created in 1971, is one of five programs supported by proceeds from the Pennsylvania Lottery. The expanded portion of the rebate program is paid for with revenue from slots gaming.

in order to save as much as \$740 in annual heating costs.

Pennsylvania Attorney General Tom Corbett has also offered some home heating oil tips that could save money. He urges citizens to:

- Contact at least three suppliers to determine the best price;
- Consider pre-purchase programs that offer protection against price increases by requiring a certain amount of fuel guaranteed at a certain price;
- Maintain your heating system by having it checked at least once a year and have filters changed regularly;
- Adjust thermostats to 65 degrees during the day and 55 degrees during sleep hours or when the house is unoccupied;
- Open drapes and blinds on the south side of your home during sunny days and close them at night and on cloudy days;
- Do not block registers and hot water radiators;
- Install storm doors and windows; and
- Have adequate insulation throughout your house and around your water heater.

Election

From Page One

ertarian Party.

Democrat Jack Wagner is fending off competition from Chet Beiler (R) and Libertarian Betsy Summers for his seat as auditor general. Meanwhile, Robert McCord (D), Tom Ellis (R) and Berlie Etzel (L) have thrown their hats into the ring for state treasurer.

Democratic contender Tony Barr is again making a run for the 9th Congressional District seat occupied by Congressman Bill Shuster (R), while Rep. Dick L. Hess is unopposed for his seat in the 78th District of the General Assembly.

The Fulton County News

A County Seat Weekly Newspaper

U.S. PUBLICATION NO. 211820

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Choochy The Pooch Delays Flights At Boston Airport

BOSTON (AP) - Just call Choochy the poodle a "runway runaway."

The "fast and elusive" poodle scampered across runways and taxiways at Logan International Airport over the weekend, evading airport personnel for more than 17 hours and delaying at least eight flights.

Airport spokesman Phil Orlandella says Choochy escaped from her kennel as she was being unloaded after a flight from Detroit on Saturday night.

About 15 state police, firefighters, operations personnel and even electricians chased Choochy late into the night, delaying flights for up 30 minutes.

Orlandella says the poodle "frightened, tired and hungry" was finally lured to safety with food early Sunday afternoon.

The dog was treated for minor injuries at a Boston animal hospital before being returned to her family.

Clearing The Record

In last week's edition of the "News," it was reported Warfordsburg resident Granvil Booth Cavender allegedly made overly obscene threats toward Amy Jo Shearer of Needmore at a location along Black Bear Road. Shearer was actually the individual who reportedly made threats toward Cavender during the incident on October 16. The "News" apologizes for the error.

The Fulton County News wants its news reports to be fair and correct in every respect. If you have a question or comment, please phone us at 485-4513.

Unemployment

From Page One

"For most months, there is an adjustment once all data has been received." He also said that, more often than not, once all data has been received, the rate will go up rather than down. The border counties (with other states) are more affected by this than the interior counties," he added.

The county, with the decrease in unemployment for September, has moved in rankings from number 67 (out of 67 counties) to number 65. Only Forest and Cameron counties posted higher unemployment rates for September. The recent increases in unemployment statistics for the county reflects recent layoffs at JLG, and it is likely that future layoffs in

county industries will impact unemployment further during the winter months. Fulton County's current unemployment rates are markedly higher than both the state and national rates.

Rankings for Fulton's neighboring counties include Franklin at number 6 with an unemployment rate of 4.6, down from a rate of 5 percent in August and a ranking of number 8. Franklin is tied for the spot with Cumberland County. Bedford's ranking dropped from number 64 in August with an unemployment rate of 8 percent to number 57 in September with a 6.8 rate. It is tied with Mifflin County. Huntingdon County's unemployment ranking rose from 50 in August and a rate of 7 percent to 59 in September, but with a slightly lower monthly jobless rate of 6.9 percent. It is tied with Clearfield and Northumberland

Gator Attack Survivor Gets Bionic Arm And Hand

By JOE PAGAN

FLORIDA TODAY

MELBOURNE, Fla. (AP) - What price tag does one put on an arm? A man who lost his recently during a fierce battle with an alligator, has a new one worth \$110,000.

Kasey Edwards, 18, jumped into a canal near Lake Okeechobee, at about 2:30 a.m. June 22, apparently to replicate a high school stunt. Moments later, he felt as if a giant pair of pliers had clamped down on his left arm.

That giant pair of pliers was an 11 1/2-foot alligator.

"I touched him. He felt like a rock," Edwards said from his hospital bed at Holmes Regional Medical Center in Melbourne.

The massive alligator had grabbed his left arm and was trying to drag him to the bottom of the 25-foot canal. The reptile tried to twist him around.

"The death roll," the construction worker thought.

Edwards grabbed onto a buoy line to keep from being dragged under. He freed himself from the alligator's jaw by poking the animal in the eye.

Then, Edwards tried to swim to shore where his friends, who had tried to talk him out of jumping moments before, waited frantically. But what had been his left arm, now was a jagged piece of flesh. He paddled painfully toward the bank with his right arm.

Edwards was taken to a hospital in his hometown of Okeechobee, but later flown to Holmes. He had lost his left arm from above the elbow. "It could have been worse," Ed-

wards said. "I was staring at death."

According to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, 17 deaths from alligator attacks have been reported in Florida since 1948.

"I am lucky," Edwards said.

At the hospital, Edwards said that it felt as if his left arm was asleep.

"I feel like I'm going to see it any moment," he said.

Now, Edwards sees a completely different image - a high-tech, carbon-fiber titanium prosthetic limb and hand, courtesy of Hanger Orthotics in Orlando and Touch Bionics in Scotland.

Alistair Gibson, Hanger's area practice manager in Orlando, and Troy Farnsworth with Hanger in Salt Lake City, designed and crafted the prosthetic arm and "I-limb" hand. Inside the prosthetics are computers and microprocessors that interpret signals from Kaey's brain to work the new arm and hand, much the way the real ones do.

By flexing the biceps and triceps muscles that weren't torn away by the alligator, Kasey is learning to use his new bionic body parts powered by lithium batteries.

Gibson, a prosthetist who moved to Orlando from Scotland, began working with Edwards in August and sees him from time to time to fine tune Edwards' new apparatus.

"When we met Kasey, we evaluated what he's capable of doing, what he did before the trauma and what he wants to do in his life," Gibson said. "It's great to work with people of Kasey's age, because the

counties.

In September, Chester County again posted the lowest unemployment rates in the state with a rate of 4.3 percent, but down from 4.5 in August. Adams, Lancaster and Lebanon counties all tied for the number two spot again in September. Cameron County posted the state's highest unemployment rate in September at 8.8 percent.

Pennsylvania's seasonally adjusted civilian labor force - the number of people working or looking for work rose to 6,441,000 in September, an increase of 41,000 from August. Resident employment rose by 46,000 from August, while unemployment was down by 5,000 residents over the month. The labor force was up 160,000 since September 2007, with both employment and unemployment up over the year.

Pennsylvania's seasonally adjust-

younger they are, the less hesitation they have to do something. He was easy to work with. He's a very intelligent kid, and he was able to give us good feedback along the way."

Gibso, who has a bachelor of science degree in biomedical engineering and a master's degree in prothetics, believes Edwards will eventually be able to live a life very much like his old one.

The new arm, which weighs about five pounds a little less than a

ed unemployment rate fell to 5.7 percent in September, down one-tenth of a percentage point from August. The United States' rate was unchanged at 6.1 percent. September marks the fifth consecutive month that the state's unemployment rate has been below the national rate. Over the year, Pennsylvania's rate was up 1.3 percentage points, while the U.S. rate was up 1.4 percentage points.

Pennsylvania's seasonally adjusted nonfarm job count fell by 12,200 in September to 5,789,400. Only the information sector showed employment growth, adding 600 jobs in September. Nationally, jobs were down 159,000 in September.

Since September 2007, the Pennsylvania jobs total was down 6,700. Since January 2003, the state has added 163,700 jobs.

real arm might not be the reality it is had it not been for the generosity of others, Gibson said.

He said Inner Wheel - a charitable organization - Hanger Orthotics and Touch Bionics all donated the \$100,000-plus cost.

Gibson, who's been in the field for 20 years, said it feels good to help someone out without any financial restrictions.

"It's all about trying to make someone's life better," he said.

400 Reports Of Baby Rashes Prompt Clothing Warning

By CHRISTINE SIMMONS

ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

WASHINGTON (AP) - The government is warning parents about Carter's Inc. baby garments with tag-less labels after about 400 babies who wore the clothing developed rashes on their backs.

The warning applies to the fall 2007 line, which includes about 110 million garments. The Consumer Product Safety Commission said Friday that children should stop using these garments if they develop a rash, but the agency did not announce a recall of the product line. Drayna said the affected clothing includes knit items such as body suits, shirts and pajamas.

The garments were made in various foreign countries, and they were sold at Carter's retail stores and at department and national chain stores, according to CPSC. The clothing appeared on the market in

the fall of 2007 and could still be on retail shelves, although Carter's has released other products since then, Drayna said.

"It appears that a very small percentage of children can be allergic to one or more ingredients in the labels. The solid, rather than stenciled, background on the fall 2007 labels appears to have produced a more pronounced and noticeable reaction among those children who are most allergic to the ink," the announcement said.

Also, the company's internal review of the product found "no indication that the labels contain any known skin irritants or abrasive chemicals, or that such a rash is anything beyond a rare allergic reaction to an otherwise safe product."

For more information, consumers can call 888-282-4674 or visit http://www.carters.com/corporate/tagless_message.aspx.