



**MES Students To Present  
"Robin Hood - The Musical"**

Page A7



**Vo-Tech Students  
Take Part In FCMC  
Health Fair**

Page A10

# The Fulton County News

THURSDAY  
WEEKLY

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108TH YEAR, NO. 45

McCONNELLSBURG, PENNSYLVANIA

NOVEMBER 6, 2008

## Skidmore Confesses To Exxon Robbery

Henderson enters plea  
in unrelated robbery

By Chanin Rotz-Mountz

Two men facing charges of robbery on unrelated incidents that occurred in Fulton County last year opted to enter a plea of guilty before Judge Carol Van Horn last Monday in the midst of the jury trial selection process.

Fulton County District Attorney Travis Kendall verified that Hancock, Md., resident Nathan Lee Skidmore agreed to a guilty plea of misdemeanor one theft during the October 27 court proceedings. Skidmore had previously appeared in the Fulton County Court of Common Pleas for a trial in mid-July that resulted in a hung jury on charges of robbery, criminal conspiracy, theft, reckless endangerment and simple assault by physical menace.

In speaking with court officials last Monday, Skidmore reportedly confirmed he indeed drove to the Warfordsburg-based Exxon July 31, 2007, and took money from a cash register operated that evening by Joshua Crouse as well as a drawer stored in a back office.

In spite of giving the court conflicting statements, Crouse had previously testified against Skidmore, a fellow Exxon employee. Crouse stated he had been approached by Skidmore, who wanted to "rob the store."

Crouse said the day of the holdup he was instructed by Skidmore to keep his drawer full and not drop any cash into the store's safe. Skidmore, Crouse stated, also said he would be watching the store. Hours later at approximately 9 p.m. on July 31, 2007, an individual clad in dark clothing and ski mask, wielding a silver handgun, entered the store and stole \$1,711.11 in cash.

The lone individual to take the stand on behalf of the defense during the July trial was Skidmore's mother, Charla Huff. Huff provided an alibi

See SKIDMORE, Page A2

## Veterans Day Observed Next Tues.

11 a.m. ceremonies  
at courthouse

STAFF REPORT

An officer with the United States Army is scheduled to give the keynote address at this year's Veterans Day observance Nov. 11 at the Fulton County Courthouse in McConnellsburg.

Col. Tricia Anslow, deputy chief of staff for engineering with the Arkansas National Guard, will speak at the 11 a.m. ceremony honoring military veterans.

Col. Anslow was deployed with the 20th Airborne Engineer Brigade during the Gulf War and, in October 2006, was deployed to Iraq as commander for the 875th Combat Engineer Battalion. The unit served as the Corps' Route Clearance Battalion.

See VETERANS DAY, Page A2

## DEATHS

Cusman, Richard, 74, McConnellsbg.

Frey, Mary, 54, McConnellsburg

Kendall, Gladys, 87, McConnellsburg

Ridgeway, Russell Jr., 77, Waterfall

OBITUARIES, Page B3

## County Votes In Historic Election



Taylor Township minority clerk Elnor DeShong (left) and judge of elections Betty Berkstresser (center) give final voting instructions to registered voter Barb Cutchall. Other election officials on hand throughout the November 4 presidential election were Dorothy and Betty Shotts, majority inspector and clerk, and minority inspector Kate Berkstresser.

## Obama Elected Nation's New President

County voters continue  
to back Republican  
candidates; Shuster  
defeats Barr

By Chanin Rotz-Mountz  
STAFF WRITER

Within 30 minutes of the final votes being tabulated in Fulton County Tuesday night, media organizations were broadcasting an 11 p.m. announcement declaring Sen. Barack Obama president-elect.

Needing a total of 270 electoral votes nationwide, the junior U.S. senator from Illinois easily commanded a lengthy-lead over Republican presidential nominee Sen. John McCain while votes continued to roll in across the United States.

In Pennsylvania, the Obama/Sen.

Joe Biden ticket enjoyed a marginal lead over McCain and Gov. Sarah Palin that was predicted by many in the weeks leading up to the "historic" November 4 presidential election. With almost 90 percent of Pennsylvania's precincts reporting, Obama held a whopping 13 percent lead over McCain.

In Fulton County, where Republicans outnumber their Democrat opponents, registered voters seemed to stick close to their party ties. With only an overall 65 percent voter turnout in county, 73 percent of the votes cast for the presidential candidates went to McCain. McCain unofficially tallied 4,612 votes in comparison to Obama's 1,562 votes locally, which equate to 25 percent of the vote.

Independent candidate Ralph Nader received 57 votes in Fulton County, while Bob Barr, Libertarian, rounded out the evening locally with 31 votes.

In asking all Americans to rally for president-elect Obama from along the campaign trail in Phoenix, Arizona, Sen. McCain reminded voters that everyone must work together to get our great nation working again. McCain added in spite of their differences during the campaign, he will indeed help Obama in through the many challenges he will face.

In his acceptance speech, Obama indicated, "We are and always will be the United States of America" and not just various categories of genders, races and religions.

"Because of what we did on this day, in this election, in this defining moment, we've brought change to this nation," he said.

"I may not have won your vote tonight, but I hear your voices and I need your help," concluded Obama.

Obama's inauguration as the 44th president of the United States is tentatively set for January 20.

### Attorney General

Republican incumbent Tom Corbett easily led Democratic contender John M. Morganelli and Libertarian Marakay J. Rogers in Fulton County Tuesday for the position of attorney general.

Corbett held a three to one ratio over Morganelli with 4,452 votes in comparison to Morganelli's 1,462. Rogers wrapped up the election locally with 160 votes.

Statewide with 92 percent of all precincts tabulated, Corbett will likely hold onto his state seat with 56 percent of the vote. In the meantime, Morganelli, a district attorney, had 46 percent of the vote, and Rogers had two percent.

### Auditor General

Incumbent Jack Wagner (D) will hold onto his position in state government as the auditor general after gathering 60 percent of the votes cast statewide. Wagner fended off competitor Chet Beiler (R) for his position as the state's fiscal watchdog. Libertarian Betsy Summers rounded out the state results with three percent.

Locally, registered voters found themselves in favor of Beiler and recorded 3,630 votes in comparison to Wagner's 2,038. Summers had 311 votes in county.

### State Treasurer

Touted as a business finance expert, Democrat Robert McCord held 56 percent of the state vote with only a small margin of votes still uncounted. McCord's Republican opponent Tom Ellis had 42 percent of the state vote, and Libertarian Berlie Etzel had two percent.

In Fulton County, Ellis, a partner in the public finance department and former county commissioner, garnered the majority of the votes with 4,112 votes. McCord received 1,707 votes locally, and Etzel finished with 159 votes.

### Ninth Congressional District

In what some termed an "uneven

See ELECTION, Page A2

## Cowans Gap Bridge Getting "Spruce-Up"

Parts of old CCC bridge  
being replaced

By Jean Snyder  
STAFF WRITER

Nearly seven years after extensive renovations and updates were made to Cowans Gap State Park, the park is now undergoing some minor "sprucing up," according to park manager Steve Behe.

Although this project is much smaller than the renovations done in 2002, its main focus is the replacement of the bridge over Aughwick Creek at the southern end of the lake. The bridge leads to Camping Area B of the park or what is sometimes referred to as the "old camping area."

George S. Hann & Son, Fort Litleton, was awarded the low construction bid for the \$191,288 project that began in early October of this year and is expected to be completed by April 1, 2009. Wen-Brooke Contracting of Three Springs submitted the second lowest bid for \$208,239. Two additional higher bids were submitted by Jay Fulkroad & Sons, McAlisterville, Pa., and Cottles Asphalt Maintenance, Everett.

The bridge being replaced was built in the early 1930s by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). The CCC was a work-relief program initiated by President Franklin Roosevelt during the Great Depression and much work was done at that time at Cowans Gap.

Although there was some work done on the bridge about 10 years ago, Behe said that weight limits remained a problem with regard to hauling stone and rocks over it as well as the increased size and weight of recreational vehicles using the campground. The old bridge had a

weight limit of 17 tons while the new bridge, Behe said, will have no weight limits.

According to Behe, the original bridge abutments built by the CCC will remain in place but will be repointed. The bridge deck, which has now been removed, will be completely replaced and the new one will have guardrails and new signage. In addition to the new bridge, the project also includes replenishing sand on the beach and lake to maintain similar depth throughout the swimming area. Another set of buoys have

also been added to mark the five-foot depth mark while the existing buoys mark the six-foot depth.

In order to replace the bridge, the lake has been drawn down six feet, but Behe said the park still welcomes visitors and fishermen. He said the lake was stocked last Friday with 1,250 trout and was also recently stocked with fingerling catfish.

The road to the B campground and to the boat launch area will remain closed until the bridge is completed. Behe said the biggest incon-

venience is for hikers and hunters. Lakeside Trail, at this time, comes to an abrupt end at the bridge and visitors are being asked to stay at least 100 feet clear of the construction area.

More than \$3 million in improvements to Cowans Gap began in 2002 and closed the park for well over a year while all restrooms and shower facilities were replaced. Other improvements included a new lifeguard station, fishing pier and upgrades to

See COWANS GAP, Page A2



Bridge abutments on this bridge at Cowans Gap State Park were built by the Civilian Conservation Corps workers in the early 1930s. Although the bridge deck is being replaced, the abutments will remain and will be repointed. The bridge, located at the southern end of the lake, leads to Campground "B."

## Forbes Road Surpasses PSSA Testing Standards

District meets adequate  
yearly progress; high  
school receives warning  
for reading scores

By Chanin Rotz-Mountz  
STAFF WRITER

The principal of Forbes Road High School took a moment Monday evening to recap Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) testing results for the previous 2007-08 school year and assured those in attendance that steps are being taken to improve reading scores on a high school level.

Principal Fred Foster informed those on hand at the school board's monthly meeting held November 3 that the high school did not make "adequate yearly progress" in reading. High school students tested include those in grades seven, eight and eleven.

As a result, the high school facility was placed on "warning status" even though the district itself achieved adequate yearly progress for the fifth consecutive year. Reading across the board, according to Foster, has consistently been in the 50th percentile. However, stakes continue to be raised for the number of students needing to reach adequate or proficient status to make AYP standards.

Foster noted steps toward improving the high school's reading scores have already been taken and six students have qualified for tutoring. Known as the Catapult reading program, students completing the program guidelines are eligible to receive a desktop computer.

Foster added he had "nothing to sugarcoat" and, while it isn't mandatory at this warning stage, a school improvement plan is also in the works.

In other matters addressed dur-

ing the board's 21-minute meeting, a medical leave extension was approved for elementary teacher Mechele Seville. In addition, Heather Hand received authorization for a medical leave of absence.

Jessica Dovey of McConnellsburg and Howard resident Brittany Frost were added to the district's teacher substitute list after completing the Tuscarora Intermediate Unit #11 emergency certification program. The motion was approved subject to the receipt of necessary paperwork and clearances.

Kara Truax was approved to serve as a volunteer elementary girls basketball coach pending all necessary clearances.

The following elementary field trips were accepted as presented to the board: grade three to Old Bedford Village in May; grade six to Washington, D.C., in May; grade one to Shaver's Creek Environmental Center located in Petersburg on

April 6; and the elementary chorus to East Juniata High School on April 3.

The Class of 2009 was granted authorization to take several one-day trips instead of an overnight trip.

A crisis management plan approved by the board will be filed with the county Emergency Management Agency, the McConnellsburg state police barracks and the Hustontown Volunteer Fire Co.

The 35 and older recreational basketball league was given permission to use a gymnasium, when available, on Sunday afternoons.

Guidelines for bus driver qualifications were updated to include the need for a copy of a FBI background check (fingerprinting).

The local Girl Scouts will be utilizing an elementary classroom for 1 1/2 hours for meetings on November 19, December 3, December 10, December 17, January 7, January 14, January 21 and January 28.



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