

## Letters To The Editor

### Praises Fire Companies, Community's Response To Trailer Fire

To The Editor:  
 Anyone who knows my family knows that we have family, but not much else, as far as assets. Monday morning I received a phone call while I was at work that my youngest brother Danny's trailer was on fire, but everyone was safe.

My supervisor had no hesitation in her voice when she told me to go to my family. As I started down 522 south, I realized my brother Donnie and his wife were behind me. Our family has always been there for each other.

It seemed to take forever to reach our family and to see for ourselves that everyone was safe. There was fire equipment and fire personnel everywhere. These brave men and women fought and tried to save what they could with determination and kindness. I cannot say enough about the fire departments in our area.

By the time it was over, my brother's family had lost all their materi-

al possessions. But this is where I saw in action the words in Matthew 22:39: "Thou shall love thy neighbor as thyself." The Red Cross, family members, friends and neighbors came offering whatever they could, whether it was food, clothing, bedding or money. They were reaching out to help. It was an amazing thing to see.

I wanted to write this letter to give our community hope during a time of almost hopelessness, where unemployment is on the rise and where politicians lie and make promises they will not keep. The only thing that had no water damage and was not burned in my brother's living room was the family Bible. God's word is alive and well in Fulton County, both in deed and in a prized possession.

Thank you friends and neighbors,  
 Mary L. Buterbaugh  
 McConnellsburg

## Key To Stemming High-School Dropouts: Parents

Many parents of students in low-performing schools say they're not kept informed, a new report finds

By Stacy Teicher Khadaroo  
 STAFF WRITER OF  
 THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR

If America is going to stem the dropout crisis, low-performing schools will have to do a better job of reaching out to parents.

That's the conclusion of a new report that found that, among parents with students in low-performing high schools, fewer than half said the schools did a fairly good job communicating about their child's academic progress.

The report's findings "counter the myth that many parents, including low-income parents, don't value education or don't want to be further engaged by the schools," says John Bridgeland, the report's coauthor and CEO of Civic Enterprises, a public-policy firm in Washington. "Parents with students in low-performing schools see the need for their involvement as advocates for their children," he says, "but they need

schools to provide good information and more tools - from homework hot lines (to guidance on) how to help their child get into college."

The report, which was released two weeks ago, is aimed at bringing the voices of the 25 million parents of high-schoolers into the dialogue on education reform.

Research shows a correlation between parental involvement and academic success, and young people themselves see the need for it: 71 percent of high school dropouts said better communication between schools and parents was one key to keeping students in school, according to the landmark 2006 "Silent Epidemic" study by Civic Enterprises. According to that study, nearly half said the school did not contact them or their parents when they were absent or dropping out.

The great majority of parents want their children to go to college. But they cite vastly different levels of engagement with high schools, according to the new report, "One Dream, Two Realities."

In schools considered high performing, 83 percent of parents say the school did a fairly good or very good job communicating about their child's academic progress. Just 43 percent say the same of low-performing schools. Only 51 percent of

parents in low-performing schools say they've had good conversations with half of their child's teachers (versus 70 percent in high-performers).

The nationally representative survey included 1,006 parents of current or recent high-schoolers. A school was labeled "high performing" if parents said most students there go to college, "low performing" if most do not.

Researchers also conducted focus groups. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation commissioned the report from Civic Enterprises and Peter D. Hart Research Associates.

The report aims to move the conversation beyond traditional tensions - with schools and parents sometimes blaming one another for low student achievement. It shows broad support for a number of steps that schools could take, including a single point of contact for parents and a way to check grades on the Internet. Six of 10 parents in low-performing schools say it would be extremely helpful to be notified when a student is cutting classes or having academic problems.

Too often, such communication doesn't come when "the parent and teacher can - help this child better his grade before it's too late," says

Mary Najera, who helped found the Los Angeles Parents Union to educate parents about their rights and responsibilities. In some people's native countries, such as Mexico, it's not expected that parents will question teachers and play an active role, she says.

Najera was "a desperate mom" after her son got into trouble in junior high. But after he spent some time at a Green Dot charter high school in L.A., he joined a club for students with grades above 3.0, she says, and now he's in college. She saw his progress connected to the school's requirement that parents do at least 35 hours of service each year. "When you start to realize that the parent engagement makes such a difference in your child's education success - I can't explain it, it's a transformation," she says in a conference call with reporters.

School systems should create that welcoming culture, and high-achieving schools do, says Dan Domenech, executive director of the American Association of School Administrators in Arlington, Va. "The least amount of parental involvement tends to take place at the high school. - That is where we really have to make the effort," he says, citing one estimate that about 7,000 U.S. students drop out each day.

### Borough Needs Residents To Complete Surveys For Sidewalk Grant Money

To The Editor:

Many residents have received income surveys letters within the past six months from Borough Council in an attempt to secure grant funding from the county of Fulton's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program to assist in the replacement of sidewalks in much-needed areas throughout the borough. In order to determine eligibility for this grant funding, income surveys must be distributed to those residents who have a residence on the streets chosen for sidewalk replacements. Renters are asked to participate in this survey process because the landowner is ultimately responsible for maintaining the sidewalk. Therefore, if the landowner fails to endure this expense, this could affect the renters with an increase in the monthly rent rate.

This income survey information will not be viewed by Borough Council but will be sent directly to the CDBG administrator at the county of Fulton, where the surveys will be collected and will be calculated to determine eligibility once the total number of surveys needed is received.

We are looking to target the worst areas within the borough on the first round, which includes the streets listed below. Also listed are the num-

Number of surveys submitted	Number of surveys returned to date
Hohman Drive	2
North Second St.	11
West Walnut St.	15
Lincoln Way East	48
North Third St.	16
East Market St.	17
South Second St.	10
Lincoln Way West	3
North Fourth St.	5
East Maple St.	1
East Walnut St.	7
South Third St.	8
Total:	143

ber of surveys submitted and the number of surveys returned to date. Following are the number of surveys submitted and the number of surveys returned:

If you have any questions or need another form, please contact Pat Frazier at 717-485-5355, Travis Bard at 717-485-3071 or the borough council office at 717-485-3690.

We would like to thank those residents who have already participated by returning the income surveys as well as everyone for their cooperation in an effort to help improve your borough.

Patsy L. Frazier  
 Borough Council

### No More Excuses! Football's Time Is Now

Dear Editor,

The Fulton County Cowboys finished their first successful season. Beginning last February 2008, a group of parents got together and in six short months raised money, joined a league, fielded a 26-player tackle team and two flag teams and was competitive in a well-established league in Huntingdon, Pa., that was gracious enough to allow us to join them. Around town, it's not too hard to see Cowboy football car magnets, hats, T-shirts and sweat hoodies. There is a lot to be proud of!

Meanwhile, over at James Buchanan High School, a Southern Fulton student is their varsity starting quarterback. In Hancock, Md., many Southern Fulton youths are standouts in the Washington County, Md.-based youth football league. The youth ranks of Mercersburg's Keystone Youth Football League are heavily fortified with, not just players, but standouts from Forbes Road, Central Fulton and Southern Fulton.

I applaud every player, parent and coach who are sacrificing so much to bring a great game into the lives of kids who would otherwise never have the opportunity. I thank

every business, man, woman and child who knows how important this is and are doing their best to make football happen in our community despite our school districts inability to make football happen.

Football is happening; look around! A mule's kick away from Penn State, and in a state with a football tradition as rich as Pennsylvania's, Fulton County still does not have high school football. We have the talent, we have the numbers and we have the energy to start a collective program right now.

What we need is our school districts and the athletic department directors to stop telling us all the reasons we can't, and concentrate on all the reasons we must. Central Fulton has the field and the newly community donated lights and is centrally located. The Sideling Hill League exists and is a forum where this can and should be organized.

I know that if the Committee to Create Fulton County Football is given the chance, it can raise all the money the Sideling Hill League will need, and it won't cost any of the school districts a plug nickel. I also know that football is a money generator, a community builder and a source of tremendous pride almost everywhere.

Parents, players and football people here in Fulton County, the time is now. We need school board members, school administrators and athletic directors who say "we can," rather than "we can't." There are no more excuses. The officials who continue to say "we can't" must be replaced. The heck with begging for nonbinding, neighboring districts' charity co-ops; rumor is Southern Fulton's is getting theirs cut after this season. Central Fulton's is on thin ice, and Forbes Road can't even produce one! It's time we demand our very own Fulton County High School football team. I urge us all to demonstrate our passion for our own football by contacting your school board members, school administrators and athletic directors and keep the pressure turned up high.

Working together it's possible to put a junior high team on the field as fast as 2009. We could have a varsity team as soon as 2011.

If you want to get involved, drop us a note at Cowboy's Football, P.O. Box 205, McConnellsburg, PA 17233, or e-mail me at melssalon@inner-net.net. The time is now; there are simply no excuses left, none whatsoever.

Damon Schoen  
 President, Fulton County  
 Cowboys

### Skidmore

From Page One

for her her son during the robbery time frame, saying her son never left their home until 9 p.m. after she completed a 30-minute work out tape that she began promptly at 8:30 p.m.

Kendall indicated a minimum prison term of up to six months has been agreed upon in connection with Skidmore's guilty plea.

### Henderson Plea

Perry Henderson, formerly of the Mount Union and Philadelphia areas, also appeared in court last Monday for jury trial selection. Prior to the selection, however, Henderson chose to enter a guilty plea to one count each of felony two robbery causing bodily injury and theft. For sentencing purposes, the theft will likely merge with the robbery charge.

Original charges levied against Henderson by investigating officer

Trooper John Lupey included four counts of robbery; one count each of criminal attempted murder, theft by unlawful taking, terroristic threats, reckless endangerment and criminal mischief; and two counts each of aggravated assault, harassment and simple assault. The standard sentencing range for Henderson, who has an extensive criminal history dating back to 1990, falls between a minimum of 36 to 42 months.

In his initial report, Lupey said Henderson visited the Back Run Road, McConnellsburg, home of

Alvin and Timothy Peck on July 17, 2007. Henderson, according to Lupey, threatened to kill 20-year-old Timothy Peck if he did not give him money. The two struggled over a knife, resulting in a knife wound to Peck.

While at the residence, the 38-year-old Henderson also slashed the tires on a 1991 Oldsmobile Cutlass Sierra owned by Alvin Peck. Henderson fled the Ayr Township residence with \$260 and was later taken into custody on a warrant in Philadelphia.

### Veterans Day

From Page One

ion for the 411th and 20th Engineer Brigades and cleared more than 1,500 IEDs.

The coporal's awards and decorations include the Bronze Star,

Combat Action Badge and Parachutist Badge. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in geography from the United States Military Academy, a Bachelor of Science degree in biology earned at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, and a Master of Science degree in water resource planning from Johns

Hopkins University.

Also participating will be the Fulton Honor Guard, the Central Fulton and Forbes Road school district high school bands, master of ceremonies and VFW Post Cmdr. Clair Traxler, and Fulton Honor Guard chaplain Robert C. Snyder delivering the invocation and benediction.

Veterans Day observances are sponsored each year by Bishop-Raker VFW Post 655 and American Legion Post 561.

The event will be followed by light refreshments at the VFW.

If it rains, organizers say the Veterans Day program will be held at the VFW on Poplar Street.

### Cowans Gap

From Page One

the cabins. The lake was also drawn down at that time and dredged.

"People like Cowans Gap State Park," Behe said, "and those upgraded amenities made it like new." He said that high gas prices and economic woes did not diminish the number of people using the park this

past summer.

In the meantime, Behe said that while it is still early in the project, it appears that construction is on schedule. He said that seven months set for the project's completion in

order to allow for ordering of supplies and possible inclement weather during the winter months. He also stressed that the park remains open to visitors and will remain open throughout the project's duration.

### Election

From Page One

match up," incumbent Bill Shuster easily overcame teacher and competitor Tony Barr. With 94 percent of the votes tabulated in the entire Ninth Congressional District, Shuster held on for 64 percent of the votes cast. Barr, a Democrat who attempted to unseat Shuster for the second time, collected approximately 36 percent of the votes cast statewide.

Locally, Shuster (R), who was seeking re-election to his fifth term of office, finished with 4,030 votes to Barr's 2,174 votes.

#### 78th General Assembly District

An unopposed Dick L. Hess (R/D) garnered 6,003 votes in Fulton County for his return to the 78th District of the General Assembly.

#### Bond Referendum

Registered voters were asked to vote in favor or against the Commonwealth incurring debt in the amount of \$400,000 to give grants

and loans to municipalities and public utilities for expenses necessary to construct, expand or improve upon drinking water systems, storm water and other wastewater projects.

In Fulton County, 2,233 individuals voted in favor of the referendum question. Those voters, however, were outnumbered locally as an additional 2,637 voters were against the state incurring any further debt.

Statewide, though, the positive votes outweighed the nay sayers with at least 62 percent of the commonwealth in favor of the bond ref-

erendum. Areas showing larger numbers of voters in support of the water and sewer improvements were Philadelphia, Delaware, Lackawanna, Montgomery, Allegheny and Cambria counties.

The Fulton County Board of Elections comprised of commissioners Bonnie Mellott Keefer, Daniel Swain Jr. and David Hoover II are scheduled to meet on Friday to count provisional ballots and finalize the vote count.

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# Are you the picture of health?

**“Colorectal cancer is the 2nd leading cancer killer. But it doesn't have to be.”**

Katie Couric, Co-Founder  
EIF's National Colorectal Cancer Research Alliance

Colorectal cancer and precancerous polyps don't always cause symptoms. So you can look healthy and feel fine and not know there may be a problem. ■ Screening helps find polyps so they can be removed before they turn into colorectal cancer. This is one cancer you can prevent! ■ Screening can also find colorectal cancer early, when treatment often leads to a cure. ■ If you're 50 or older, make sure you really are the picture of health. Get screened for colorectal cancer.

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