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Hustontown Class of 1953 Holds Reunion

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The Fulton County News

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THURSDAY WEEKLY

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McCONNELLSBURG, PENNSYLVANIA

NOVEMBER 20, 2008

Hearing Set For Accused Murderer

Shooting victim Karen Gerholt has local ties

By Chanin Rotz-Mount
STAFF WRITER

A Mount Union, Huntingdon County, man accused of gunning down his wife and mother of his children in the parking lot of the Bedford McDonald's Sunday, November 9, was tentatively scheduled to appear in court this week for a preliminary hearing.

Faced with multiple charges of criminal homicide; voluntary and involuntary manslaughter; simple and aggravated assault; recklessly endangering another person; and terrorist threats, John Lewis Gerholt Sr. currently remains lodged in the Bedford County Prison without bail in connection with the death of Karen Marie (Lemin) Gerholt.

John Gerholt also reportedly faces a weapons charge for violating a protection-from-abuse (PFA) order, which stipulated the 38-year-old was not to possess a firearm. His preliminary hearing was set for Wednesday, November 19, at 9 a.m.

John Gerholt was found kneeling over the woman's body shortly after 3 p.m. by Pennsylvania State Police Bedford troopers responding to calls of multiple shots fired in the fast food restaurant's parking lot along Route 30. John Gerholt, police elaborated, had also utilized his shirt to cover the body of his 24-year-old estranged wife.

The couple had been married for approximately six years, and Karen Gerholt had recently taken up residence at 663 Sandy Run Road, Hopewell. Only weeks earlier she had filed a PFA against John Gerholt, who is the father of two of her three young children.

Karen Gerholt was shot near her vehicle where she had reportedly been observed by eyewitnesses "crouching down" in an attempt to hide from her husband carrying a shotgun. At least one spent shell casing fired from a sawed-off 12-gauge shotgun was found adjacent to her body.

Karen Gerholt was pronounced dead at the scene by Bedford County Coroner Sam Gordon at 4:22 p.m., and an autopsy was performed the following day at Conemaugh Health

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The News will print early next week due to the Thanksgiving holiday. Advertisers, correspondents and readers are reminded to submit items for publication in next week's issue by this Friday, November 21.

DEATHS

- Butts, Rachael, 21, Titusville, Fla.
- Dodson, Donna, 67, Clearville
- Eader, Donna, 64, Berk. Springs
- Gerholt, Karen, 24, Hopewell
- Mellott, Dorothy, 87, Mercersburg
- Minnick, Zella, 94, Danville, Va.
- Pyatt, Anita, 84, Chambersburg
- Smith, Deborah, 45, Dunkirk, Md.
- Stough, Leon Jr., 47, Riddlesburg
- Young, Sarajane, 75, Hancock

OBITUARIES, Page B3

First National, Graystone Banks Merge

Second change for local bank in less than three years

By Jean Snyder
STAFF WRITER

Less than three years after The First National Bank of McConnellsburg became the McConnellsburg branch of The First National Bank of Greencastle, what was once a locally owned bank will now become "Tower Bank, a division of Graystone Tower Bank." The name change will come as a result of a recently announced merger between The First National Bank of Greencastle, and Graystone Financial Corp., a rapidly growing Harrisburg-based bank.

Like so many other things throughout the years, the word "McConnellsburg" will no longer appear in the bank's name, a bank that was founded more than 100 years ago and was independently and locally owned until 2006 when it merged with the Greencastle bank.

The merger was announced jointly last week by Jeffrey Shank, president and CEO of Tower Bancorp Inc., which is the holding company of First National Bank of Greencastle, and by Andrew Samuel, chairman and CEO of Graystone Financial Corp., the holding company of Graystone Bank.

The partnership of the two institutions will create a financial institution with combined assets of over \$1.2 billion with more than

300 employees.

In making the announcement, Shank said the "alliance is a proactive, revenue-driven strategy, not a cost-saving response to the current financial climate." Shank also said that "because there are no overlapping branches and markets, no branch closings of either banking institution are planned." However, both bank presidents concede that "after an initial evaluation period, some duplicating positions may require streamlining."

Graystone Bank was founded in 2005 and is headquartered in Harrisburg with nine branch locations in six counties, including Centre, Cumberland, Dauphin, Lancaster, Lebanon and York. It is the fastest growing bank in Pennsylvania, while The First National Bank of Greencastle, founded in 1864, is the oldest independent bank in Pennsylvania. The merger will result in a banking institution with a total of 25 branch locations in nine counties in Pennsylvania and one in Washington County, Md.

In a press release, Shank and Samuel promised that "both institutions will continue operating under their established brands and their respective customers will receive the same high-level of services and products from the familiar faces at their existing locations." They said the only visible transition will be the name changes of both banks and their branches. First National Bank of Greencastle will be known as Tower Bank, a division of Graystone Tower Bank, while cur-



The First National Bank of Greencastle's McConnellsburg branch will change its name again in early 2009 as a result of the merger of Tower Bancorp and Graystone Financial Corp. The local bank will be called "Tower Bank."

rent Graystone Bank branches will be known as Graystone Bank, a division of Graystone Tower Bank.

The 2006 merger agreement between The First National Bank of McConnellsburg and The First National Bank of Greencastle called for three of FNB's directors to sit on the board of Tower Bancorp. Local

FNB directors Dr. H.D. Johnston, Terry Randall and Patricia Carbaugh were designated to serve in that capacity. According to Shank, the three directors will continue to serve on the newly combined Tower Bancorp board of directors.

Under the terms of the deal, the two holding companies, Tower Ban-

corp Inc. and Graystone Financial Corp. will merge and still be called Tower Bancorp Inc. with a 20-member board of directors, 10 each designated by Tower and Graystone, respectively. The agreement also provides that Kermit G. Hicks shall

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Library Expansion, Renovation Move Forward



The million-dollar-plus expansion of the Fulton County Library that includes an elevator and stairwell is taking shape after nearly three months of construction work. According to librarian Jamie Brambley, the project, which also includes the renovation of the existing library, is about three weeks behind schedule and will now probably be completed in June or early July. She said Monday that demolition work upstairs has been finished, reinforcement has taken place where needed and the existing building has been skinned. Brambley said the library would probably be closed for a week in January to move the book stacks downstairs so that work on the building's interior can begin. Eagle Construction Co. employees could be seen Tuesday morning working on the library's exterior at the rear of the building.

Presidential Election Comes To A Close

Fulton County Board of Elections wraps up duties last Thursday

By Chanin Rotz-Mount
STAFF WRITER

With deadlines extended for military personnel and individuals out of the country needing to submit federal write-in ballots and provisional ballots issued Election Day requiring a final tally, the Fulton County Board of Elections was finally able to close out the historic November 4 presidential election last week with the issuance of a final vote count.

In speaking with the "News," County Chief Clerk Richard Wible elaborated on Friday, November 7, the Board of Elections comprised of commissioners Bonnie Mellott Keefer, Daniel Swain Jr. and David Hoover II counted a total of 17 ballots that trickled into the commissioners office the day before the elec-

tion and on November 4. Votes cast in the race for the presidency were tallied during that specific count.

In addition, 27 provisional ballots were issued at polling places across the county on Election Day. Of those ballots, Wible noted, eight were taken into consideration and counted. Furthermore, military and out-of-country ballots known as federal write-in ballots totalling 21 were tabulated late last week as well.

The newest additions to the ballot box did little to change the overall results in Fulton County, however. Sen. John McCain (R) received an additional 30 votes bringing the final count to 4,642, while President-elect Barack Obama (D) garnered an extra 14 votes. Obama's count stopped at 1,576 votes, while the votes cast for Independent Ralph Nader and Libertarian Bob Barr remained unchanged at 57 and 31 votes, respectively.

Obama's inauguration as the 44th president of the United States

is set for Tuesday, January 20.

Other state and regional races were tabulated in county as follows:

Attorney General
Tom Corbett (R) - 4,459
John M. Morganelli (D) - 1,461
Marakay J. Rogers (L) - 160

Auditor General
Chet Beiler (R) - 3,636
Jack Wagner (D) - 2,038
Betsy Summers (L) - 311

State Treasurer
Tom Ellis (R) - 4,119
Robert McCord (D) - 1,705
Berlie Etzel (L) - 159

Ballot Question
No - 2,636
Yes - 2,238

9th Congressional District Representative
Bill Shuster (R) - 4,037
Tony Barr (D) - 2,173

78th General Assembly District Representative
Dick L. Hess - 6,008

Old Jail Makes 2008 Pennsylvania At Risk List

8 endangered historic resources named statewide

By Lindsay R. Mellott
STAFF WRITER

Preservation Pennsylvania announced Monday that the Fulton County Jail is one of eight resources statewide included in its 2008 Pennsylvania At Risk list.

The fate of the old jail became a concern of the Fulton County Historical Society and a number of citizens locally after the county commissioners announced earlier this year they were considering tearing it down as part of a multi-million dollar plan to upgrade the county's offices.

In an effort to save the old jail, concerned residents circulated petitions, wrote letters to the editor and spoke out at town meetings with the county commissioners. In October, during the annual Fulton Fall Folk Festival, the Historical Society, to raise interest in the old jail's history and preservation, included the building on its tour of unique homes and historic structures.

The Pennsylvania At Risk list is published annually by Preservation Pennsylvania, a statewide preserva-

tion group. The list, according to a press release issued Monday by the group, serves as a representative sampling of the commonwealth's most endangered historic resources. It is compiled from recommendations made by Preservation Pennsylvania members, local heritage organizations, the board and staff of Preservation Pennsylvania, and the Bureau for Historic Preservation, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.

The description of the Fulton County Jail on the Pennsylvania At Risk list reads:

"Shortly after Fulton County was established in 1850, the county commissioners accepted a bid of \$2,874 to construct the Fulton County Jail. Circa 1900, a rear addition containing more cells was constructed to increase the jail's holding capacity. By the late 20th century, however, the historic structure could not comply with the new building codes and prisoners were sent to facilities in nearby Franklin and Bedford counties. The Fulton County sheriff continues to use offices in the old jail, which is located directly behind the courthouse and within the boundaries of the McConnellsburg His-

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The future of the old county jail, which is listed in the National Register of Historic Places as contributing to the character of McConnellsburg, is now a concern of a statewide preservation group.



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