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SF To Present Christmas Cantata

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THURSDAY WEEKLY

The Fulton County News

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McCONNELLSBURG, PENNSYLVANIA

DECEMBER 4, 2008

Rouzer Trial Delayed

Trial in hit-man-for-hire case tentatively set for January

By Chanin Rotz-Mountz
STAFF WRITER

The details of an alleged murder-for-hire case that began from within the confines of the Franklin County Prison will be aired in January during the trial of Gregory Aaron Rouzer.

Tentatively set for January 15 and 16 in neighboring Franklin County, the trial will decide the fate of the 40-year-old Harrisonville man charged with felony counts of criminal solicitation-homicide and criminal conspiracy engaging-homicide. Rouzer is currently lodged in prison after previously being sentenced to a minimum of 14 years and seven months in a state correctional institution after attempting to kill Breezewood area resident Randy Walters. The attempted murder purportedly stems from a supposed grudge by Rouzer against Walters' girlfriend, Marian Wertz.

It is possible Rouzer's case will be tried in conjunction with the commonwealth's case against Rouzer's former girlfriend, Mildred "Midge" Tressler, who faces charges of criminal conspiracy and hindering apprehension. He is represented in court proceedings by defense attorney Eric Weisbrod, while Tressler is represented by attorney James Reed.

According to charging papers filed against Rouzer in the hit-man-for-hire case, state police said after being initially arrested in the attempted murder of Walters, Rouzer allegedly conspired from his jail cell with a fellow inmate for assistance in having the shooting victim and his girlfriend killed in hopes they would not testify against him in court.

The hit-man secured by

See **ROUZER**, Page A2

"News" Changes To Narrower Page Width

STAFF REPORT

Fulton County News readers will notice that this week's paper doesn't seem as wide. That's because it isn't. The "News" is following the trend in newspaper production and adopting the 25 inch wide narrow width broadsheet as its standard printing size beginning with this week's edition.

The "News" was previously printed on a 27-inch-wide web, which was known as the Standard Advertising Unit format. That size and format has been made narrower by publishers wanting to save paper and in response to readers wanting a newspaper that was easier to handle.

The trend toward a slimmed-

See **PAGE WIDTH**, Page A2

DEATHS

Caldwell, George Jr., 81, Hancock

Cisney, Olive, 81, McConnellsbg.

Horton, Robert, 82, St. Thomas

Mellott, Justin, 28, McConnellsbg.

OBITUARIES, Page B3



Hunter Turnout Down Opening Day

By Chanin Rotz-Mountz
STAFF WRITER

Thirteen-year-old Brandon Langeheine waited patiently for the perfect shot. His patience paid off when at 7:30 a.m. Monday a beautiful, eight-point buck walked into his sights. One slow squeeze of the trigger and Langeheine bagged his very first deer, thereby marking the season opener of the statewide firearms season for both antlered and antlerless deer.

In his second year in the field, Langeheine stated his love of hunting comes honestly as his family has boasted some big hunters of deer, turkey and even bear. The Hanover, Pa., teenager enrolled in the eighth grade was visiting the Fulton County area for the first two days of the two-week season with his 19-year-old brother Bryan.

Bryan, according to an elated Brandon, was fortunate enough to have already bagged a deer in archery season.

The group was celebrating the youngest Langeheine brother's kill in state gamelands near the border of Wells and Broad Top townships when they were checked by local Pennsylvania Game Commission field officers, who had the opportunity to share the memorable moment with the Langeheine family.

"The highlight of my day was checking that 13-year-old boy with his very first buck," said Fulton County Wildlife Conservation Officer Kevin Mountz. "A young hunter in the field having one of the most memorable experiences of his life is something that is an honor and a privilege to share in."

While Mountz noted some hunters such as Langeheine were lucky in pulling out some "rather nice bucks" from both private and state wooded areas, others were not so fortunate and finished the day without catching a

See **OPENING DAY**, Page A2



Brandon Langeheine of Hanover, Pa. killed his very first deer, an eight-point buck, Monday morning while hunting with his older brother Bryan near the border of Wells and Broad Top townships.

Hunter Dies After Fall From Tree Stand

STAFF REPORT

A McConnellsburg man succumbed to injuries sustained in a fall from a tree stand the first day of deer season near the state gamelands in the southern end of the county.

According to local reports, Justin Mellott, 28, died at Altoona Regional Hospital as a result of the injuries suffered in the Monday, December 1, accident near Sipes Mill and Mountain roads. Mellott was flown to the Blair County hospital after being removed from the wooded area in Belfast Township by

See **HUNTER**, Page A2

Great Cove's Future Discussed At Ayr Twp. Meeting

Recreation club/golf course continues to struggle financially

By Jean Snyder
STAFF WRITER

Ayr Township supervisors met with board members of Great Cove Golf and Recreation Club last week to discuss options for the golf club that has been struggling financially for the past several years.

Board members Bob Peck and Paul Johnston attended the supervisors' regular monthly meeting last Monday evening and updated them on the current financial condition of the club. Although each certificate holder was assessed \$250 this year to keep the club afloat, Peck said they still expect to end the year with a \$50,000 deficit. Peck acknowledged that the deficit is less than last year's, but more than the club can continue to manage.

Monday night's meeting is the second time the club's directors have approached Ayr Township about the possibilities of the township buying the club and/or partnering with the Parks and Recreation Commission to man-

age it. The club is located in Ayr Township and the supervisors have, in the past, discussed ways to provide recreation in the township.

In response to Peck and Johnston, "Sonny" Harr, township supervisor chairman, said that in recent months he had talked with various township residents about the possibility of buying the club, and he said, "Not one person I have talked with has said they thought it was a good idea." While Harr said he would not favor the purchase, he did say he felt it should remain a recreational opportunity, but, he said, "I think it should be a countywide thing and not just Ayr Township."

According to Johnston, the club, which is a public, nonprofit organization, has a half-million-dollar annual budget. The club operates on annual dues and greens fees but has seen a decline in membership in recent years. Both said they must compete with Majestic Ridge west of Chambersburg and Whitetail near Mercersburg for golf memberships and greens fee players.

Johnston and Peck said that the club wants to explore all possibilities for the future, but

stressed that its financial condition, while not good, is also not dire. Johnston said that the course has been appraised at \$3.9 million, and the club is indebted for less than one-tenth of that appraisal.

Harr also questioned why the Parks and Recreation Commission did not take over the club and Johnston said the commission is not in any position financially to do so. He said only nine municipalities have signed onto the commission and three of those are school districts. The other municipalities are Ayr, Todd, Licking Creek, Thompson and Dublin townships and the borough of McConnellsburg. Johnston said the commission only takes in about \$5,000 in income annually from those nine members.

In further explaining the club's financial condition, Peck said the pool at the course continues to lose money each year. He said that it costs about \$8,000 each year just to get the pool ready to open. He said that two years ago, the pool made some money on swimming lessons and 380 lessons were given. He said that the club raised the rates and this year only gave 220 lessons.

He added that because of its size, the pool is not covered during the winter months, making it more expensive to open in the spring.

Both men also said they want to continue to have a PGA pro at the course and said that not having a pro would not be an effective way to save money. They said a pro is needed to organize tournaments and to offer lessons and run the pro shop. They said if they didn't have a pro, they would still need to hire one or more persons to direct the club's day-to-day operations.

Peck also said the club pays about \$26,000 in taxes per year to the Central Fulton School District and the county, and Harr suggested that they explore asking the taxing authorities to suspend those taxes temporarily to help the club get back on its feet financially.

In concluding, both men said they are committed to trying one more year to pull out of the slump, but both also conceded that the current economy does not bode well for that. Peck said they need to "sell" 25,000 rounds of golf per season and have 220 members to break even or make money. He said 18,000 rounds

were played this year and the club had only 188 members. They said they are trying to better market the club by starting a Web page and also by reopening their restaurant in the hopes of bringing in more people.

The supervisors agreed to remain in contact with the club's board and to offer any suggestions they may have to assist with the club's ongoing financial difficulties.

2009 proposed budget

During other business, the supervisors adopted a 2009 proposed budget that calls for expenditures of \$310,000 with revenues of \$321,531. The township spends about one-half of its budget on road paving and road maintenance.

Ayr Township assesses no taxes on real estate, occupation or per capita. Its only tax revenue is about \$160,000 per year from an earned income tax and a real estate transfer tax. The township expects to end 2008 with a \$1,441,797 surplus and expects to end 2009 with a surplus of \$1,453,328.

The township will adopt a final 2009 budget on December

See **GREAT COVE**, Page A2

Local Black Bear Harvest Average

Nine taken during first two days of three-day season

By Chanin Rotz-Mountz
STAFF WRITER

A fixture among Fulton County's sportsmen for approximately 20 years, Lynn Rotz considers himself fortunate. The 55-year-old Franklin County resident has not only harvested two black bears in Wells Valley, but, ironically enough, both were taken in the exact same spot.

Rotz of 670 Bowman Road, Chambersburg, was the lone hunter to check in a locally killed bear with Pennsylvania Game Commission officials last Tuesday at the Sideling Hill Bureau of Forestry facility, bringing the county's tentative bear kill count to nine. Results from the final day of the three-day season ending November 26 are not yet available.

According to Rotz, the female bear, tipping the scales at 230 pounds, sauntered by his location in Wells Township at 12:30 p.m. on Monday, November 24. Unfortunately, for Rotz, his initial shot only wounded the bear and chased it deeper into the woods.

"I wounded it so gave it a little time before I started tracking," said Rotz, who joked he practically tracked the bear "barefooted" for a good one-half mile after discovering his hunting boots had fallen victim to dry rot.

The blood trail, Rotz noted, led into a thick briar patch, where he found the wounded

bear lying. When his shouts didn't rouse the bear's attention, Rotz took the next logical step in securing his harvested bear. That first step into the briars, however, caused the bear to charge at Rotz, who managed to fire off several more shots. Down to his last shell, Rotz called to his hunting partner and used rocks to flush the bear from its hiding spot.

By 7 p.m., long after nightfall, and with some help from his son-in-law, Rotz managed to drag the 230-pound bear back to his campsite. "I was so exhausted I couldn't move," recalled Rotz. "That last 50 feet was the worst because the ground was totally flat before we hit a slight grade."

Meanwhile, McConnellsburg resident Darrel Seville took to the field Monday morning for his very first bear season. An avid hunter, Seville's hopes of harvesting his first black bear were soon met when he killed a 142-pound male bear in the Big Cove Tannery area of Ayr Township.

The Seville family told to the "News" the bear's history of repeatedly making itself a nuisance in neighboring Maryland has earned Darrel an almost "rock star" status for its harvest. Causing a ruckus in the southern part of Maryland, the state's Department of Natural Resources moved the bear to the western section of the state. The bear, the Sevilles stated, was then most recently relocated to Indian Springs State Park, which is a 6,400-acre tract in Washington

County near the town of Clear Spring.

With Rotz's and Seville's bears checked in Tuesday, the initial two-day standings show four bears harvested in Wells Township; three in Licking Creek Township; one in Ayr Township; and one in Dublin Township. In 2007, black bear hunters harvested a total of seven bears in Fulton County over the three-day period.

Game Commission preliminary reports indicate 2,518 bears were taken during the first two days of hunting statewide this year. Through Tuesday, the top 10 bears processed at check stations had estimated live weights exceeding 600 pounds. Morgan C. Neipert of Tobyhanna killed the largest bear, a male bruin with an estimated live weight of 716 pounds. The bear was taken in Tobyhanna Township located in Monroe County last Tuesday afternoon.

In the southcentral region, two-day harvest results were recorded as follows Huntingdon County, 96; Bedford County, 69; Mifflin County, 35; Snyder County, 24; Blair County, 23; Juniata County, 17; and Perry County, 11.

Right: McConnellsburg resident Darrel Seville took this 142-pound bear while hunting in the Big Cove Tannery area last week. The bear was tagged as a nuisance and had been relocated on several occasions before wandering into Fulton County.

