

**Community Aids In Battle Against Selective Mutism**

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**SF Competes In "Scholastic Scrimmage"**

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THURSDAY WEEKLY

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109TH YEAR, NO. 3

McCONNELLSBURG, PENNSYLVANIA

JANUARY 15, 2009

**McConnellsburg**

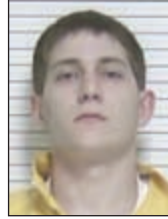
## Four Arrested In Gun Store Burglary

By Chanin Rotz-Mountz  
STAFF WRITER

Four McConnellsburg residents were taken into custody over the weekend by special agents with the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives for their alleged connection to a break-in at a gun store last week in nearby Franklin County.



Stains



Davis



Horton

Eighteen-year-olds Loren Stains and Jeremy Davis were arrested at a home along East Market Street in McConnellsburg Borough Saturday at 3 p.m. by ATF agents and Pennsylvania State Police troopers. Hours later 19-year-old Ryan Horton and a male juvenile, also of McConnellsburg, turned themselves in after ATF agents offered a reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of Horton.

John Hageman, a spokesman for the Philadelphia Field Division of the ATF, told the "News" nine firearms reported stolen from Keystone Country Store at 168 Path Valley Road, Fort Loudon, at approximately 6 a.m. on January 6 were recovered at the time of Stains and Davis' arrest. An additional 10 firearms remain unaccounted for at this time. Among the weapons taken during the "smash-and-grab" at Keystone Country Store were 16 handguns and three long guns.

Stains, Davis and Horton were sent to the Franklin County Prison where they remain in lieu of \$50,000 straight bail. Preliminary hearings in all three cases have been set for Tuesday, January 20, at 1 p.m.

Both Stains and Horton face one count each of burglary, criminal conspiracy, theft by unlawful taking and receiving stolen property. Davis is charged with burglary and receiving stolen property. All charges are categorized as a felony two.

To date, the ATF/Pennsylvania State Police Firearms Trafficking Task Force have made arrests in four thefts that have occurred since July 2008 at regional gun dealers. More than 120 firearms have been stolen from dealers in Franklin, York, Perry and Lebanon counties.

**DEATHS**

- Bivens, John, 99, McCbg.
- Ford, Doris, 82, Orrtanna
- Johnson, Dorothy, 81, McCbg.
- Miller, Dorothy, 80, Breezewood
- Musick, Carol, 67, Annandale, Va.
- Pittman, Thomas, 50, Needmore

OBITUARIES, Page B3



## Winter Breeds Stunning, Icy Landscape



Wintry precipitation and cold temperatures came together over the weekend to make this icy landscape Monday morning atop Mercersburg mountain. Even colder weather is expected to grip the region late in the week, after an area of low pressure moves across southern Pennsylvania Wednesday night. According to the National Weather Service the coldest air so far this winter will follow Thursday and Friday and combine with a gusty northwest wind to bring bitterly cold wind chill temperatures.

## Mary Hann NVFC's Fireman Of The Year

Company honors its female staff, firefighters

By Jean Snyder  
STAFF WRITER

It was definitely the women's turn on Saturday evening as the Needmore Volunteer Fire Co. bestowed all four of its major awards on three female company members.

Mary Hann, Needmore, a company member since 1988 and the company's longtime secretary, received the top honor on Saturday evening when she was named "Fireman of the Year" during the company's 39th annual banquet.

Hann was presented the award by last year's recipient, Denis Strait who described Mary as "a hardworking person." Mary received the President's Award in 1990 and in 2002. In addition to her secretarial duties, she also spends a great deal of time in the company's kitchen as often as she is needed.

Mary told the "New" she was surprised to get the award. "It was quite an honor," she said.

Mary was married to the late Chalmer Hann and they are the parents of four children, Donna, Linda, Mike and Karen. She also has four grandchildren, Justin, Laura, Bradley and Bethany.

**Memorial service**

A memorial service was held for deceased company members Donald McQuade, Ray Wertz and Larry Shade. Both McQuade and Wertz were lifetime mem-

bers and Wertz was a charter member. Shade was a regular member of the company.

**Other awards**

Wavy Kirk was the recipient of the company's Herb Fisher Memorial Award. She was presented the award by company President Jimmy Divelbliss, who thanked her for all her help, especially on the financial side of the company. "Wavy has done a great job supporting the company," Divelbliss said. Wavy is a company lieutenant.

Kirk was also the recipient of the Buzz Strait Memorial Award (chief's award). Fire Chief JR Sigel presented the award to Kirk saying "whatever needs done here, Wavy will do it."

The ambulance squad also presented its first EMS award to Carol Dennis. Ambulance Cpt. Jerry Mellott Jr recognized Carol for her work not only with the ambulance crew but also with bingo. Dennis, the assistant ambulance secretary and a top ambulance responder accepted the award saying, "Thank you, it is an honor."

Twenty-five year membership awards were presented to: Donald Kerlin, Kevin Hensley, Marlin Wertz, Linda Lynch, Michael Klinepeter, Denver Kerns, Jr., Donna Carbaugh and Rick Buterbaugh.

**President's report**

Company President Jimmy Divelbliss discussed the year's activities in his report. He re-

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Denis Strait presents the 2008 NVFC Fireman of the Year award to company secretary Mary Hann.



Wavy Kirk  
Herb Fisher Memorial Award  
Buzz Strait Memorial Award



Carol Dennis  
EMS Award

## Boro Council Wraps Up Police Issues

Discusses parking meter enforcement

By Jean Snyder  
STAFF WRITER

McConnellsburg Borough Council members, along with their solicitor, reviewed the final impact agreement with the McConnellsburg Police Association and asked their solicitor to assist them in accounting for borough property at their regular meeting held last Wednesday evening.

As reported last week, the two borough police officers whose employment ended at 11:59 p.m. on December 31, 2008, received additional pension and health-care benefits, paid time for any future required court appearances, as well as payouts for sick leave, personal leave and vaca-

tion days accumulated but not used by the end of their contract in the binding arbitration agreement finalized last month. That agreement cost the council about \$53,500 in leave payout and up to \$24,000 per year for three years in health benefits. Additional contributions to the pension fund will be taken out of the police pension fund, however.

In commenting on the agreement, council President Rick Buterbaugh said, "I wish it had been a little more in our favor, but it is what it is." Councilwoman Pat Frazier said, "I think we should be very careful in the future with regard to any hiring." However, all council members agreed that their budget simply could not support any police department in the future. Buterbaugh said, "The only way a police department could be economically feasible would be if it were regionalized." He added that he had not seen any support for that from surrounding municipalities.

Council members also discussed the whereabouts of the former police officers' weapons, including two handguns and a rifle. They were reportedly turned into the Pennsylvania State Police. However, council, calling the weapons "saleable and borough property," instructed solicitor Carlton Walker to determine their whereabouts. Walker was also instructed to ask that the borough's computer hard drive be returned or replaced in a timely fashion so that the computer can be operable.

It was also reported that the officers kept keys to their former office in order to access the evidence safe for future testimony and court cases. Council asked Walker to see if evidence can be transferred to the Pennsylvania State Police so that council can gain access to the keys and combination to the safe and that keys to the building can be returned to council.

Anthony Busillo, a Harrisburg-based attorney and counsel and arbitrator for the McConnellsburg Police Association, called the final agreement "a fair resolution of the matter." Busillo went on to say, "It was the best of a bad situation because these officers obviously wanted to continue their careers. This is a no-win situation for anyone, especially for the borough citizens, and I believe that will become very clear very soon."

Busillo has maintained throughout the disbandment process that "there was no legitimate reason" for it and has discounted the council's statement that the borough could not afford to have a police department. Busillo said it likely would have cost the borough about \$175,000 in 2009 to retain the police. In the meantime, he said, the borough expects to end 2009 with a \$275,000 surplus even after cutting taxes two mills.

Busillo said that during the binding arbitration hearing, three of the seven council members remained in favor of keeping the police department. Busillo also said, "There were no meaningful negotiations in trying to come to an agreement for a new contract. "There was an initial exchange of proposals and that was it," he said.

In a related matter, Sheriff Keith Stains met with council members to again request their consideration in selling the police cruiser to the county. Sheriff Stains had met earlier with the council and said the county would be interested in purchasing the car for the sheriff's department since it already has county-purchased equipment in it, such as a computer used for

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## Heating Woes Plague Forbes Road School

Boiler breakdown leads to early dismissal Monday

By Chanin Rotz-Mountz  
STAFF WRITER

The Forbes Road School Board received an update Monday night on the district's heating woes that led to an unexpected dismissal of students earlier in the day.

Building and grounds supervisor John Mixell appeared before the school board and administration to outline the continuing problems with the two boilers located in the district's relatively new junior/senior high school.

According to Mixell, a crack appeared in one of the boilers last week, resulting in a breakdown similar to one experienced by the district in February 2008. While waiting on an estimate to have the unit repaired, the second boiler cracked Monday, leaving the administration with no other

choice but to dismiss students just before lunchtime.

Repairmen from Knisely and Sons Inc. worked throughout the day Monday and by evening got one of the boilers back on line. While there has not been a definite answer given on the exact cause of the ongoing problems with the heating system, Mixell reminded the board the boiler sections fall under a five-year warranty. Labor is not covered through the warranty, and the district has a \$2,500 deductible.

In other building and grounds matters, the board gave authorization for alumni to utilize the old gymnasium for basketball recreation on Sundays from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. beginning December 21.

Soccer coach Kevin Bricker will be holding indoor soccer practice in the old high school gymnasium on Thursday evenings from 8 p.m. to 9 p.m.

A mock drill is in the works for the school district in upcoming months as a joint effort between

the district, Pennsylvania State Police, Emergency Management Agency, the Fulton County Sheriff's Office and other law enforcement agencies. The drill will assist in finding areas of weakness and strength within the school's facilities while also helping first responders have a better working relationship on emergency scenes.

**Curriculum**

Homebound instruction was approved for a high school student.

**Personnel**

With regret the board accepted the retirement of long-time elementary teacher Nancy Home, who will be permanently replaced by Samantha Connor. Connor is slated to receive a prorated salary for remainder of the current school year. Connor, elementary Principal Byron Hesel added, has been substituting in recent months for teachers on maternity leave.

McConnellsburg resident Joan Mellott was added to the

district's professional teacher substitute list.

Theresa Burd resigned from her position as library aide.

**Finance**

In accordance with Act 1, a resolution was adopted stating the district will not raise the rate of any tax support for the 2009-10 fiscal year by more than its index. The index at this time is the equivalent of 1.8925 mills.

After having completed her probationary period, business manager Lynn Wertman is scheduled to receive a 5 percent pay raise through the conclusion of the fiscal year.

The law firm of Andrews & Beard was hired to represent the school district in negotiations.

At the conclusion of the January 12 board meeting, the board held an executive session to review legal matters. The board also conducted a 20-minute executive session for legal and personnel issues prior to the meeting during their regularly scheduled work session.