



FR Members Receive FFA Keystone Degrees

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THURSDAY
WEEKLY

The Fulton County News

75¢

For home
delivery call
717-485-3811

109TH YEAR, NO. 4

MCCONNELLSBURG, PENNSYLVANIA

JANUARY 22, 2009

Local Fire Companies Get Grants

SPECIAL TO THE NEWS

Three area fire companies were among a long list of fire companies and EMS providers in Bedford and Fulton counties slated to receive grant monies, Rep. Dick Hess of the 78th Legislative District stated in a special announcement.

Hess said the grant program will allow for a total disbursement of \$180,000 to 23 organizations within the two county region in 2009. The grant program was first approved by the General Assembly and signed into law in 2000. The monies are awarded through the Pennsylvania Office of the fire commissioner as part of the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency.

"With each sector of society suffering through hard economic times, ensuring local fire companies and emergency services personnel are able to execute their jobs remains an important priority," said Hess. "These men and women volunteer countless hours in saving our lives and protecting our properties. I am proud of the fine job that each of them do."

Among local companies scheduled to get grant funding is the Hustontown Area Volunteer Fire Co., which will receive \$9,500 for its fire services and an additional \$4,916.86 for its EMS Unit. The McConnellsburg Volunteer Fire Co. will receive \$11,181.22 for its fire unit and \$4,916.86 for EMS operations.

In addition, the Needmore Volunteer Fire Co. will also receive \$4,916.86 for EMS operations as well as \$9,686.46 for its fire company.

Hess concluded companies awarded the grant can utilize the funding to purchase new equipment, such as personal protection gear, and can make repairs to existing apparatus.

Keep Pets Warm As Temps Drop

SPECIAL TO THE NEWS

The Bedford County Humane Society is reminding local residents that as winter temperatures continue to plummet, extra care should be given to pets kept outdoors.

According to Humane Society representative Alysia Tozer, dogs and cats should be brought indoors when temperatures drop below freezing. If bringing your pets indoors is not a possibility, Tozer indicated straw bedding should be provided to help animals maintain their body heat.

"A dog box should be large enough for a dog to stand up and turn around inside but not so big the dog cannot maintain its own body heat," concluded Tozer. "In addition, blankets are not good bedding material for dogs as they get wet and do not help the animal stay warm."

DEATHS

Bradley, Linn, 80, Mercersburg
Cheslock, Charles, 95, Orbisonia
Crone, Carrie, 49, McConnellsbg.
Henry, Nathan, 53, Harrisonville
Hoover, Robt., 86, Fayetteville
King, Donald, 80, Maugansville
Spade, Delmar, 73, Hancock

OBITUARIES, Page B3



A small building receiving television transmissions for WJAL Family TV 68 erupted in flames last Wednesday evening atop Mercersburg mountain just off Route 16. The fire is under investigation by a fire marshal in hopes of determining the cause and origin of the blaze.

WJAL Returns To The Air

Fire destroys building receiving transmissions; programming interrupted

STAFF REPORT

WJAL Family TV 68 has hit the air waves once again after transmission of their quality family programming was temporarily knocked off the air for almost a week as a result of a fire that broke out in a building receiving transmissions atop the Mercersburg mountain.

Last Wednesday evening, area fire officials were dispatched to Peters Township, Franklin County, for an automatic fire alarm emanating from a 20-foot-by-40-foot building responsible for receiving transmissions from a nearby WJAL tower.

Upon arriving at the scene immediately following the 5:45 p.m. dispatch, firefighters were unable to locate any blaze on site. No WJAL officials were on scene

to allow access to the interior of the building, which did not reveal any visible exterior signs of a fire.

Approximately one hour later, firefighters were sent again to the scene after a representative from WJAL located a small fire on the property. Multiple fire extinguishers were utilized by the official to put out the blaze, but the fire had grown too rapidly and already reached the ceiling of the transmissions building.

Due to the icy and snowy conditions, firetrucks were reportedly unable to access the location. Additional tankers were dispatched, and firefighters collected water from both the Fulton and Franklin side of the mountain. A total of 1,400 feet of hose was laid to get the water from the trucks to the scene of the fire.

Meanwhile, traffic was rerouted onto Mountain Road, Route 75 and Route 30 while firefighters from a total of nine fire compa-

nies, including McConnellsburg, worked side-by-side to combat the blaze for three hours.

In spite of the efforts of the volunteer firefighters, the building was completely destroyed with only cinder block walls and rubble remaining to mark its original location. A fire marshal with the Pennsylvania State Police is reportedly investigating the fire to determine cause and origin.

According to WJAL's statement, the company is "an English-language independent television station under the Entravision umbrella. Entravision Communications Corp. is a diversified Spanish-language media company utilizing a combination of television, radio and outdoor operations to reach approximately 70 percent of Hispanic consumers across the United States, as well as the border markets of Mexico."

Harris, Hoover: MVFC Firemen Of The Year

Ed Stonecipher, Chip Keebaugh and Robert McQuade also given special awards

By Jean Snyder
STAFF WRITER

The McConnellsburg Volunteer Fire Co. made history on Saturday evening when it bestowed its top honor on two firemen instead of the usual one. In announcing the award, master of ceremonies David R. Hoover II said that for the first time in the company's 45-year history voting was tied for the award. Joe Harris and David "Dub" Hoover III were both named 2008 Firemen of the Year.

In making the award first to Harris, David Hoover II said, "This man has been in the company for over 15 years and he's always around, at the fire stations, at bingo, on the ambulance runs and helping out at the food stands." In accepting the award, Harris thanked the company members and said, "And I'll still be here doing all the same things."

Harris currently serves the company as deputy ambulance chief and was a top responder for the ambulance squad in 2008.

In presenting the award to "Dub" Hoover, his father, Dave Hoover, said, "This award recipient has been at the firehall for a very, very long time. Calling him a 'firehall brat,'" Hoover also said, "This is also an historic moment because it is the first time that three generations have received this award," referring to his father, the late Rev. David Hoover, himself and his son.

Hoover accepted the award and in an emotional acceptance speech thanked his wife, kids and his parents. He also said, "Thank you to everyone - we really do have an outstanding crew

and we work as a team."

Hoover serves as an ambulance club director and as a captain with the fire company.

Both Hoover and Harris and their families live in the McConnellsburg area.

Votes for the company's firemen of the year are cast only by former firemen of the year.

Nearly 200 members and invited guests attended the company's 47th annual banquet held at the American Legion in McConnellsburg.

Other awards

During the evening's program, other awards presented included:

Chief's Award to Ed Stonecipher, presented by "Pete" Lynch for "eight years of unselfish duty." Stonecipher is a company captain.

EMT of the Year award to Chip Keebaugh. Keebaugh was a top-10 responder for the ambulance service in 2008.

Ambulance Chief's Award to Robert McQuade. McQuade is a driver for the service and was a top-10 responder in 2008.

50-year member awards were given to Maynard Bard, Carl Gordon, Thornton Mellott Jr., Richard T. Ramsey and Eugene Stenger.

25-year member awards went to Donna Carbaugh, Rita Chamberlain, Nelson Harmon, Jeff Harr, Marlin Harr and Tina Welsh.

Recognition was given to Howard and Sue Fox and Phil Altland for their maintenance of company vehicles.

Memorial service

A memorial service presided over by Dreama Everts and Tom Blue was held for four life members who passed away in 2008, two of whom were past Fireman



The McConnellsburg Volunteer Fire Co. named two firemen as their 2008 "Firemen of the Year" at their banquet on Saturday evening. For the first time in company history, the vote for the coveted award resulted in a tie between Joe Harris and "Dub" Hoover.



MVFC Captain Ed Stonecipher received the "Chief's Award" from company Chief "Pete" Lynch during the company's annual banquet at the American Legion on Saturday evening. Lynch recognized Stonecipher for "eight years of unselfish duty" to the company. Nearly 200 attended the banquet.

Old MHS To Change Ownership

Central Fulton School Board approves transfer

By Chanin Rotz-Mountz
STAFF WRITER

Ownership of the old McConnellsburg High School is slated to change hands once again on the heels of action taken by the Central Fulton School Board early last week.

District solicitor James Schall and board member Robert Snyder II publicly shared last Tuesday that the McConnellsburg Lions Club is interested in deeding ownership of the old high school to the McConnellsburg Alumni and Friends Association. The Lions Club took over the facility from the McConnellsburg Jaycees more than five years ago in hopes of turning the facility into a recreational center of sorts.

In accordance with stipulations set forth in the Lions Club deed, the school district reserved the first right of refusal in the event the Lions Club ever wished to transfer ownership. In addition, the deed transaction could be denied in the event the building would be renovated into an education center.

Attorney Schall stated if the ownership transfer was approved by the board, many of the same stipulations could be maintained in order to retain control over the building and ensure nothing detrimental would happen to McConnellsburg students.

In hearing Schall and Snyder's comments, the board

unanimously agreed to allow the ownership of the facility to be transferred to the Alumni and Friends Association. The organization intends to move forward with the Lions Club's former plans of operating the facility as a recreational center.

Personnel

Cafeteria employee Kathy Hedrick was authorized to take a leave of absence for approximately four to six weeks retroactive to December 12. The leave is in conjunction with the Family Medical Leave Act.

Clifford Glunt of the maintenance department will begin a six-week leave February 10 under the Family Medical Leave Act.

Ellen Wagner, cafeteria employee, had a request approved for two days without pay on February 24 and 25 for the purpose of extended travel.

The board accepted the resignation of special education aide Joan D. Mellott of McConnellsburg retroactive to December 31. Mellott will be required to follow the district's educational agreement for supportive staffing in reimbursing the district college tuition fees.

Mellott was replaced by Rebecca Helder of McConnellsburg, who has been serving as an instructional aide on an extended basis since the start of the 2008-09 school year. Helder's position will include 6.5 hours per day for 184 days at an prorated hourly rate of \$7.40 plus benefits.

Mellott, however, was added to the professional substitute list. Her clearances are in order and have been submitted to the district.

Timmy L. Strait, also of McConnellsburg, was placed on the maintenance and custodial substitute list pending the receipt of all necessary clearances.

Rachel Lane, head cheerleading coach, was approved to receive a salary of \$2,560 in accordance with step one on the extracurricular salary scale. Meanwhile, head track and field coach Joni Dunkle will receive \$2,510 for her duties. Dunkle's salary also falls under step one.

Transportation

Chambersburg route #033 contracted to Lynn C. Reeder saw an increase in daily rate retroactive to November 11. Reeder's rate was altered from \$180.96 to \$183.28 by adding another student to his roster.

Lynda S. Strait's #025 route for K-4 students was adjusted from \$113.34 daily to \$121.67 effective December 9 due to an extension to the route for picking up a new student.

Reeder's life skills route #036 saw an increase in daily pay between December 15 and December 23. The change, which increased his pay from \$77.21 to \$82.84, was a result of a student needing short-term special transportation due to leg surgery.

Jamie and Wendy Laughlin replaced their 1999 Dodge Durango with a 1992 Chevrolet Astro Van on December 4. The change on route #017 will not alter the couple's daily rate.

The district entered into a contract with Sandy Deck Transportation of Harrisonville at a low bid rate of \$1.07 per mile, which equates to \$231.55 daily. Retroactive to January 5, the contractor will provide transportation to the Tuscarora Blended Learning Charter School.

The hourly rate for the dis-