



MHS Basketball 1,000 Point Banners Unveiled

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Relay For Life Kickoff This Sunday At American Legion

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Two Nabbed During Burglary

Warfordsburg area man, woman jailed for series of break-ins

By Chanin Rotz-Mountz
STAFF WRITER

After having slipped into the Needmore home of Kermit and Sheila Swope undetected on four separate occasions, Pennsylvania State Police troopers were inside and ready last Wednesday afternoon when an area man entered the couple's residence in hopes of again stealing prescription drugs.

Twenty-three-year-old Daniel Brock Flowers of 920 Green Lane Road, Warfordsburg, and fellow Warfordsburg area resident 20-year-old Jessie Nicole Whiteside of 1274 Barnett's Run Road were taken into custody on February 4 at 2:25 p.m. by troopers Ken Falkosky and Brett Massafra. The troopers were two of many local officers who had either waited inside the Swope residence or patrolled the home located at 467 Sawmill Road in hopes of nabbing the burglars responsible for a series of break-ins dating back just prior to Christmas 2008, according to McConnellsburg barracks Crime Unit supervisor Cpl. William Baker.

The investigation, headed by Trooper Roger Sheffield, began in December and delved into a total of four separate burglaries that occurred on December 19, December 22, January 8, January 21 and the most recent last Wednesday. Approximately 135 oxycodone pills were stolen during the incidents.

"We didn't know what specific day they would be coming back," Baker told the "News." "Most of the prior thefts had occurred in daylight during the week when nobody was home. We had troopers watching the house and sitting in the house for many days prior to this date and were obviously unsuccessful."

"We just hit it right that date," said Baker, who added Sheffield deserved the credit for successfully solving the ongoing burglaries.

Flowers, an affidavit of probable cause filed by Sheffield revealed, had allegedly been entering the Swope residence through an unlocked, attached two-car garage. A credit card or driver's license was then reportedly utilized to crack open a door located on the west side of the home.

The affidavit of probable cause further stated Flowers had asked Whiteside to drive him to the Swope residence to steal some pills on February 4. In an interview with police, Whiteside allegedly said she didn't want any involvement with going into the house. She had been waiting outside the Swope residence in

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170 More Jobs Vanish At JLG Industries

Layoffs total 1,670 since July

By Lindsay R. Mellott
STAFF WRITER

JLG Industries continued paring its workforce on Friday, laying off 170 more production workers employed at the company's North American manufacturing facilities.

The latest downsizing came a little more than two weeks after the world's leading manufacturer of access equipment said 100 nonproduction employees had lost their jobs, and after imposing weeklong unpaid leaves for white-collar workers remaining on the company's North American payrolls. Company officials said then they hoped the unpaid leaves would minimize future workforce reductions.

Friday's round of layoffs brings the total number of jobs lost at JLG since it first began downsizing in July 2008 to 1,670, or 37 percent of its 4,500 employees around the globe, according to Kirsten Skyba, vice president of global marketing.

Skyba said Monday that JLG is continually assessing the marketplace and making adjustments to adapt to the crumbling

demand for products here and abroad while working hard to maintain the company's long-term viability.

"Things can change quickly," Skyba said. "We try to assess daily where our customers are and what we can do in the short term."

JLG is hopeful that once the massive economic stimulus bill being hammered out in Congress is finalized and sent to President Obama for his signature, the money set aside in the bill for infrastructure improvement and school construction will help to get production at JLG back on track.

"That would definitely be a bright spot," said Skyba.

President Obama told the nation Monday evening during his first prime-time press conference that 90 percent of the jobs created by the plan would be in the private sector, rebuilding roads, bridges and other aging infrastructure.

Skyba said that although JLG continues to develop new products, product design has been scaled back. Military contracts for telehandlers have not been affected by the economic crisis and remain relatively stable.



The booms of JLG telehandlers dot the skyline at the McConnellsburg plant Tuesday morning. Slumping sales have forced the company to trim its workforce by 37 percent and scale back production.

However, only a small percentage of JLG employees work on military contracts, she said.

A not so bright spot for JLG was parent company Oshkosh

Corp.'s fiscal 2009 first-quarter earnings report posted Jan. 29. It showed a loss of \$20.6 million for the quarter ending Dec. 31, compared with a profit of \$37.3 mil-

lion in the same quarter last year.

The earnings report also said Oshkosh's access equipment division, JLG, had seen a 40 percent decline in sales.

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MVFC Gets \$132,050 Grant

SPECIAL TO THE NEWS

Congressman Bill Shuster has announced that the McConnellsburg Volunteer Fire Co. has successfully secured a \$132,050 grant through the Department of Homeland Security's Assistance to Fire Fighters Program (AFGP).

The \$132,050 grant will be used to purchase rescue equipment and personal safety apparel to enhance the fire company's ability to serve the community. The fire company will purchase 24 complete sets of SCBA (self-contained breathing apparatus) equipment, as well as a thermal imaging camera to assist in fire rescues.

"The equipment the fire company will buy with this grant will save lives," Shuster said. "The breathing systems will keep the firefighters safe against smoke inhalation, and the thermal imaging camera will allow rescuers to see through the smoke and flames to find people quickly."

"I congratulate the volunteers of the McConnellsburg VFD for their successful grant application," Shuster added.

"The McConnellsburg Volunteer Fire Co. is very appreciative of the efforts of Congressman Shuster in supporting this vital program for fire departments nationwide," said Fire Chief Pete Lynch. "Without this program, it would be difficult to secure quality, up-to-date equipment to better serve and protect our community as well as providing the utmost protection and safety for our firefighters."

The Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program (AFGP) awards one-year grants directly



A \$132,050 Homeland Security grant awarded to the McConnellsburg Volunteer Fire Co. will be used to purchase rescue equipment.

to fire departments and rescue personnel to support the nation's first responders and the services they deliver. The Department of Homeland Security's Office of

State and Local Government Coordination and Preparedness (SLGCP) administers the program, in cooperation with the U.S. Fire Administration.

Rendell Proposes School Mergers

Legislature asked to include money for study in 2009-10 state budget

By Chanin Rotz-Mountz
STAFF WRITER

On the heels of announcing a spending plan for 2009-10 that includes a 2.5 percent increase in the areas of education, prison systems and health coverage, Gov. Ed Rendell last week also publicly called for a merger of Pennsylvania's school districts to alleviate the tax burden on property owners.

In his annual state budget address last Wednesday, Rendell stated he wanted a bipartisan commission comprised of 12 legislative representatives to begin recalculating district boundary lines and formulate as many as two "implementation plans" to consolidate the state's 501 public schools to 100 or less.

Once created, the merger plans would be put before the General Assembly for a final vote within a six-month time frame. If rejected, however, the plans for consolidation would, in turn, fall upon the shoulders of the state Board of Education.

Furthermore, in his announcement, the governor also asked the Legislature to include the money needed to complete the study in the 2009-10 budget.

The last call or state-ordered merger of Pennsylvania's public schools occurred in the 1950s and '60s, resulting in a reduction from 2,700 school districts to 1,900. The existing number of

school districts, 501, is expected to drop by one this July when the Center Area and Monaca school districts, located to the northwest of Pittsburgh, will complete their merger as a result of declining enrollment numbers.

After speaking with the governor about his merger proposal, Sen. John H. Eichelberger Jr. of that 30th Senatorial District, which spans Fulton County and bordering areas, told the "News" he expects to be deeply involved in any decision on this matter by virtue of his recent appointment as chairman of the Senate Local Government Committee.

"At face value, having 500 school districts does appear to be inefficient," said Eichelberger. "... In conversations over the past couple of days with members of the Senate and other key officials, it sounds like the governor's final number of 100 districts is too drastic. Two hundred thirty to 250 districts seems to be where the discussion is centered."

Eichelberger added the discussions also seem to revolve around the need to combine administrative duties and not close area schools.

"At this point, I need to see the criteria that would be used in the consolidation process before I could speculate on how the districts of Fulton County or this region would be affected," he said. "Although we don't seem to have the issues of wealth, language and ethnic disparity that some areas of the state have, we have transportation concerns if schools were to be closed."

Even with so many unknowns and factors, Central Fulton School District Superintendent Dr. Julia Cigola stated consolidation could work and should bear careful examination or scrutiny. However, the end result, she said, should still focus on high quality of education for area students balanced with fiscal responsibility to taxpayers.

"If a consolidation were just to involve Fulton County, then we might be looking at a situation where the elementary students would remain at their current elementary buildings and then have either one or two middle schools (depending on student population) designated in the county and one county high school," stated Cigola, who noted even with the shifting of students she does not foresee a means of reducing the number of certain administrative positions such as special needs, guidance coun-

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Boro Council Finalizes Police Issues

Sells cruiser to county, PSP take over coverage

By Jean Snyder
STAFF WRITER

McConnellsburg Borough Council discussed several issues relating to the December 31, 2008, disbandment of its police department during Wednesday evening's meeting.

Borough secretary Jack Fields responded to several questions from council members regarding 2009 costs for disbanding the department.

Fields estimated the 2009 budget cost for the binding arbitration award at \$71,012. This cost includes paid sick leave for both officers at approximately \$26,800 each. It also includes one

week vacation for Sgt. Doug Thomas at \$742. Medical insurance costs for 2009 are estimated at \$10,800 for one officer and \$6,000 for the other. Health insurance costs will continue for three years, according to the award.

In a related matter, Fulton County Sheriff Keith Stains met with council and, pursuant to a discussion held at last month's council meeting, Stains presented an offer of \$5,850 from the county commissioners to purchase the 2001 police cruiser. The vehicle has approximately 70,000 miles on it. The offer from the commissioners includes the removal of the VASCAR speed control system and the two-way radio. The JNET computer system will remain in the vehicle as it is county property.

Calling it a "fair offer," council voted on a Pat Frazier/Lee Rager motion to accept the county's offer.

Council also said that the former officers' weapons are now being held by the Fulton County sheriff until council meets with its solicitor to decide what it needs to do to sell them. Council will also sell the VASCAR system. The weapons include two .357 handguns, a 12-gauge shotgun and a semiautomatic rifle.

On Wednesday evening, council also adopted the necessary resolution to cash in police life insurance policies and deposit the cash-in values to the police pension fund. It also adopted an ordinance regarding the administration of the police pension fund in accordance with the binding arbitration award requirements.

Council also reminds borough residents they should now call 9-1-1 for police emergencies. Anyone needing to contact the borough office for issues not related to police coverage should now call 717-485-3690.

Council voted last year to disband its nearly 80-year-old police department, citing economic reasons. It is not unique in its move as a total of 65 Pennsylvania municipalities have done the same, relying on the Pennsylvania State Police for coverage. The disbandment of the departments is seen to be more of a statement on tough economic times rather than any desire to abolish police presence in small communities.

According to Pennsylvania State Police (PSP) spokesperson See BORO POLICE ISSUES, Page A2

DEATHS

- Dorty, Paul, 79, Mercersbg.
- Harvey, Janet, 74, McConnellsbg.
- Harvey, Goldie, 86, McConnellsbg.
- Hoover, Scott, 14, Big Cov Tan'ry
- Ritchey, Herman, 86, Six Mile Run
- Schooley, Ada, 96, Florida
- Whitney, Mary, 88, Chambersbg.

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