

# Happy New Year

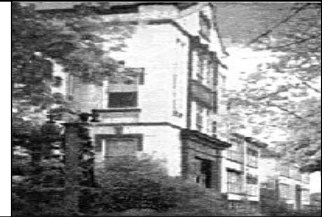
## NEWPORT COMMUNITY NEWS

Winter 2009

[www.newporttownship.com](http://www.newporttownship.com)

Number 20

*A Newsletter of the Newport Township Community Organization*



### Pennsylvania Environmental Council Holds Press Conference At Alden Mountain Dump Site



Pictured left is the largest of the numerous dump sites within Newport Township that have been reclaimed to date. This particular site is located just off Alden Mountain Road near Fairchild's Pond. Pictured above left are invited guests at press conference as the conference begins. Pictured above right is NTCO 2nd Vice President Tom Kashatus addressing those in attendance as Pennsylvania Environmental Council President Don Welsh looks on.

*By Bill Hourigan* On December 15, 2009, the Pennsylvania Environmental Council held a press conference near two recently cleaned dump sites just off Alden Mountain Road and just before Fairchild's Pond as the road ascends the mountain. The press conference was attended by officials from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, Pennsylvania Environmental Council, Earth Conservancy, representatives of local, state and federal elected officials, Newport Township

Community Organization members, Gary Fronk, site contractor, Police Chief Robert Impaglia and local media reporters.

Because the site pictured above is deep and the sides so steep it was necessary to lower large bags into the site, fill them by hand and remove them with a crane-like machine. The site in the picture yielded 91.77 tons of trash and 3 tons of scrap metal. The trash included a large number of tires, common household trash, and materials from demolition and construction projects.

In addition to the site picture above, sights were cleaned within the Township during November by both contractors and volunteer groups. These efforts resulted in the removal of an additional 24.28 tons of trash, 32.38 tons of scrap metal and 3.62 tons of tires.

**Editors Note:** NTCO has been the principal entity behind all of the cleanup activities in Newport Township for the past few years. We encourage interested groups to consider cleanup activities as a civic project. For more information on areas needing attention, how to go about such projects, tools and equipment needed for a project and how to remove materials collected, Contact Palmira Miller at 736-6637

### AMBULANCE UNIT SEEKS VOLUNTEERS

The Newport Township Fireman's Community Ambulance Association is seeking volunteers for emergency vehicle operators (EVO's) and emergency medical technicians (EMT's). After a background check, residents who are sixteen years of age or older may apply to ride along as an observer, to decide if they may be interested in further training which may result in part time and/or full time employment and/or a career in emergency services. EVO training requires 80 hours, EMT 900 hours, and paramedic (1100 hours). Most training is available through courses offered at Luzerne County Community College or in Kingston, PA.

Contact persons for more information are Jason Kowalski at (570) 736-7382 or Jason Poremba at (570) 735-4652 or (570) 592-8514.

### **Join the Newport Township Community Organization**

**Meetings are Held on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month at the Knights of Columbus Hall on Main Street in Glen Lyon.**

**For more information and to read all of our Newsletters go to [www.newporttownship.com](http://www.newporttownship.com)**

## President's Report

This column represents this writer's valedictory. Since the formation of the Newport Township Community Organization in 2004, this author has had the privilege of serving as its President.

The Organization's bylaws provide that no person can hold an office for more than six consecutive years. Therefore, it is time for this individual to pass the torch of leadership to another committed member.

The Organization has been a strong proponent of term limits, and it is only fitting that other interested Group members be given the opportunity to serve.

No President could have had the opportunity to have worked with a more committed and dedicated cabinet. Any success the Newport Township Community Organization has achieved during its initial period would not have been possible without the untiring efforts of First Vice President Russ Sager, Second Vice President Tom Kashatus, Secretary Palmira Miller, Treasurer Steve Masakowski, and the hard work of a core group of members who have consistently been there for all the volunteer work performed since May of 2004.

Much more needs to be accomplished to help ensure that Newport Township and its elected officials achieve the goals that will guarantee that the Municipality will be worthy of its designation as a First Class Township.

The Community Organization has over 150 members, but it is a core group of 20 to 25 individuals who volunteer regularly to perform the myriad of activities necessary to ensure that the Group remains true to its original purpose of making the Township a better place to live, work, and play.

The Organization's litter pick up in October along the Kirmar Parkway again amplified the fact that many travelers along this thoroughfare have little regard for the environment and the appearance of the area in which they reside. In the three months since its previous pickup, a substantial amount of litter was deposited along this highway, continuing to paint a bleak picture of community pride to many outsiders.

In this regard, the Organization applauds the efforts of the Township officials to demolish a number of substandard structures and strongly encourages them to continue this effort.

Strong support is reiterated for the ambitious list of projects outlined earlier in the year to enhance the appearance and growth of the Municipality. Elected officials are encouraged to continue with periodic updates regarding the status of these wish list items.

It is important to note that volunteers are needed more than ever. Government at all levels is facing fiscal constraints and cannot be expected to meet every need with public monies. Some of the voids will have to be filled with the efforts of volunteers.

In conclusion, I would request that we are all guided by the words of the late Winston Churchill, "We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give."

## Letter to The Editor

Contrary to what the editor of the Newport Township Community Organization (NTCO) newsletter opined in the Fall, 2009 issue, Newport Township Commissioners in the past 25 years have been energetic and interested in dealing with derelict properties. I was one of those commissioners.

Upon taking office, I organized procedures to contact the owners of those properties and keep track of the efforts that I, and our Building Inspector/Code Enforcement officer, took to remedy the deficient properties. If preserved, all records of our efforts regarding those properties are in blue file folders in the Township office. One has to be an elected official to appreciate how much time and effort is involved in working to alleviate the deplorable conditions of dilapidated properties while preserving the right of the property owner to due process. An example of my diligence to blighted properties can be illustrated with a house that existed on the corner of Spring and East Enterprise Streets, Glen Lyon. The house was in violation of building/housing codes (BOCA) and was a nuisance to neighbors. Numerous attempts were made to contact the owner via phone and certified mail, to no avail.

Luzerne County contacted me that funds were available to demolish a property, if the Township had clear title or an owner's permission. In a last ditch effort, I finally spoke to the owner of the Spring Street property. I told the owner that if they would permit the demolition and sign a contract for \$1.00 (YES, one dollar), the demolition would take place and the owner would still retain title to the property. The estimated cost of the demolition was in excess of \$7,000. The owner declined, and the blighted property stood for years to come. Because no other property in the Township qualified, the demolition grant went back to the County.

There are those in the NTCO who believe that the legal process of Eminent Domain is the way to resolve the Township's problems with those properties. Eminent Domain can only be used when the taking of a property by a municipality will benefit the public interest, such as acquiring a property for the purpose of constructing a new township building. What they are apparently ignorant of is that if such a procedure were to be implemented, the Township would assume the financial and legal obligations of those properties. Most notably, the Township would have to pay the property owner the fair market value of the property, and the Township would be responsible for any back taxes and/or liens on said properties. That is a huge financial burden to place on a municipality that is by Commonwealth Law limited to a set tax millage of 30 mills. That is **not** an example of full responsibility in governing the Township. □

When my wife and I joined the NTCO, we believed that it was interested in bettering the community. With the incendiary remarks of the editor, we are now wondering if it is actually a political affiliation. □

*Frank Czaplá , Jr.*

## EDITORIAL

Newport Community News would like to take this opportunity to thank NTCO members Palmira Miller and Tom Kashatus for their extensive work throughout the Township aimed at cleaning dump sites and recycling metal.

Palmira has organized numerous cleanups throughout the Township and has also set up several regularly scheduled cleanups along Kirmar Parkway between Alden and Glen Lyon.

Tom is always on the go in his compact pickup truck. Whenever he spots piles of metal items which have been randomly dumped he loads them on board for transport to a recycling center. In addition Tom regularly picks up recyclable metal items from residents of the Township.

Tom sells all of the recyclables at local junk yards and donates the proceeds to NTCO to help offset the expenses involved in these

excellent NTCO Projects,

In addition to the cleanup projects planned for volunteers in various areas of the Township, Palmira has also been instrumental in getting additional professional help from the Pennsylvania Environmental Council, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection and Pennsylvania Department of Transportation.

We also wish to thank all of the volunteers who have helped on cleanup operations for their hours of work in often difficult places and poor weather conditions.

Finally, last but not least, we wish to thank all of Newport Township Emergency Services for their support and cooperation with our cleanup projects.

2 To All we say - JOBS WELL DONE, Thank you very much.



## Township Demolition Program Continues

*By John Jarecki* At a special meeting on November 19, the Township Commissioners accepted a low bid of \$32,000 from the T. Brennan's Heavy Equipment of Carbondale to demolish three dilapidated or damaged buildings in the community.

The buildings are the houses at 19-21 Arch Street in Glen Lyon, 65-67 Laurel Street in Alden, and 56 Spruce Street in Alden. The Laurel Street building was formerly the home of Joseph Hitzner, who tragically died when the building burned. According to Commissioner John Wilkes, the Township will not have to pay any money toward this work. A county grant will pay for the demolition of the Glen Lyon house, and the Newport Township Authority, of which Wilkes is the Chairman, will pay for that of the two Alden houses with its own funds. The county grant can only be used for buildings in Glen Lyon.

The Commissioners expect the buildings to be demolished within a month or so. This will be the culmination of a long process of satisfying the legal requirements of demolition. First the Commissioners get the permission of the owner of the building. They then do a title search to verify ownership, do an inspection for asbestos (if present, they must arrange for its safe removal), get county approval if a county grant is paying the cost, advertise for bids, and finally accept a bid for the actual demolition.

The commissioners, also on November 19, said that they are in the midst of this legal process in working on the demolition of two more buildings in Glen Lyon, a house at 335 West Main Street and another in the 100 block of Newport Street. For the first building, they have done a title search and asbestos inspection, and have sent project information to the county for its approval. They expect this demolition to occur soon. For the second building, they are just at the stage of getting the owner's approval.

We congratulate the Commissioners and the members of the Newport Township Authority for their good work on this project.

**Editor's Note:** Contracts have been awarded for demolition of the buildings mentioned above, the work should begin shortly.



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## NTCO to Hold Elections on January 26

The Newport Township Community Organization meeting scheduled for December 22nd was canceled.

The next meeting will be an agenda meeting to be held January 12th, 2010 at the Knights of Columbus at 6:30 P.M.

On January 26th a general membership meeting will be conducted and an election of officers will take place, nominations from the floor will be accepted.

The annual meeting and report will take place immediately after the regular meeting. **Tom Kashatus, 2nd VP**

## Sewer Authority Increases Rates

*By Tom Kashatus* In October, after a ten year hiatus, the Newport Township Sewer Authority raised its quarterly fees of \$57.50 by \$10.00 which will total \$40.00 or 17% per year. The new rate will be implemented in the first quarter of 2010. The motion for the increase was passed on a 4 - 0 vote. In the late 1970s an approximate loan of \$2,600,000.00 was negotiated with the Farmers' Home Administration, in addition to grant funding from other sources, to establish the system which resulted in a mortgage that had to be repaid over a period of forty years. It is claimed that a tight budget resulting from necessary repairs to the 30 year old system and its pumping stations and increases in fixed costs are the cause of this action. Originally the fixed rate was set at \$39.00 per quarter or \$150.00 per year. This is the second increase since that time.

Increased water flow into the system during storms which result from internal leaks, illegal hookups by property owners, hookups that do not separate rainwater runoff, and grease and dirt increase pressure on the system resulting in unanticipated deterioration. The budget is based on 1950 EDU's (Equivalent Domestic Units). **It was especially noted that an abnormal increase in the amount of grease in the pumping station in Sheatown has caught the attention of the Authority, and the public is asked to report any abnormal activity in and around the manholes scattered throughout the area.**

On a split vote 3-2 the authority voted to give no raises to its employees for the year 2010. After much discussion, this action was approved due to the already tight budget and decision by the Feds not to give any cost of living increases to their employees and social security recipients.

The Sewer Authority holds its regular monthly meetings on the third Monday of the month at 6:00 p.m. at their office in Wanamie. Board President is Mel Dudeck, Vice President is Dawson Jenkins. John Farrell is Secretary/Treasurer. Joseph Deluca and Peter Wanchisn are the remaining voting members. Solicitor is Vito Deluca and Engineers are Joe Bluge and John Latsha of Glace Associates, Inc. of Camp Hill, PA.



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Russell Janney

## People

# Glen Lyon Beauty Was Inspiration for Book “Coaltown” & Film “Miracle of the Bells”



Olga Treskoff

### Russell Janney

*By Heidi Selecky* Russell Janney, the author of *Miracle of the Bells*, was born to Reynold and Ella Dixon Janney on April 14, 1884 in Wilmington, Ohio. His father was a school teacher. In 1892, the family moved to Keene, New Hampshire where Reynold Janney became a bicycle manufacturer.

Russell became interested in theater, as many road shows put on performances in Keene. He attended Yale, where he wrote and staged plays for his fraternity.

In 1906, he moved to England where he was employed as a publicity writer and also wrote several short stories. In 1909, he returned to America and formed the Russell Janney Players who performed in Milwaukee and other cities. He was also a press agent for the Fox Film Company. In 1916, he produced his first New York stage plays by Stuart Walker and Oscar Wilde. Following their success, he co-produced other plays and musicals through collaborations with Brian Hooker and others. His first major Broadway production was Booth Tarkington's "Seventeen" in 1916. A brief marriage produced one son, William.

He met Olga Trotzski of Glen Lyon in 1920. They became business partners and were also linked romantically.

In 1925, he hit the peak of his career with *The Vagabond King* in which Olga had the role of *Lady Mary*. This musical was based on the life of the French vagabond poet, Francois Villon, also dramatized in the play by Justin McCarthy, *If I Were King*. In 1927, he returned to London where he presented "The Vagabond King" and other plays. He went back to New York and in 1934 collaborated on a musical *The O'Flynn* with Brian Hooker.

After Olga's untimely death in 1938 at age 46, Janney was inspired to write the novel *Miracle of the Bells* based loosely on Olga's life. Published in 1946, it became a best seller. The film version was produced by RKO in 1948 and starred Alida Valli as Olga, Fred MacMurray as the press agent, Frank Sinatra as the priest at St. Michael's, and Leo J. Cobb as the movie producer. Scenes and townspeople of Glen Lyon can be seen throughout the film. Janney also wrote the lyrics for the song, *Miracle of the Bells*.

In 1953, Janney wrote another novel *So Long As Love Remembers*, a story about a girl from Wilkes-Barre, Olga Lasenka. Russell Janney died of natural causes in New York City on July 14, 1963 at the age of 79.

### Olga Treskoff

*By Bill Piccone* Many people are familiar with the 1948 RKO film, *The Miracle of the Bells* and with Russell Janney's best-selling novel from which the film was adapted. But the lady who was the inspiration for the book and film, Olga Treskoff, came from Glen Lyon ("Coaltown" in the book and film) - . She was born Anna Trotzski on May 7, 1892 to Jan and Josefa Trotzski of 66 East Main Street. Her father and some of her brothers worked in the coal mines. Anna went to school for three years in Glen Lyon. Later, in her teens, she worked as a servant girl in Wilkes-Barre. By 1913 she had moved to New York City and appeared in several silent films, eventually changing her name to Olga Treskoff after the title role of a 1913 film starring Helen Gardner.

In 1916 she married Attorney Austin Flint Gibbons from whom she soon separated, charging him with cruelty. In 1920 she met theatrical producer Russell Janney. They co-produced plays and musicals in the period from 1921 to 1934, the most successful of which was *The Vagabond King*, the 1925 Rudolf Friml-Brian Hooker operetta. Olga made an appearance in the operetta as *Lady Mary* in the Broadway production. Olga and Russell Janney staged more productions on Broadway and in London with varying success. Tragically, Olga became ill with spinal cancer in mid-1937 and died on April 21, 1938. Her funeral was held at St. Michael the Archangel Church (now razed) and she was interred in the parish cemetery.

With Olga gone, Russell Janney continued in the theatrical field alone. He often came to Glen Lyon to visit some of her relatives and to visit Olga's grave and help tidy up the cemetery. One day at the cemetery, the inspiration came to him to write what became the best-selling novel, "The Miracle of the Bells," whose leading female character, Olga Treskovna, was somewhat patterned after Olga Treskoff. The book was published in 1946 and the film version starring Fred MacMurray, Alida Valli and Frank Sinatra was released in 1948.

Russell Janney died in 1963 and is buried in Kensico Cemetery in Valhalla, New York.

To this day, people come to visit Olga's grave which is still beautifully cared for. Russell Janney would be proud.

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## Preliminary Newport Township 2010 Budget

*By John Jarecki* At a Special Meeting Township Commissioners' meeting, the Commissioners announced their preliminary 2010 budget, which is divided into four major funds for which the revenue and expenses are listed in the following table.

|                   | Revenue   | Expenses  |
|-------------------|-----------|-----------|
| General Fund      | \$712,161 | \$706,507 |
| Refuse Fund       | 335,950   | 355,950   |
| Recycling Fund    | 42,375    | 42,375    |
| Liquid Fuels Fund | 94,549    | 94,549    |

The two largest sources of revenue for the General Fund are an earned income tax of 1% and a real estate tax that last year was 1.45 mills, or \$1.45 per \$1000 of property value. In the 2010 budget this real estate tax will increase by .5 mills, which is an increase of about \$38 on the average taxable property of about \$77,000.

The Commissioners gave several reasons for this tax increase.

- 1) Because of appeals of reassessed property values during the past year, the total assessed value of taxable property in Newport Township has decreased by \$3.5 million from \$157 million to \$153.5 million.
- 2) During 2009 Township expenses ran above expectations in a number of cases, for example paving Simon Street (\$16,000 over), paving Frederick Street (\$7,700 over), and repairing a police car (\$1,700 over). Overall expenses exceeded expectations by more than \$45,000.

In the 2010 budget the earned income tax is expected to raise \$250,000, and the real estate tax is expected to raise \$229,000.

Revenue for the Refuse and Recycling Funds comes from refuse and recycling fees, and revenue for the Liquid Fuels Fund comes from the state. The refuse fee is expected to raise \$355,950, and the recycling fee is expected to raise \$42,375. The state will contribute \$94,549 to the Liquid Fuels Fund.

Commissioner John Zyla said that this was the first tax increase since the early 1990's and that, although the Commissioners certainly do not like to raise taxes, they felt that there was no good alternative.

### Angela Lowe Wins Chili Contest for 2nd Time



**Pictured left with Angela (fourth from left) are Leigh Bonczewski, Tom Kashatus, Mary Ann Smocharski, JoAnn Kowalski and Christopher Todd.**

*By Tom Kashatus* For the second time in two tries Angela Lowe of Alden was voted the best Chili Chef and blue ribbon winner at the fourth annual chili contest sponsored by the Newport Township Community Organization at their fall festival held recently at Holy Child Picnic Grounds in Sheatown. Over one hundred patrons at the festival participated in the judging and selected the chilis of Mary Ann Smocharski and JoAnn Kowalski as the second place winners in the heated competition. There were ten entries with over 40 gallon of different delicious concoctions for all to enjoy. Co-chair persons for the event were Francis Zaleski and Tom Kashatus.

## Illegal Dumpsites Reclaimed

*By Palmira Gregory Miller* This year members of the Newport Township Community Organization planned and executed a massive clean up campaign throughout the Township by documenting illegal dumpsites, contacting property owners, recruiting volunteers, securing donations, dumpsters from Waste Reduction and JP Mascaro, landfill space, and partnering with the Pennsylvania Environmental Council.

First, residents were provided with free rubbish disposal for their properties and neighborhoods. Next, a one-day Community Pride Event was held to cleanup along the main roads. Then, seven (7) illegal dumpsites were eradicated and a number of streets throughout the Township were cleared of litter. Through the adopt-a-highway program, litter was removed along the main roads several times throughout the year. In October and November the Pennsylvania Environmental Council hired contractors to clean 3 large sites, and implemented 3 additional volunteer clean-ups.

The profits of our efforts are seen by the reduction of 234 ton of trash, tires, and scrap metal throughout the community. Funding for all events was provided from in-kind donations, sponsors, partners, and grants. An estimated dollar amount exceeded \$70,000.00 with a price tag of \$0 to the Township and Residents.

This year 215 volunteers provided 2,035 hours of community service, removed 36 ton of garbage, 31 ton of recyclables, 871 tires, eliminated over 10 illegal dumpsites by participating in the following events:

1. April 20<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> – Big Junk Drop Off, Township Recycling Center
2. April 25<sup>th</sup> – Community Pride Event, Main Roads in the Township
3. April 27<sup>th</sup> – Three large pits behind St. Michaels, St. Adalbert's Cemeteries, Glen Lyon
4. April 28<sup>th</sup> – In front of St. Mary Cemetery, Brown Row, Wanamie
5. April 29<sup>th</sup> - Old Newport Cemetery Road to the Red Lake, Sheatown
6. April 30<sup>th</sup> - Around and along the old railroad bed from Spring St. to Depot St., Glen Lyon
7. May 1<sup>st</sup> – Along the old railroad bed between Robert St. & E. Kirmar Ave., Alden
8. May 1<sup>st</sup> – Glen Lyon Pumping Station, Vandermark Rd, W Main Ave., Wanamie, and more
9. July 25<sup>th</sup> – Main highway cleanup from Glen Lyon to Alden
10. October 17<sup>th</sup> – Main highway cleanup from Glen Lyon to Alden
11. October 17<sup>th</sup> – Dumpsite between W Main Ave and the Compose Center
12. November 16 – Kreiger Rd, Wanamie
13. November 17 – Weinick Park, Glen Lyon
18. November 18 – Kirmar Ave. Forge Creek area and Penobscot Trail, Alden

Due to steep terrain, contractors were retained with funds provided to the Pennsylvania Environmental Council from Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection and the United States Department of Agriculture, resulting in the removal of 115 ton of trash, 39 ton of scrap metal and 5 ton of tires from the following sites. (*Please See Dump sites page 8 Column 2*)



## NTCO'S FALL FESTIVAL

Despite coolness and a threatening sky the 2009 Fall Festival turned out to be a fun for all who attended. Pictured below are just a few of the workers and patrons as they wandered through the many exhibits and stands.

### Scenes from NTCO Fall Festival



**Norm With Some of His Fans**



**Car Show**



**Chili Contest Prize Winners**



**Hay Riders**



**Tux Makes New Friends**



**Face Painting**





### A Family Affair

Pictured as they take a well-deserved lunch break at the Alden Mountain site are Austin, Jeff (Gary's brother), Garrett, Garry and Kyle. Fred King (Alden Mountain resident) and Palmira Miller (Newport Township Community Organization) chat with them.

**By Tom Kashatus.** We have to give credit to the Gary Fronk family from Thompsontown, Juniata County for driving up Interstate 81 every day and returning home during the evening after working a full day in our strip mining pits. They have cleaned up our illegal dump sites created by the residents of Newport Township and others from throughout Wyoming Valley. Gary is the owner of Gary Fronk Excavating and the father of three sons – Austin (15), Kyle (16), and Garrett (19). It took approximately two weeks to clean up two strip mine pits in the Township – one behind St. Michael's Cemetery in Glen Lyon and one on Alden Mountain near Fairchild's Lake. Another smaller site was cleaned up along Forge Creek behind the now defunct Northeast Regional Equipment Center. The task of removing the trash and debris was enormous, as recyclables were separated and handpicked from the material that traveled to the landfill. The contract for the cleanup was awarded to Fronk Excavating by the Pennsylvania Environmental Council under the auspices of Angela Vitkoski in partnership with a Newport Township Community Organization project led by Palmira Miller.

On the trip home the Fronks would often take a load of scrap tires to Mahantango Enterprises in Liverpool, PA where they would be recycled into a unique rubber granule that would eventually be used as horse turf for arenas, rubber mulch, fuel chips, drainage material around foundations, playground surfaces, and aggregate for septic tanks. Gary also noted that the task of reclamation would be almost impossible without the large nylon bags that they use which are obtained gratuitously from Empire Kosher Poultry located in Mifflintown, PA. Due to the depth of the pit and steep sides the men filled the bags and they were lifted out by a crane.

Along with a strong unified family work ethic the Fronks were determined to get the job done. Thanksgiving morning was spent cleaning up the mess at the Alden site only to return home and enjoy what was left of their holiday. On Friday they returned for the last time to finish their assigned project. Gary will return to Thompsonstown to continue his work on excavating for swimming pools, foundations, building roads, and timbering. Austin and Kyle will continue to be home-schooled as they work to their high school diplomas. Sometime during the winter the family will travel to Haiti or the Dominican Republic to engage in missionary volunteerism. For us who have met this hardworking family and had become friends, it has been a pleasure.



### Halloween Party by Women's Activity Group

**By Tom Kashatus.** A dreary day and pouring rain didn't stop the eighty plus children from celebrating Halloween with a party sponsored by the Newport Township Women's Activity Group at the Glen Lyon American Legion Post 539 on October 24<sup>th</sup>. There was plenty of food, games to be played, pictures to be colored, balloons everywhere, and just fun things for everyone. As you walked through the door, chances were offered by Nancy Britton (pictured in her witch's costume) to guess how many candy corns, M & M's, and gummy eye balls were in the jars. Also pictured at her table of Chinese auction items is Lisa Guy as participants purchased chances to win one of the special handmade crafts. Chairpersons for the event were Mary Gray, Patti Smith, and Nancy Britton. The long established organization is led by President Brenda Grabowski, Vice President Debbie Ward, Treasurer Janine Floryshak, and Secretary Mary Gray. The American Legion provided the facility, they also furnished plenty of homemade pizza for everyone. A Christmas party was also held for the township children at the American Legion on December 13<sup>th</sup>.

The group is currently selling entertainment books as a fundraiser. The books contain coupons for discounts to restaurants and local businesses. The cost is \$20.00. Chairperson for this project is Judy Novak. She can be reached at (570) 735-5914. They will also be looking forward to their recurring spring bingo which will be held at St. Adalbert's Church in Glen Lyon during March 2010. Chairpersons for that event are Eileen Molecavage and Bonnie Lazar. The bingo fundraisers are the group's main source of revenue to subsidize all their activities for the children.

### NEIGHBORHOOD BLOCK WATCH PROGRAM

**By Karen E. Rejician** Why should you be involved in neighborhood watch? You should be involved because working with neighbors to look out for each other is one of the most simple and most effective ways to prevent crime in your neighborhood. A neighborhood block watch encourages effective working relationships between law enforcement and the community.

Neighborhood watch encourages citizens' awareness of neighborhood crime through a continuing information process. You spend more time in your neighborhood than a patrol officer could. You can play an important role just by keeping your eyes and ears open for anything suspicious and watching out for those things when the police can't be there.

The more citizens who agree to participate, the more **effective** the crime watch group is likely to be. The more block captains, the more effective the crime watch group.

**We applaud the Newport Township Police Department for attending Glen Lyon's Crime Watch meetings and sharing information with us as to what types of crime are occurring in our neighborhoods. Crime Watch Meetings are held the second Thursday of each month at 7:00 PM at the Italian Apple & Orchard Streets in Glen Lyon.**



# Picture In Time

Pershing School in Alden



Pershing School, Alden

**By Heidi Selecky** A beautiful brick structure with eight classrooms, the Pershing Elementary School in Alden collapsed into a mine cave-in one May night in the late 1920's. The school was located on Newport Avenue and was built over a large seam of coal in the Lee Mine at the former Bliss Colliery. The cave-in was a direct result of careless mining. A worse tragedy was averted because the cave-in occurred in the wee hours of the morning. It also swallowed an automobile. Several coal companies then built the K.M. Smith School without cost to taxpayers. It was named for the coal company official who spearheaded the effort. The Robert Street location was deemed safe from further mine subsidence. Thomas G. Roman of Sheatown was principal of the Pershing School at the time. Students were assigned to the abandoned East Kirmar Avenue School and to the High School Annex until K.M. Smith School was completed.

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(Dump Sites Continued from page 5.)

1. October 12 to 14 - Tire Pit behind Brown Row, Wanamie
2. November 19 to 21 - An Appliance Pit near the rock quarry, Glen Lyon
3. November 21 - Completed Penobscot Trail Cleanup, Alden
4. November 23 to 27 - Off Alden Mountain Rd., Alden

THANK YOU to the volunteers, the many partners and outpour of in-kind donations for the success in accomplishing these projects. We continue to monitor and keep these sites under surveillance.

Earth Conservancy provides a place for yard waste and the Township will pick up your Christmas Tree(s) after the holidays. Even though our local police continue to prosecute and fine litter bugs, it is our responsibility to stop littering and report offenders to the proper authority. For more information you can visit [http://www.pacleanways.org/enf\\_whattodoif.html](http://www.pacleanways.org/enf_whattodoif.html).

Your help is needed to continue with these projects. New sites have been spotted and documented for possible cleanup in 2010. To meet the demands of our recycling program we are looking for a recycling truck. If you would like to be a supporter, volunteer your time, or truck, please contact Palmira at 736-6637 or [palmiram@newporttownship.com](mailto:palmiram@newporttownship.com).

## December Commissioners' Meeting

**By John Jarecki** The Township Commissioners held their December meeting on Monday the 7<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm at the Municipal Building in Wanamie.

The most important event of the evening was the introduction of the preliminary 2010 Township budget, in which the property tax rate will increase by half a mill over last year because it is expected that tax revenue will decrease from last year while expenses have increased. For further information about this, please read the article in this newsletter about the budget.

The Commissioners also announced that they have sent letters to Luzerne County requesting county gaming funds as well as to Representative Paul Kanjorski requesting help in getting funds from other sources. In both cases the Commissioners intend to use any money they receive to build a new municipal building. Similarly, they have requested the Luzerne County Housing Authority for help in getting funds for new equipment or a new police car. The Commissioners said that they are making an effort to get whatever financial help might now be available.

The Commissioners approved a resolution adopting the Luzerne-Lackawanna County joint hazard mitigation plan. They also appointed Murph Fletcher to a five year term on the Township Recreation Board. Murph's qualifications include his running of the Community Organization's summer recreation program for children and his extensive volunteer help in renovating the Coal Street recreation park in Glen Lyon. We congratulate Murph on his appointment.

The Commissioners announced that there is now an e-mail address for Newport Township: [newporttownship@pa.metrocast.net](mailto:newporttownship@pa.metrocast.net).



PNC

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# **Glen Lyon Crime Watch**

## **Holiday Crime Prevention Tips**

**Be ALERT and AWARE of your surroundings. Pay attention to who is around you & what activities are happening. Don't leave the safety of a building or your vehicle until you have ensured all is secure & safe. Trust your instincts; if you feel uncomfortable with a place or people near you get away.**

- Park in a well-lit area.
- Remember to lock your vehicle!!
- Minimize the number of valuables left in your vehicle and keep valuables, electronics (including cell phones and DVDs), gifts and other "theft attractors" out of sight.
- Protect your purse or wallet and clean out any unnecessary items before leaving home. Don't carry large amounts of cash or extra credit cards. Carry only those cards that you will need to use that day. Keep a master list of all cards so if your wallet is stolen, they can be reported promptly to the appropriate banking facility.
- Never leave your purse, wallet or cell phone unattended in a public place.
- Don't overburden yourself with packages while shopping.
- Shop with a buddy ; there is safety in numbers.
- Role-play with children about what should happen in the event you are separated.
- Have your keys out and ready when you return to your vehicle.
- Do not leave your car unattended with the motor running or with the keys in the ignition; even for the very short time needed to do a quick errand or pay for fuel.
- Only make online purchases from trusted, secure websites. Look for "https" in the web address to verify security.
- Make sure all doors & windows have secondary locks (window pins, deadbolts, dowels, etc.) and use them!
- Ensure that dark areas and entrances have outdoor lights that are turned on after dark or that are activated by sensors.
- Place gifts where they can't be seen from the outside.
- Avoid opening the door to strangers. Legitimate delivery people will be able to show identification.
- Investigate charities before donating by calling the Secretary of State's office or the charity's main office.
- Be sure to mail cards with money, checks or gift certificates from the Post Office or a blue US Postal Service collection box.
- If traveling, use timers for lights and radios while you're away. Ask a trusted friend, neighbor or Block Watch member to watch your home. Remember to make arrangements for mail and newspapers.
- Recognize that the holidays can cause stress; keep emotions under control while driving. Give other drivers plenty of space and always leave yourself a route to avoid an accident.
- Carry your valuables wisely. Do not keep cash in your wallet. Instead, keep it in an inside pocket and only carry the credit cards you'll need.
- Do not leave valuables in your vehicle. If you must leave packages in your car, put them in the trunk. Keep receipts with you.
- Whenever possible, park and walk in well-lit areas. Be aware of your surroundings, especially the people around you.
- Carry your purse close to you, with the opening or flap towards your body. Never leave a purse unattended in a shopping cart.
- Do not keep a wallet, credit cards or cash in a backpack. If you are in a crowd, consider carrying the backpack in front of you. Pickpockets can quickly and easily remove items from a backpack without being noticed by the owner.
- Protect your credit card numbers and other personal information. Carefully dispose of receipts that have a credit card number on them. Never provide credit card information in response to unsolicited calls or emails.
- Don't announce your new high-dollar purchases after the holidays. Break down the boxes of TVs, stereos, computers, etc. and turn them inside out before putting them in the trash.
- When parking your vehicle to go shopping, remember where you parked it! Always park in a well lit and well traveled area. Do not park in a remote dark area.

- When you return to your vehicle, scan the interior of your car to be sure no one is hiding inside. Check to see if you are being followed.
- Have your keys in hand when approaching your vehicle. You will be ready to unlock the door and will not be delayed by fumbling and looking for your keys.
- Do not leave your purse, wallet, or cellular telephone in plain view.
- Don't resist if someone tries to take any of your belongings. Don't chase someone who robs you, they may have a weapon. Instead call 911.
- Lock your vehicle and put up your windows even while you are driving.
- If you go to an automatic teller machine for cash, check for people around and make sure it is well lit and in a safe location.
- Carry only the credit cards you need and avoid carrying large amounts of cash. If you make a purchase with your credit card, be sure to obtain the carbons or see that they are destroyed in front of you.
- Beware of the "a good deal" scams. Things are not always what they appear to be.

**After the holidays:**

- Pay close attention to bills and report any unauthorized charges.
- Photograph and record the serial numbers of new items and add them to your inventory.

## Teasdale

### A Long Lost Village and Mine in Newport Township Located Near Lee



**Teasdale and Surrounds in Late 1880s**

*By Tom Kashatus* After the Civil War a coal colliery was started at the extreme western end of Newport Township on the way to Mocanaqua at "Teasdale" or Lee by the Great Atlantic Coal Company. In the early 1880's the Village of Lee was founded there by the Pan-Coast Coal Company just over the mountain off the state auxiliary highway between Mocanaqua and Glen Lyon in Conyngham Township. On the north side of the Jersey Central tracks that served the Lee shaft and breaker, the settlement consisted of ten single homes, a company store, and a three family home. Ten single homes, two 10 family homes, an old church building and a storehouse were on the other side. The school was located on the main highway at the corner of the then county road, and the road leading over the mountain to the village. A post office was located adjacent to the only hotel in the area operated by Vincent Butkiewicz at the present Lee area at the right angle curve. He was also the postmaster until the hotel was sold to Ignatz Osowiecki, a Glen Lyon resident, whose daughter became postmistress. Louis Morgan delivered mail from the Wanamie post office to the Lee office on a daily basis.

Flooding within the mines led to problems and in 1915 ownership changed to the West End Coal Company who began the dewatering process of the shaft. In 1932 when it became futile to keep the water out of the mines in "Teasdale" and Mocanaqua, the West End Coal Company ceased its operations and notified the residents of the small village that the frame homes would be razed. The homes were sold to a Muhlenburg contractor who leveled the buildings and removed the lumber to another site.

Families migrated to Glen Lyon, Mocanaqua, Nanticoke, Wanamie, New Jersey, and New York. The Lee shaft worked for the last time in December of 1937. Subsequently, the present Lee village began to grow with the construction of a double block home built by the Antoniat's family across the street from the Butkiewicz hotel.

Immigrants from Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Lithuania, brought to America by the Great Atlantic Coal Company, mainly settled into the company homes of the mining community and carried on the customs from their native lands. When not working in the mines they raised livestock, poultry, and vegetables. Weddings were three day affairs that attracted all the villagers.

Family surnames associated with the village of "Teasdale" over the years were: Connors (who daughter was the village school teacher), Butz, Sweineki, Kost, Yalch, Yaglinski, Krakoviak, Mazonkey, Adams, Kochiban, Shenoski, Cobosco, Charnetski, Rushkowski, Bochochin, Links, Kotsko, Evan, Samuelewicz, Stefano, Mierzwa, Leshnicki, Sweeney, Antonaitis, Nanchol, Mihalko, Hankey, and Wolfe.

. Information in this article was taken from the Wilkes Barre Times Leader compliments of the Yaniga and Kropiewnicki families.



## Community Organization's Web Site

*By John Jarecki* The Newport Township Community Organization's web site is attracting four hundred visitors each month, some of whom visit the site more than once. In fact from January to November of this year, the total number of visits (counting repeat visits by individuals) has increased by 30%, and the amount of information the visitors have viewed on the site has increased by 400%, a fourfold increase.

Visitors to the site are most interested in viewing the Community Organization's Newsletter, usually the latest issue. They are also interested in the minutes of Community Organization meetings, organization activities, and information on the organization's officers. Visitors are also interested in information on the Township Commissioners, police, and building code enforcement, and in reading the text of Township ordinances found on the web site. Finally, they are interested in information on other community groups and the calendar of their activities.

Visitors include both Township residents and people living all across the county. Of the ten most active visitors, half live outside the community, including people living in Kennett Square, Pennsylvania, New Britain, Connecticut, and San Francisco, California.

Although the overwhelming number of visitors are from the United States, it is amusing to see that the second largest number of visitors are from China, and the third largest number are from Russia.

Palmira Miller is webmaster of our site, whose address is [www.palmiranewporttownship.com](http://www.palmiranewporttownship.com). We congratulate her for good work and invite you to visit the site.

## Scouting Report

*By Tom Kashatus* Boy Scout Troop 430 and Cub Scout Pack 430 which meet at the Glen Lyon American Legion Post 539, 62 Newport Street at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesdays is presently undergoing reorganization. Present Scoutmaster is Dawn Bobinoski and Cub Scout Packmaster is John Bobinoski. Guidance is still furnished by Mr. Joseph Figlerski, American Legion member and longtime scouting representative. The Bobinoski's stated that their charter is always open to new members and they may be contacted at (570) 542-7797 or e-mail [drbobinoski@yahoo.com](mailto:drbobinoski@yahoo.com).

Cub Scout Pack 476 which meets at the Glen Lyon Italian American Sporting Club on Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. recently participated in a field trip to "Puppetry Past Times" at Stillwater which is in the Jonestown-Benton area to observe and learn how to make puppets and perform as puppeteers. Successful candidates would then qualify for the Cub Scout "Showman Badge." The scouts have been working hard in the health and nutrition areas and the Webelos have earned their fitness pins. During "Fire Prevention Month" in October a visit to the Newport Township Fire Department and a tour of the trucks and equipment were experienced. Packmaster is Jamie Miller who also stated that their charter is always open to new candidates, and she may be reached at (570) 736-6203 or e-mail [millers6203@verizon.net](mailto:millers6203@verizon.net).



Shown in the picture with their dramatically crafted puppets are as follows: Kneeling left to right are Taylor Clements and Gabriel Miller. Standing: Aaron Miller A. J. Youellis, Ashley Youellis, Daniel Mieczkowski, Jordyn Miller, Kyle Czapracki, and Dylan Makavensky.

## Newport High School Class of '59 Reunion



Pictured are members of the reunion committee: Seated from left to right are Barbara Veronick Deluca, Sally Stapinski Kashatus, Jean Marie Levulis Lewis, and Theresa Mieczkowski Wash-

ington. Standing are John Kashatus, William Zidek, Sylvia Wacławski Vassia, Stephen Phillips, and Mary Alice Morgan Dudeck.

*Written by John Kashatus* The Newport Township High

School class of 1959 recently celebrated their **50<sup>th</sup>** Class Reunion at Appletree Terrace in Dallas. Tables of interest that were "showcased" reflected memorabilia of those school days of yore and also a memorial to deceased class members. John Selecky, Master of Ceremonies, guided the class in the "Newport Millionaire Quiz" which was developed by Paul Gregory and kept the classmates and guests occupied after dinner. (This "Quiz" and other highlights of the special evening, to include pictures and items of interest, may be viewed at the web site: <http://newportclassof59.shutterfly.com/>. An acknowledgement by Mr. Selecky of all reunion attendees who served in the Armed Forces of the United States was greatly applauded by those in attendance. "Diedre and Al" provided music for everyone's listening and dancing pleasure.

During their era of Junior High and High School Slocum Township, Dorrance Township, and Nuangola Borough had their own school Districts, but Dorrance and Nuangola students would enter the Newport Township School District in seventh grade while Slocum students entered in ninth grade. Conyngham Township students from Mocanaqua, Wopwallopen, and Pond Hill came aboard during the Newport/Conyngham Jointure in 1957.

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**"Sunday" Wing Day \$3.95 Per Order**

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**Open Daily 3:00 PM to Close**

**Food & Beer Take-out s Available ATM on Premises**

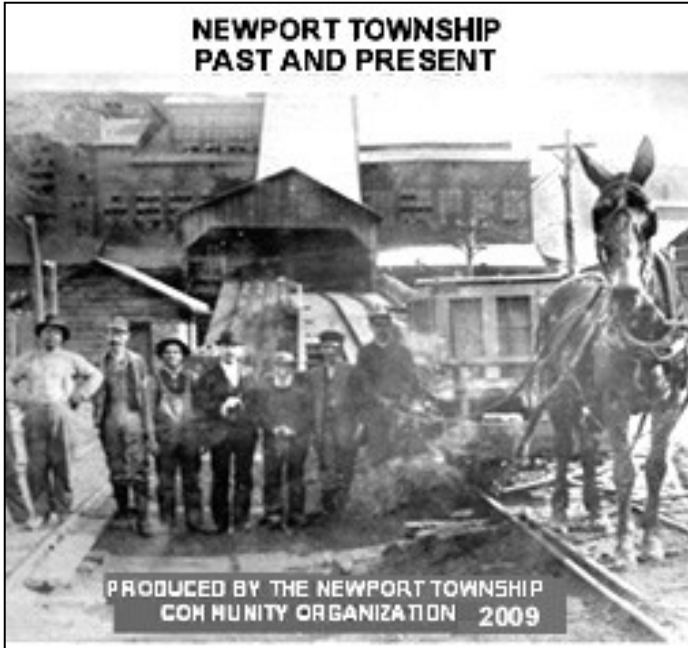
**Enjoy the Winter - Try Skiing or Skating**

## Newport Township Memorabilia

Newport Township Community Organization offers a number of fine items which will serve as excellent gifts for any present or past resident of the Township.

Surprise your friends who have moved away - get one or more of our gift items for your neighbor or for a special person from the past with whom you want to share memories of years ago.

## ANNOUNCING OUR NEW DVD



### NEWPORT TOWNSHIP: PAST AND PRESENT

A SLIDESHOW OF 820 PICTURES IN DVD FORMAT  
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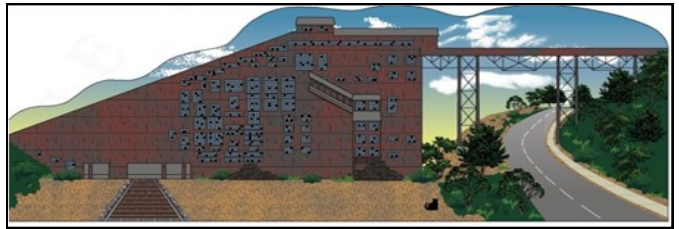
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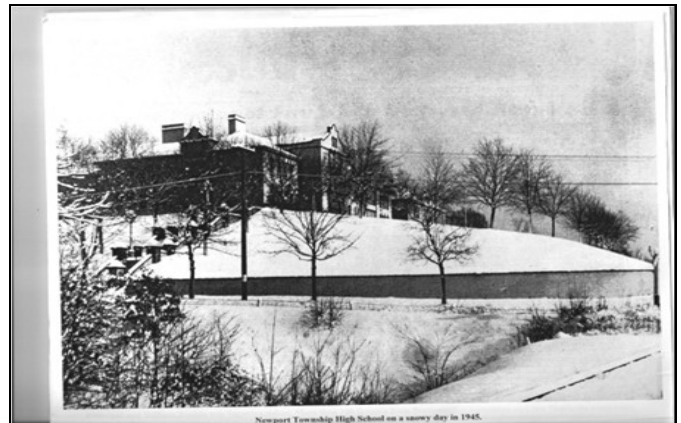
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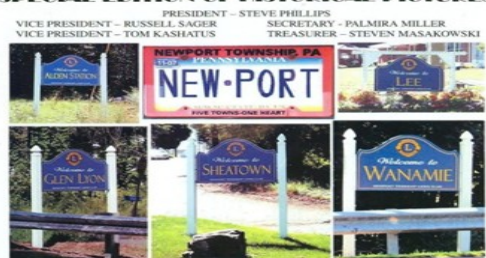


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MEASURES 8" LONG AND 4" HIGH  
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