

THE FOREST CITY NEWS



Anthony Del'Aquila, owner of Elegante Restaurant, surely has other skills in addition to being a good cook. He recently took it upon himself to remodel the restrooms there, and did it after the restaurant closed at night. Despite some long days, he did a great job. He still has the best tomato sauce to be enjoyed anywhere.

The forty days of Lent started last week with Ash Wednesday. A number of area churches will be having Lenten Services during these days leading to Easter. See other pages for dates and times.

Michael Andzulis tells us the new "Sisters" restaurant at Fern Hall, Crystal Lake, was named after his daughters. A front page ad in the *News* last week announced the opening. Until the weather breaks, hours will be Friday's and Saturday's only from 5 til 7? They will be open seven days a week later on. He said the cuisine will consist of "comfort food." Our best to them.

The March edition of "Happenings" magazine has a great story about Jessica Polednak, Forest City, and her annual fundraiser Horse show for the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation. It will be held Saturday, April 1 at her Birchtown Stables, off Rte. 247 in Clifford Township. Her annual events have raised \$30,000. Jessica suffers from this debilitating disease and she and her family have been raising funds for the Foundation for a number of years. Watch our newspaper for times of the event.

We do not belittle in any way the difficulties facing low income people in our country but when self-serving politicians try to equate the real poor of this world to those of the United States, it is not right. We provide a safety net to the poor and unfortunate in this country, but to compare their suffering to those in Africa, India and other 3rd world countries is a sin. In some of the sub-Saharan countries people live on the equivalent of \$100 to \$400 PER YEAR. Babies are dying from mal-nutrition. Young people and adults die from total lack of medical care. Here there are numerous agencies providing food and medical support to poverty stricken. No one is denied medical care. The poorest of the poor in our nation have more than the middle class of some of these countries. You can help by signing up as little as \$10/mo. to help raise these people out of their true poverty. Compassion, Cross International, Save the Children, and World Vision are among the Christian agencies providing this aid. The next time you see a plea on TV, call and help them out. It's the decent thing to do.

Warning to Snow Birds - Saturday and Sunday mornings were the coldest this winter: 13 and 6. In one week we were in shorts and t-shirts in the 70s; rain and hail in the 50s; battling snow squalls and slippery roads in the 20's; 40 -50 mph winds; and single digit temps. Crazy winter!

Sampled the food at our new advertiser, "Sisters", at Fern Hall, Saturday. Cook Mike Andzulis and daughters, served us filet mignon, chicken scampi over rice, black Angus beef tenderloin. The filet was spectacular. About 10 different entrees ranging in price from \$10 to \$18. Excellent and fast service. We wish them well. We also understand the Golf Course will be open on March 7.

Many matters are discussed by FCA Historical Society for 2017

At the Feb. 19 meeting of the Forest City Area Historical Society Treasurer Bob Wirts' report listed a donation of \$5,000 from Joseph and Kathy Sterchak. The Sterchaks have made several donations already to the Society and indicated that the funds can be used for any of the Society's purposes.

The Society also expressed its thanks to Edward and Steven Tourje of NEP Telephone Co. for having their crews clean the sidewalks at the Society Museum on Main Street after every storm this winter. There is over 150 feet of sidewalk plus entrance and stairways. They have also salted the walks whenever necessary. The membership expressed its thanks for this community-minded service to this local organization.

The Society will also again solicit for its Hometown Heroes program. Families of veterans of any conflicts, living or deceased, can honor their memory with a name, photo and brief description on a 3x6 banner which will be displayed in the Museum.

David Opeka and Tammy O'Reilly are in charge of the Heroes project. Cost is \$100 and deadline for this year's enrollment is March 31. The application form and all details can be found on pg. 5 of this edition. Presentations will be on Memorial Day weekend, Saturday, May 27 at 2PM.

Secretary Juliann Doyle said the \$25 Society memberships or \$100 family memberships are now due. They can be sent to her at 305 Martin St., Brown Dale, PA 18421

Treasurer Bob Wirts report was as follows:

Checking \$3,779
Deposits \$2,356
Expenses \$598
Ending bal. \$5,536
Savings Acct. \$23,880
HNB CD \$1,003
Investment \$5,474
Entertainment \$872

Jon Harcharek, who has taken over the Society Facebook page, presented some ideas for additions to the Facebook page and also will present some fundraising ideas at the next Society meeting. One of them, which will be scheduled, is called "History Storytelling". The Society will invite local and area people to come and tell stories, and show photos, about their memories of the past.

Society Booking Agent Paul Ferraro listed some of the events already scheduled for this year: Pysanky Class by Lourdes Brown at the Museum on March 6 & 9; Cornell

Discover the D&H Trail Sat., March 11

The Rail-Trail Council (RTC) of Northeastern PA will host "Discover the secrets of the D&H Rail-Trail" on Sat., March 11, at 10 a.m. at the Forest City Trail Head, Forest City Information:

Join the group for a snowshoe/hike to interesting sites on and off the trail. The group will begin the hike to the tri-county marker near the trail head where you will be able to stand in all three counties at once! (Susquehanna, Lackawanna and Wayne). They will then head north and explore the history on and off the trail. On this hike they will not only learn the historic importance of mining, processing and transportation of coal in the area, but will be visiting places where these things took place.

Well behaved dogs welcomed on leash. Dress warm, pack a snack and water. If we have snow and you would like to borrow a pair of snowshoes please call or email us to reserve a pair.

For more information call or email 570-679-9300 trails@nep.net or www.nepa-rail-trails.org or 570-679-9300.

University "Hearsay" Singers May 7, Old Time Fiddlers June 23.

An Election Day luncheon will be again sponsored by the Society on Tuesday, May 16.

Society member Tammy O'Reilly reported that a TV program based on her upcoming book "Murder in Lehigh Valley" will be on the Investigative Discovery (ID) channel on Sunday, March 5 at 8PM. It will be moderated by Keith Morrison. The ID channel is available on both NEP Datavision and Adams Cable.

Building Manager Frank Brager was given permission to buy a new basement dehumidifier as the present one is no longer operating properly. He indicated that he insulated the rear door in Dec. and it is keeping the cold out.

Mr. Brager also suggested sponsoring a ceremony to burn old and discarded American Flags. It will be held on Flag Day, June 14.

A grant application for a laptop computer will be made to Lackawanna Heritage Valley.

The new outdoor sign for the Museum is presently under construction by Carbon-dale artist Joseph Kluck.

At the request of former resident and Vietnam veteran John Onufrak, the Society will look at participation in helping to erect a memorial to all Vietnam veterans in this area. There already is a memorial plaque dedicated to those who sacrificed their lives in Vietnam.

At the request of member Roseann Swegel, the Society will sponsor a book signing by author of the Sherlock Homes book Randy Williams. It will be held on Sunday, March 5 at 2PM. He recently visited the Forest City Library for a book signing.

Frank O'Neill of Pleasant Mt. Welding will look at the possibility of erecting an aluminum ramp to provide handicapped access to the Museum floor. Monies have already been raised toward providing handicapped access to the basement and museum floor.

Chicken BBQ In B'dale Sun., April 2

The Brown Dale Fire Company will conduct its annual Spring Chicken BBQ on Sunday, April 2, 2017 at the Brown Dale Fire Station located on Route 247, 620 Marion Street, Brown Dale. The menu includes half a Chicken, Baked Potato, Brown Dale Green Beans, Home Made Cole Slaw, Roll & Butter and Dessert. The "drive through only" hours for serving are from 11:00 AM to 1:30 PM.

Tickets are \$9.00 and are available from any member or at Tobacco Road, 607 Main St., Forest City (570-785-2123); Franceski Lumber Yard 900 Main St., Forest City (570-785-3516); Red Cross Pharmacy, 420 Main St., Forest City (570-785-5400); NAPA Auto Parts, 429 Main St., Forest City (570-785-9000) or by calling the fire station at 570-785-5300 and leave a message, visit our web site at www.43fire.com or our Facebook page.

Tickets are advance sales only or until sold out. Proceeds from the BBQ to benefit Brown Dale Fire Company.

Petitions for Spring Primary Due March 14

Any candidates for elected office in the May 16 can begin securing nominating petitions at their County Courthouses. The first date to begin securing names on petitions is Feb. 14. The deadline for filing nominations petitions is March 7.

Karen Allen handles vast array of housing for Susq. Co. Authority

by Art McLain

One of the most popular video games these days is called Minecraft. You may have heard of it or even play it. If you have school age children chances are good they play it or their friends play it. In this game you build houses and even cities using your imagination and the building components of the game. Another popular game that we have all played is Monopoly. In this game you buy properties and then build houses and hotels. Picture these games coming to life and you might begin to get an idea that Redevelopment is a key word in the title of Karen Allen as she leads the way in finding, designing and getting new properties built to help qualified citizens with their housing needs. The list of housing, 10 properties and growing, would be impressive enough but the steady need for help for people with their housing needs keeps Karen busy creating new opportunities for those 55 and older, handicapped/disabled, and families needing help based upon their income qualifications.

In Forest City and on the Main Street you will find the William Penn Apartments. Located on the site of the former William Penn Elementary School, which Karen attended through third grade, this building was constructed in 1982 and offers 50 one bedroom apartments. On the outside a red brick structure with neatly kept grounds and monuments honoring our soldiers and on the inside a modern looking apartment with a beautiful day room which looks like it was taken out of a Better Homes and Gardens Magazine. Any of us would be thrilled to have such a beautiful room in our house. Spacious with windows allowing for plentiful sunlight and great views, a room that must be seen to appreciate.

Another housing option for qualified residents are duplexes that offer a more traditional form of shelter. Two duplexes can be found at 335 Hudson Street. The previous site of Kartri Sales at the corner of Depot and Hudson has 3 newly constructed duplexes with the fourth slated to be finished in May.

It might be easy to think that there is not availability to obtain any of these residences but often, and currently, there are some openings. The way to check on availability would be to call the office at the William Penn Apartments at 570-



Karen Allen, Executive Director of the Susquehanna Housing and Redevelopment Authority

785-5990.

Ms. Allen explained that another program for qualified applicants is the voucher program where applicants would pay 30 percent of income for housing and they could obtain a voucher that would cover the rest of the rental expense. Montrose, being the county seat and location of SCHRA office at 33 Public Avenue, would be the place to go to make your application for a voucher to help with your housing expense.

Ms. Allen, in addition to overseeing seven housing complexes and three duplex properties in Susquehanna County, oversees a staff of 13 people. You will find Lisa Higgins, a project manager, in the office at Forest City and Paul Vergari handles the maintenance of the building. Joe Gluck is the maintenance supervisor of all of the properties. Karen has 3 project managers, a management aide, voucher coordinator and fiscal assistant in addition to six maintenance men. A key person on the team is Bobbi Jo Turner, Grants Administrator, who writes and helps secure the grant money necessary for the continued growth. Karen noted that \$1.7 million was secured from a PHARE grant funded by Marcellus Shale impact fees for the recent Forest City duplex project.

Ms. Allen's work is overseen by a five member Board of Directors, volunteers, who are appointed by the County Commissioners. One of the Board of Directors, the vice-chairman, is Forest City's Paul Lukus, who has served on the board since 1984. The Board of Directors is comprised of people representing the different parts of Susquehanna County.

Karen has worked and advanced through several positions during her career. She

started as a management aide in 1985 at the encouragement of her twin sister, Sharon who was William Penn's first project manager. Karen became a project manager and then served as a Deputy Director before becoming the Executive Director in 2001. Karen and her team now manage 269 rental units with more being developed. The housing authority also administers 253 vouchers for rental assistance throughout the county.

Karen mentioned that some of their complexes do have openings but in New Milford, site of the newest duplex project currently in the design phase, there is a waiting list of 20 people. This project will be funded by \$1.3 million of PHARE Grant funded by Marcellus Shale impact fees. Obviously there is a need, larger in some areas of the county than others. When Karen talks about the different housing complexes people sometimes are surprised about how much she knows and can recall. It would be easy to forget that Karen has been involved in most if not all of the residences and instrumental in the development of many of them.

One last analogy might be fitting in the phrase to not judge a book by its' cover. Karen Allen is humble, modest, soft spoken and calm as can be. The impact that she and her team makes in helping people with the most basic of needs, their housing, cannot be overstated. As we've said before, not all superheroes wear a cape. Karen loves her job and our county is very fortunate to have someone with her talent in this position. Thank you, Karen, for bringing your passion for helping our citizens to Susquehanna County and Forest City.

Read Across America held at FCRE



Read Across America was held at Forest City Regional Elementary School on Thursday, March 2. It is held every year on this date which is Dr. Seuss's birthday. Readers from the community were first row left to right: Dr. Mike Elia, Brian Kelly, Brian Urbas, Brittany Butler, and Mary Lee Martines. Second row left to right: Dr. Beth Spinelli, Mary Emmett, Dr. Henry Nebzydowski with his granddaughter, Anna, Jennifer Butler, Trudy Butcher, Marie Britton, Leeta Dennebaum. Third row left to right: Maryann Corey, Richard Corey, Brittany Burrell, Donna Keslo, Alyssa Bowen, Bernice Lukus, Ashley Hornbeck. Fourth row left to right: Nicole Case, Brenda Pecko, Brian Fitzsimmons, Jose the Dysfunctional Leprechaun, Kevin Lesjack and Jill Bailer.

