

THE FOREST CITY NEWS



Our Dining Guide took us to the Candlelight Inn, Herrick Center, recently for several tasty, varied dishes. The baby back ribs produced a more than generous portion, with a crispy salad, mac & cheese and excellent bread, all for only \$15.95. Others had an overflowing dish of penne ala vodka, enough to take home, for \$14.99, and also delicious Balsamic Chicken dish with salad and veggie at \$14.95. Of course the meal was high-lighted with table service by Belle Lemoncelli, a Forest City Regional student, who was not only efficient but very personable. It was a rather dismal day outside but friendly and cozy at the Candlelight.

A pat on the back to the Parks & Recreation Committee of Forest City Borough for arranging the Winter Fest at Kennedy Park Saturday. Hope this will be an annual event similar to the many Winter Carnivals held there in the 60s & 70s. The big feature back then was snowmobile rides, a sport which was in its infancy back then. Sadly, liability insurance issues called a halt to snowmobile rides, and the Carnivals were discontinued.

The Rev. Joseph Horanzy, visiting priest for a number of years at the Catholic parishes of St. Joseph's, St. James and St. Juliana's, celebrated his 60th anniversary in the Priesthood last week. Father can be counted on for a brief description of our local weather, and also comments on Penn State football. He resides at Villa St. Joseph for retired priests in Scranton. We wish this spry and energetic Man of God many more happy, healthy anniversaries.

A statistic in the recent Clifford Township Supervisor's meeting article caught our eye. Last year Clifford Fire Company EMS ambulance responded to 615 calls, or almost two a day. Clifford Township is the 2nd largest municipal subdivision in Susq. County. The Township straddles a lengthy section of I-81 which is quite accident prone, resulting in many of their EMS calls. Our citizens owe a debt of gratitude to all EMS responders in our area who are only a 911 call away 24 hours a day.

Forest City Branch Library is a great asset here. We had a visit last week from Librarian Diana Junior and we commented on the many facets of modern libraries including ebooks, cd's, best sellers, computer usage, Wi-Fi access, newspapers and more. We are fortunate we can have our local branch with the cooperation of Forest City Borough Council, Forest City Lions Club and the Susquehanna County Historical and Free Library Assoc. You can read about what is available in our library in the frequent "Library Tidbits" column written by the County Library's publicist Nancy Narma, Oakland Twp.

Hopefully bought the last bag of ice melter I will need this winter at Franceski Lumber. Thought the several hundred pounds I bought in November would last, but it didn't. The local snow plowers, who were mighty slow last winter, are making it up this season.

In our "Looking Back" column, we noted that 10 years ago, in 2009, of the six counties in N. E. PA., Susquehanna County had the lowest per capita income according to the U.S. Census Bureau. The natural gas industry has certainly changed that statistic!

As Spring seems not that



Wayne Memorial Honors Dr. David Tomazic, D.O. With Stethoscope Award



Wayne Memorial Community Health Centers (WMCHC) honored three of its medical providers—two physicians and one board-certified physician assistant—with the 2019 Golden Stethoscope Award. The clinicians were recognized for demonstrating "outstanding leadership, patient satisfaction and loyalty to the health centers, Wayne Memorial Hospital and the community at large" throughout 2018. Shown during WMCHC's annual holiday and awards dinner on February 2nd, are, left to right: William R. Dewar, MD, III, Highland Physician's Family Health Center and chief, Wayne Memorial Hospital Medical Staff; Frederick Jackson, executive director, WMCHC; David Tomazic, DO, McAndrew Family Health Center; Susan Gabrielson, vice chair, WMCHC board. Also receiving an award: Sharon Savakinas, PA-C, Carbondale Family Health Center.



Vandling Mayor Joe Brady, left, is shown congratulating William Matos III, right, on his appointment to Borough Council.

William Matos III is new Vandling Boro Councilman

William Matos III was selected by Vandling Borough Council at the regular meeting on Monday, February 18, to fill the seat of Patrick Sherry who passed away recently. Former Councilman Don Franceski had also sent in a letter of interest for the position.

Matos has resided in Vandling for the past 30 years and is employed as a plumber for Regal Plumbing. He will serve until the 1st Monday in January 2020. If he wants to run for the seat, he will need to file now so that he is on the ballot for the May election.

CORRESPONDENCE

Council received a letter from the Lackawanna River Basin Sewer Authority about the construction of a gravity sanitation sewer line in Vandling which will go the sewer plant in Clinton Twp. It requires a signature from Council. There will be no additional flow and it is not overloaded nor will it be in the next five years.

PA American Water needs to do testing of the backflow assembly at the Borough Building. Council will notify them when is a good time.

The Department of Elections requested the use of the Borough Building for the special election to be held on March 12 to fill the vacancy of the late Sid Michaels Kavulich in the 114th District.

The Lackawanna County Recycling Center sent the Borough a notice regarding contamination in recyclables that are coming into the Center. If it is found that any are coming from Vandling they receive a written warning. Proper preparation of recyclables is needed. The Center offered to come to speak to residents about recycling if the Borough is interested.

Councilman Bill Boyle asked if something could be included in the next newsletter about what can be recycled and how to prepare them.

President Fran Pantzar questioned whether the Vandling recycling actually goes to the Lackawanna County Recycling Center. He said he would find out.

B'DALE FIRE REPORT

Fire Chief Josh Debevec said the department had 19 incidents in January including five structure fires and five accidents.

Debevec later on in the meeting discussed the possibility of either a fire tax or a fee that residents would have to pay to keep the fire company going. He said they need a new fire truck and it is going to cost \$500,000.

Debevec said they have already met with Clinton Township regarding the fire tax. He would hope that Vandling would discuss the necessity of either a tax or a fee. "We can't flip chickens for support and the fund drive doesn't raise enough money. The fire service can't survive on fundraisers. Firemen will probably have to be paid down the road and we need equipment to do that. We have expenses like everyone else," said Debevec.

President Fran Pantzar said Council needs to do some research on what other areas of the state are doing.

Debevec said, "The fire company can't get loans anymore because they need to show proof of income. The state only will give up to \$10,000 and that is only for certain things. In a few years the state and federal funding will be gone."

Solicitor Paul Smith said he would have to look into the tax and fee as well.

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Something for everyone at Winterfest in Forest City



It was a beautiful day on Saturday, February 23 for the Parks and Recreation Winterfest at Kennedy Park. People enjoyed ice skating, a fishing derby, cornhole tournament, basket raffles and delicious food. Seventeen soups were featured and you got to try all of them for \$5 and vote for the best. First place was Seven Seas Soup by The Speakeasy, second place was broccoli cheddar by the Candlelight and third place was southwestern chicken chili by the Christ Episcopal Church. Pictured left to right are Paul Daugevelo, Mayor Chris Glinton, Amy Bean, Tracey Lazier, Kathy Kernoschak, Chris DeGonzague, Deb Giddings, and Nick Cost. In the back is Rick Priebe.

Herrick Twp. Hearing for Cond. Use Permit for Stone Bridge Part 3

Part 3 of the Herrick Twp. hearing regarding the conditional use permit for the Stone Bridge Inn

by Theresa Opeka

Hearing Officer Jack Zelinka said the applicant (Bellino) has the decision to accept the decision of the hearing officer (Zelinka) or just the recommendation of the hearing officer. He said the applicant decided to accept the decision. O'Brien asked when was the request made. Zelinka said prior to the last hearing.

In closing arguments, O'Brien said in reference to Neyhart's inquiries into whether or not Ingram is familiar with the proposed use at the Herrick facility. "Ingram testified that he was not a drug rehab expert but was a real estate expert. However, after nights of testimony, the applicant isn't familiar with it either.

Their water expert said the only way to meet state requirements was to cut off water to the neighbors at the resort. That would be required for 21 beds and to meet staffing levels by state regulations. Their compliance manager said last week there would be 30 beds and security. They won't have enough water. Attorney Zelinka, you don't have enough information. Which is it? The water expert testified for staffing at 21 beds. A week later, there are 30 beds and security. They don't know what they are doing.

The compliance director said they destroy Level 1 Narcotics. This guy didn't come from off the street. Chief Walsh said that it was illegal to do that. What if they get Fentanyl? What if they are exposed to it? There are no safety mechanisms in place. Use your common sense in the conduct of your own personal affairs.

Walsh has 25 years of experience as a trooper. You also have a volunteer captain of EMS that tells us we can't handle this. Who do you call during an emergency? Who do you put your trust in? Chief Walsh or the compliance officer? We aren't pulling it out of them.

Herrick Township Supervisors passed a zoning ordinance. Section 608.4 states there should be no undue burden on utilities and services provided by the township or another agency, specific to emergency and law enforcement. Chief Walsh testimony would be inconsistent with Section 608.4. Also, Dave Maglicane said it would have an impact. Do you call Dave Maglicane if you have an emergency? People of Herrick do. It would impose an undue burden on his volunteer company. Volunteers for 92 square miles. One police car for the county. What if it is your mother? Your brother? You won't have adequate emergency services. There

would be a burden on emergency services based on the testimony of the experts. The applicant couldn't contradict this. They didn't do any studies to say we were wrong.

Ingram testified based on his expertise and did a study. He measured and quantified and prepared a report of the drug treatment center's impact on the resort. Mere speculation? No. He has experience. His report said HE took into account three reports. The Virginia study showed an 8-17% decrease in home values. Treatment for opioids and heroin, even more of a decrease. Opioids and heroin: That's their market. These are their words. Not mine. That is why they are coming here. Would you want a 17% reduction in your property values? Seattle had a 3.4-4.6% reduction. Ingram said in a rural area, you are more likely to see a more dramatic decline. Not speculation. He was the only real estate expert who testified in the case. The applicant didn't hire any. There is no substantive evidence that Ingram is wrong. The Philadelphia study showed an increase in crime. So, we decrease property values and increase crime.

"The compliance director is unaware of certain rules of law that he must adhere to. Is Herrick a high crime area? No. What does the Philadelphia study say? Crime will go up. There is nothing in the record that will contradict it. Ingram also did analysis on the area surrounding Just Believe in Carbondale. The properties values 'went in the tank.' Anybody surprised?"

"Submitted in the record last summer was our Right to Know requests to Carbondale. I asked the compliance director if he had any calls to the facility. He said no, then maybe one. The record shows 85 calls to 100 Lincoln Avenue within the period. The witness could only remember one. Do you want these people running this facility? Are you comfortable if a patient has fentanyl? It would be thrown in the garbage and affects the person handling it. What did he say about emergencies? "We don't plan on having them." How about security officers? "Hopefully they have experience in security."

"What did Ingram also say specific to my client, who has paid with their own money and resources, like Catherine and Bud Meredith and Michael Peregrin? Their property values will go down. There is a 25% price reduction on similar priced units. Neyhart mentioned damage to the pool house. That's not what caused it (price reduction) and there is no testimony. Ross hasn't provided any real estate analysis. The only evidence in the record was provided by Ingram."

"The supervisors in their wisdom drafted Section 608.3: 'It shouldn't have undue effect on adjacent property or neighborhood.' Do you think using your own common sense after Ingram's testimony that the plan is consistent with Section 608.3? No. Property values will go down and crime will go up. 'I have a bridge to sell you.'

"In summary, the applicant's case, separate and apart from the objectors is different. For conditional use, you have to demonstrate specific use outlined in the zoning ordinance. Compliance with state and federal laws. That is why we are here. The application is still deficient. How many bes, security officers? There are staffing issues. Enough water? The water expert said water would be cut off (to Endless Mountains Resort). A week later, there are now 30 beds and round the clock security. The application is deficient and doesn't meet the criteria in the zoning ordinance."

"The proposed use is deficient for Section 608. It has to comply with the zoning ordinance with conditional use. The record is inconsistent with the proposed use with Section 608.3. Crime will go up, property values will go down. There will be an adverse effect on the neighborhood. Also, there must be no undue burden on the township resources provided by the township or otherwise for emergency services, etc. You don't think 25 years experience with the state police and a volunteer with EMS matters? The proposed use is inconsistent with Section 608 of the ordinance. We want this voted down. It is in the best interest of the residents. The supervisors have a right to put specifics on the conditions on the conditional use permit."

Part 4 and final testimony will be in next week's edition.

GFCBA Spring Mixer set for Thurs., March 7

The Cornerstone Bible Church will be the setting for the GFCBA Spring Mixer set for Thursday, March 7 from 6 PM to 8 PM. Pastor Tim Madden hopes that everyone will come out to this event and you don't have to be a member of the GFCBA in order to come. It is open to the public! There will be food, music, prizes, games and speakers. Speakers will include Dr. Mary Surridge, Alpha Chi Rho; Pastor Tim Madden, Cornerstone Bible Church; and GFCBA President Erin Debish. RSVP is by February 28 and can be emailed to Kelley Statkun at skstat@nep.net.