

LETTERS TO EDITOR

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Dear Editor:
Thank you very much. We really enjoy the paper.
Regards,
Marian and Kevin Knapp

LETTER TO EDITOR

Dear Editor:
Greetings from Vero Beach and Key West. Sorry to miss Ararat's beautiful weather. It got all the way down to 76 degrees here one night. See you when the snow is GONE.
Regards to All
Ivan Burman
Gelatt

LETTER TO EDITOR

Dear Editor:
Enclosed is my check for another year. I enjoy reading about the community events and especially the "Odds 'n Ends" column. Keep up the good work.
Anna Zdanis
Rockville, MD

B'dale Fire Co. Chicken BBQ Sun., April 7

The Browndale Fire Company will conduct its annual Spring Chicken BBQ on Sunday, April 7, 2019 at the Browndale Fire Station located on Route 247, 620 Marion Street, Browndale.

The menu includes half a Chicken, Baked Potato, Browndale 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. Proceeds from the BBQ to benefit Browndale Fire Company.

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FCR Mask & Hammer to present "The Wizard of Oz"



The Forest City Regional Mask and Hammer Drama Club will be performing the musical "The Wizard of Oz" this spring! In the play, Dorothy Gale of Kansas is swept away from her family farm by a tornado and finds herself in the magical land of Oz. But the Wicked Witch of the West and her minions of Winkies and Flying Monkeys want Dorothy and her dog Toto gone! With the help of Glinda the Good Witch, the Munchkins, and her new friends Scarecrow, Tinman, and Lion, Dorothy learns that no matter what, "There's no place like home!" Performances will take place on Friday, March 29th at 7:00 pm, Saturday, March 30th at 7:00 pm, and Sunday, March 31st at 3:00 pm. Tickets are \$6 for adults, \$3 for students and senior citizens, and free for children ages 3 and under. Pictured above, the Wicked Witch of the West (Jessica Notari) is surrounded by her minions of Flying Monkeys (Austin Grosel, Sydney Hodges, Maiya Rizner, Phillip Hodges, Sage Bilko) and Winkies (Olivia Casper, Hailey Gray, Lila Ingenito, Hannah Perry.) Absent from photo is Emma Jo Burrasca.

Long discussion on Fire Tax for Clinton Twp.; Still no decision

by Theresa Opeka
Discussion of a proposed fire tax dominated the Wednesday, March 13 meeting of the Clinton Township Supervisors.

Mark Lopatofsky started off the discussion of whether the township would institute a fire tax to be collected for the Browndale Fire Company by saying, "We don't need another tax. Doesn't the township give to the fire company?"

Supervisor/Road Master Brian Non said, "No, only the Foreign Fire Relief funds." Lopatofsky said, "My mother-in-law passed away waiting 30 minutes, I am going to wait."

Browndale Fire Chief Josh Debevec replied, "ALS (Advanced Life Support) would be dispatched. The county is working on it. ALS is terrible in the county." Lopatofsky said, "You guys do a wonderful job but how many taxes do we need? We got a wage tax. I donate to Prompton. We are taxed to death."

Don Salak said, "Can you put the per capita back on?" Supervisor Ken Coles replied, "Don't know."

Solicitor Jeff Treat said, "If

you are going to do a tax, the fire tax goes to them (Browndale)." Coles said, "We were asked to put on a flat rate fire tax and we couldn't."

Debevec said 14% of the township's residents donate. Matt Curtis asked if there is a legal precedence on the township. Treat said the township has to pay the fire company's Workers Comp. Coles said, "Your question if we have to have a fire company in the township? No, we don't." Curtis said, "The law says may support the fire company, not have to."

It was asked if the township audit had the correct figure of \$351,048 for the ending balance for 2018. The supervisors said yes. It was asked since there was that much money in the general fund, why is there a need for a fire tax. Coles said much of the money is needed for roads. Non said, "There is \$416,000 in it now. Bids from blackout will bring it down to nothing."

It was also mentioned the township received \$160,074 in liquid fuels money, which is used for roads. Coles said they will use between \$300,000-\$400,000 and will look to borrow another \$500,000. He also said money from the windmills is running out. Curtis said, "You put a wage tax in last year. If the fire company needs help, there are going to be strings attached." Treat said, "The township has no legal responsibility to help fire company except Workers Comp. If they want to take money from the general fund and donate, okay. But, the main concern is keeping up the roadways, trucks, etc. So, you are back to square one. Money is going to disappear quickly."

Lopatofsky said, "You doubled the budget in the last two years." Salak said, "You have money from the windmills and the wage tax. Can't you take money out from the windmills to donate?" Lopatofsky said, "You have senior citizens who get \$12,000 a year. We are over-taxed." Coles replied, "That is why we are having this meeting."

Jeff Weinberger said, "You need the money for the tax but taxes don't go away. It will never go away. What are you going to do in three years?"

Debevec said, "Our budget is above \$60,000. With relief, we spend \$80,000 a year. We aren't going to stop fundraising. Let's make a fire board. I pay tax too."

A man in the audience said the fire company is going to need to consolidate. He said they spent \$500,000 on the building and that it is never going to end. He said he donates and donating is different than a tax. The tax will never go away. He also said he has a storm water tax and a light tax.

Coles said, "We contacted the sewer authority. The amount was given by the government. Every three years, we pay the permit fee of \$5,000. If we don't, we get fined \$15,000. We clean the storm drains. We put your tax on hold. We have money put away. You won't see it on your taxes. In 2010, the census said Browndale was barely over the density."

A woman in the audience asked why isn't the \$10,000 cost of the generator assessed on Clinton I. Coles said, "It is for the good of the community. We only have one building." He went on to say, "It cost \$300,000-\$400,000 to pave a mile of road. It would cost \$15 million to pave 27 miles. There is also dust control."

Curtis said, "The township has been here for a long

time without being paved. If we take care of the dirt roads, they will last a long time."

Coles said, "The township has changed a lot. You will always be chasing your tail." Non said they used three loads of cinders and salt this past winter. Coles said they use it sparingly.

Joe Franceski said the township isn't responsible to have a fire company. Debevec said, "The township is responsible for having coverage from a fire company. Franceski said, "Unless Browndale grows a lot, what are the implications if the Browndale Fire Company isn't there?" Debevec said, "I guarantee it will be a county fire company. The county will have to take it over. The township doesn't have money. It cost money for training. Twenty years down the road, the county has to take over." Franceski said, "There are a lack of volunteers and if you are going to have paid 'volunteers', where is the money going to come from?"

A man in the audience said it makes sense to have a regional force and consolidate. He said the fire company spent \$500,000 on the building and \$500,000 on the truck. He asked Debevec how many house fires they went to in the past year. Debevec replied, "About 13 in the last week, 3 in Clinton."

A woman asked how much would the tax be. Debevec said, "\$36 for the year on average, depending on the size of the property."

Another woman in the audience asked Debevec if they need the money because of how they drive vehicles. She said it makes her disgusted how they drive their trucks. She said they lay on the siren and asked why it is the residents responsibility to replace their equipment when a pager goes off for a fire, more people show up than for an ambulance.

Another woman said about 15 years ago, the fire company took pictures of her father in an accident. She said she asked them to stop. She said she was told they needed to do it for training. She also made a comment about how fast they drive past her and others along the road when they don't need to go to parades.

Ray Vogt asked, "Can we look a little more at a per capita tax? Everyone should have to pay. No one should skate on this."

Ron Poska said, "If you don't put it (fire tax) on, look into the per capita tax. Put \$15 on everyone. Coles said the township has about 2,000 residents."

Curtis said, "Consolidation is what is ultimately going to have to take place." Coles said, "I personally don't know what to do. We are in a tough spot." Non said, "The last meeting we had, people wanted it. Tonight, a room full of people, said no. We don't have to vote on it tonight." Coles said, "I asked Josh for the books for the last three years. I got them. He has been transparent."

Supervisor Russ Curtis said, "I think the fire company and Forest City Ambulance do a good job. We already lost another ambulance (Waymart). We should stand by our fire company and ambulance. Forest City Fire Company, Prompton and Waymart do a good job." Coles said, "If everyone donated \$20 or \$30, we wouldn't have this conversation." Debevec said even \$15 would help.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 10 at 7pm.

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Pleasant Mount News

By Theresa Opeka
570-679-2065 bu7294@gmail.com

Happy Birthday to: Marisa Mead, Mary Ann McCusker, Linda O'Brien Donna Dovin, David McMullen, Jim Griffin, Lily Eltz, Kaylee DeHaven, Tyler Butler, Luke Megivern, Brian Weist, Terry Joseph, James Swegel, Christa Hicks, Betty Skoski, Mike O'Brien, Sean McGraw, Madeline Schupper, Lewis Lee, Fran May, and Amelia Franceski.

Happy Anniversary to: John and Erica Walker

Orders are now being taken for the final Pierogie sale of the season for St. Katharine Drexel Parish, Wednesday, March 27 and Thursday, March 28. Pre-orders are sold for \$6 per dozen and additional pierogi for \$7. Order sheets are in the back of the church or call Barbara at 570-727-8385 or Jean 570-448-9181.

Saw my first robins of the season last Friday when we had a warm 60 degree day. It was so nice to see them, letting us know spring is on its way. Also, saw the birth of April the Giraffe's second son with Oliver the Giraffe at Animal Adventure Park, Harpursville, NY on Saturday, March 16. April likes having babies on a Saturday. Tajiri was born 2 years ago

on Easter Saturday. What do you think, Patrick for the baby's name? After all, he was born a day before St. Patrick's Day!

Gazebo price Has changed

Council approved a new price for replacing the Gazebo at Kennedy Park. Joseph Franceski, of Franceski Lumber Yard, told Council March 4th that the bid Council accepted from Franceski's in February was given to Council last year and was only in effect until Nov. 30th.

He said the price from a supplier had increased from \$9,146 to \$9,836. Council said it was not necessary to rebid since Council does not need bidding for projects under \$11,500.

The new Gazebo is to replace the 30-year-old structure which has deteriorated.

Mr. Franceski said the new structure will be constructed on site and will be placed on a foundation which the Borough will have installed.

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Three Locals Receive Promotions in Chinese Kempo



Three Forest City Residents recently received first promotions in the martial art of Chinese Kempo at Tiger Kai Karate of the Spectrum Gym, Blakely. Alycia Chen was promoted to 2nd degree white belt, while her brother Adan Hyung and Sophia Greenleaf both received first degrees.

Pictured above L to R are: Front row: Sophia, Adan, Sampai Johnny Gurdock and Junior Sampai Michael Pilch. 2nd row: Head Instructor Soke Grandmaster 10th Dan Paul Hickey, Alycia and new orange belt Nicky Fisher of Carbondale.

Large gas tanks removed from Hornbeck Chevrolet



A large crane and excavating equipment were used to remove the gasoline tanks from Hornbeck Chevrolet on Main Street in Forest City last week. It took a few days to complete the project.

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