



# THE JOURNAL-HERALD

THURSDAY, JULY 30, 2020 • Volume 41 – No. 1

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(USPS 277440)

CONTINUING: *THE WHITE HAVEN JOURNAL*  
ESTABLISHED 1879–141<sup>st</sup> YEAR, NO. 35

CONTINUING: *THE WEATHERLY HERALD*  
ESTABLISHED 1880–141<sup>st</sup> YEAR, NO. 9

## Weatherly Borough plans street sweeping next week

Street Sweeping will begin at 7 a.m. on the following days in Weatherly:

### Monday, August 3

North Street  
Norman Street  
Allen Street  
Louise Street

East Main Street (start)  
Evergreen Avenue  
Buttonwood Street  
Laurel Street  
Fern Alley (behind First St.)  
Chestnut Alley (behind Schwab school)  
Pine Alley (btwn. East Main

St. & Hill St.)  
**Tuesday, August 4**  
First Street  
Second Street  
East Second Street  
Third Street  
East Third Street

See **STREETS**, page 10



**FIX ME?** Penn Lake Park's dam, at right, and outlet, above, are in need of an upgrade. The Pennsylvania DEP's Dam Safety Division has determined that it is time for this dam to be made safer. The state's approach is either improve it so the dam and its outlets can handle big storm events without failing, or remove it. Given that the Lake defines the Borough, the plan is to do improvements, and the challenge is how to pay for them, borrowing for up to 40 years. Engineering details are still to be worked out. Penn Lake Borough council and volunteers have started the work to get everyone with property at Penn Lake informed as to what needs to be done, and the options, including how the work is to be paid for. *JH: Ruth Isenberg*



## Dam not only business for Penn Lake council

by **Seth Isenberg**

While the subject of repairing the dam dominated Penn Lake Park Borough's July meeting, borough council also conducted their regular that night.

The borough has ordered some 30 MPH speed signs to post on Hollenback Road. Those signs should have been put up in mid-July. Speed

lines have been painted on the road to help with enforcement.

Road repairs were to be underway by this writing. Costs for the repairs will be paid from the State Liquid Fuels fund.

See **PENN LAKE**, page 6



## THE JOURNAL-HERALD

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Ruth Isenberg, Editor

Steve Stallone, Sports Editor

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# From the Archives

**From  
The Weatherly Herald,  
Thursday, July 30, 1970  
James Faust and  
Cletus Milan, Publishers**

Carbon County Commissioner Bud Angst announced that he will attend a briefing in Philadelphia on August 1 on a plan to package metropolitan garbage to be buried upstate—in local abandoned strippings. The Reading Railroad is named by Angst as the prime mover of the idea.

The Lehigh and Lausanne Sportsmen's Club is restoring cemeteries in Weatherly RD 2 which have been desecrated by vandals. At the St. Joseph's Catholic Cemetery in Laurytown, club members have repaired the damaged fence, and fixed knocked over tombstones.

A front page photo shows Chief Warrant Officer Nicholas Lazo receiving a Meritorious Service Medal for the outstanding manner in which he has performed his duties in 1969 and 1970.

A broken water gauge caused the Weatherly Fashions building in RD1 to fill with steam on Friday. Citizens Fire Company responded and found the broken gauge on the furnace, then turned the unit off to end the emergency.

A new company, Genard Corp., is looking to move into the former Linotype Parts building on Hudsonale Street, to establish a sewing plant.

William VanDyke of Weatherly was re-elected president of the Carbon County Tourist Promotion Agency.

**From the Sidelines,  
by Don Garber**

Weatherly Little League members attended a Reading Phillies game and got to meet the manager and some of the players of the Phillies, and of the Pittsfield Senators.

Garber added his voice to fishermen who are objecting to the periodic release of water from the Francis Walter Dam to accommodate canoeists who ride the rapids from White Haven to Jim Thorpe and Lehigh. Objectors are sometimes left stranded on an island in the middle of the river. Fishermen note that fish and fish eggs get washed downstream. There are form letters to be sent to congressmen.

Penn State University is offering a course to train prospective farriers in the fundamentals of shoeing horses. It is a two week program, one week of lectures and the second in practice, shoeing real horses. There are students from five states and Canada (including one woman).

The Wagner Electric squad is in first place of the Little League with a 2-0 record.

The Babe Ruth team will have played their playoff game last night versus the CVCO. If they won, they would play the West Hazleton Booster Club team for the second half flag.

John Timko will represent the Weatherly Babe Ruth 13 year-old team in the tournament, to be held in Lansford on Saturday, as part of the Valley team.

*In memory of Garber, who passed away this past October.*

The Weatherly Little League All-Stars team took on McAdoo on their field on Thursday in their first game of the tour-

namment. They "were subjected to a 16 hit, 14 run barrage" with the winning pitcher striking out 11 Weatherly batters.

**From The Journal-Herald  
August 2, 1990  
Clara and Jay Holder,  
Publishers**

Front page photos for this issue were of the championship teams for the 1990 Weatherly Area Girls Basketball Camp—20 girls from grades 3 through 8; and of two White Haven area honor students, Philip Engman and William Henning, as Delegate and Alternate for the Odd Fellows Annual United Nations Pilgrimage for Youth, and sponsored by White Haven Lodge 457 of the I.O.O.F.

Dennison Township resident Tim George was given permission by supervisors to hook his property into the White Haven sewage system, as his septic system had failed. George urged supervisors to "take advantage of the proposal by the White Haven Municipal Authority for the Middleburg area to hook into White Haven's system, if feasible."

The Weatherly Rotary Club sent Lisa Adams and Jan Truver to the 1990 Leadership Camp at College Misericordia, and Tom Bachart to the boys Leadership Camp at Keystone Junior College. On the schedule is a visit from an exchange student from South Africa on the 1st, then August 3, 4 and 5 running a funnel cake stand at the Gnaden Huetten Hospital Festival in Lehigh. In September, the club will have their funnel cake stand at the Carbon County Fair.

See ARCHIVES, page 6

## Editorial

# Saving the dam worth the cost

by Seth Isenberg

The quality of life that makes Penn Lake Park Borough so special starts with the fact that it's a lake community. The reality in much of our area's lake communities is that they're on lakes with dams.

Dams need periodic maintenance, which brings us to now, when the state's department of dam safety has decided that it's time for a tune-up.

These things are expensive, because the earthen rock dams of a hundred years ago need to be brought to 21st Century standards. Weather is fickle enough that a line of thunderstorms could dump a huge amount of water, and the state wants to make sure the dam can handle a worse-case event. Bottom line—this is going to cost a whole lot of money.

The community came together to afford the big project which is the sanitary sewer system almost 20 years ago. Here we are with something perhaps even more important. This will be difficult, but it will be worthwhile. Done right, the dam will stand another hundred years, keeping the lake for this generation and many more to enjoy.



# Public Notices

## PUBLIC NOTICE

White Haven Borough Planning Commission will meet August 4 at 6 p.m. at the borough building, 312 Main Street, to hear a petition from Sheila Weaver and review her development plans.

**Linda Szoke**  
Borough Manager

## LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that Letters of Administration have been issued in the Estate of Jeffrey J. Dolinsky a/k/a Jeffrey Dolinsky a/k/a Jeff Dolinsky, late of 129 Maple Lane, Weatherly, Lausanne Township, Pennsylvania who died on the 14th day of April, 2020 by the Register of Wills of Carbon County to Co-Administrators, Amber Dolinsky, of 86 N. Stagecoach Road, Weatherly, PA 18255 and Devon Dolinsky, of 129 Maple Lane, Weatherly, PA 18255. All persons indebted to said estate are requested to make payment, and those having claims to present the same without delay to:

**Daniel A. Miscavige, Esquire**  
**Gillespie, Miscavige**  
**& Ferdinand, LLC**  
67 North Church Street  
Hazleton PA 18201

7/30

## PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the August 2020 meeting of East Side Borough Council will be held on Thursday, August 6, 2020 at 6:00 P.M. in the Centre Street Playground which is located adjacent to the municipal building. For those attending, because of the coronavirus please bring a lawn chair to sit on for your own personal safety.

**Carol Ann Lenahan, Secretary**  
East Side Borough

## LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Letters Testamentary have been granted to Philip Engman, Esq. of Wellington, Florida in the Estate of PHILIP DAVID ENGMAN, A/K/A PHILIP ENGMAN, late of White Haven, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania who died on June 24, 2020. All persons indebted to said Estate are requested to make payment and those having claims or demands to present the same without delay to the Executor named:

**PHILIP ENGMAN, ESQ.**  
9134 DUPONT PLACE  
WELLINGTON, FL 33414

8/13

## NOTICE OF HEARING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Planning Commission of Lehigh Township will hold a hearing at the Lehigh Twp. Municipal Building, 1741 South Lehigh Gorge Drive, Weatherly, Carbon County, PA, on Thursday, August 13, 2020, at 7:00 p.m., prevailing time, for the purpose of hearing the following matters:

A Minor Subdivision Application for Robert G. Richeson and Lori L. Faust to subdivide Parcel No. 92-27-A6 into two lots, located at 53 South Lehigh Gorge Drive, Weatherly, Carbon County, PA.

A Reverse Subdivision Application for Thomas W. Morelli, Jr. to combine Parcel No's. 92-27-A58.03 and 92-27-A49, located at 169 Indian Run Road, Lehigh Township, Carbon County, PA.

All persons are welcome to attend and be heard. If you are a person with a disability and wish to attend this hearing, and require an auxiliary aid, service, or other accommodation to participate in the proceedings, please contact Christine Hoffman, Board Secretary at (570) 371-8552 to discuss how Lehigh Township may best accommodate your needs.

**Cynthia S. Yurchak, Esquire**  
Solicitor, Lehigh Township  
Planning Commission  
121 Carbon Street, POB 49  
Weatherly, PA 18255

8/6

# Lots of road work reported in Dennison

by Seth Isenberg

Dennison Township supervisors' July meeting on the 1st was short. Supervisors went right into reports:

Jack Varaly sent his report that three zoning permits were issued, for a fence, a carport and an addition. The police report had not arrived for the meeting, but there was mention of an auto accident in the township.

The Planning Commission met on July 20 to go over some new language for the curative amendment to the township's zoning ordinances. The new rules will get another look at the regular township meeting on August 5.

Jim Yackiel, in his roads report, listed that he did some clean-off of roads after the "big rain," and clean out of storm drains. Red Shale Pit Road got some grading along the sides, and a ditch clean-out to improve water flow. He also graded along Ice Lake Road. Branches that are growing into the road have been cut. A STOP sign whose post was bent over

was repaired. The lawn was cut, and more seeding done in front of the municipal building.

He also reported that the recycling containers are filling up, and being emptied regularly.

Bill Bauersfeld of the Dennison Twp. Volunteer Fire Co. reported 8 calls in June, with 13.5 hours of service. There was one dwelling fire, three vehicle accidents — one with extrication, two trees down, an EMS assist and a water rescue from a stream in Penn Lake. Five of the calls were in Dennison, one each in Penn Lake, Foster and Wright Townships.

Bills totaling \$8,963 were approved, with \$2,252 to White Haven for police coverage, \$1,500 and \$500 for Varaly, \$782 for the EFT payment, \$638 to County Waste, and \$278 to PA Revenue for taxes; 8 smaller bills.; and \$2,370 for payroll.

Treasurer Stevie Stortz' report showed a balance of \$57,784 in the General Fund after income of \$13,411 — (\$7,960 in EIT, \$3,000 in sewer revenue, \$2,037 in local taxes, plus fines and fees). Expenses were \$14,096.

The meeting was attended by supervisors Mike Mack and Sheila Weaver, secretary/treasurer Stortz, roadmaster Yackiel, Bauersfeld and this reporter. Dennison's next meeting is at 6 p.m. on August 5, in person, socially distanced at the township building on Walnut Street in Middleburg, White Haven.



**Atty. Cindy Yurchak**

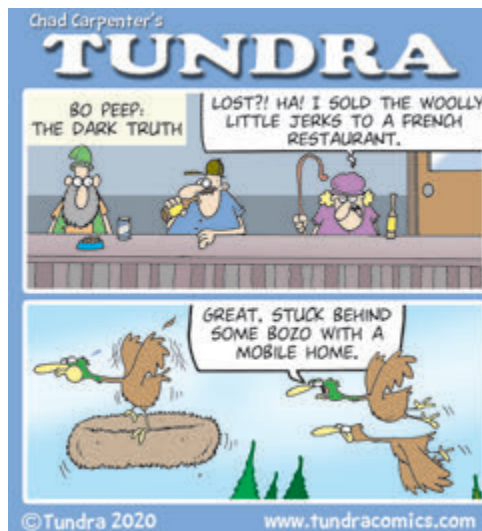
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# Death Roll

## NICHOLAS TARAS PAWLUK

December 1, 1946 – July 22, 2020

Nicholas Taras Pawluk was born in Germany and immigrated to the United States with his parents and his twin brothers after WW II. His family settled in the Ukrainian community in Chicago IL. Nick entered the Army shortly after high school. He first served in Korea, and during his tour of duty at Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville AL in 1972, Nick met and married Beth Hano (granddaughter of Joseph and Lucille Burke of White Haven.) The couple was married for 47 years. The military provided their European honeymoon of four years, after which he served at Redstone

and Fort Huachuca, AZ.

Nick retired from the Army after 21 years' service to his country, attaining the rank of Sergeant First Class. Afterwards he worked at Calhoun Community College for 20 years. In civilian life Nick promoted his Ukrainian cultural heritage though educational classes and displays, as well as teaching the art of Ukrainian egg decoration. Nick represented Ukraine at the Mobile International Fest, the Burritt Museum, the UAH International Fest and Learning Quest for many years. Nick enjoyed several trips to Ukraine and Belarus to visit relatives; he last visited in October 2019.

Nick passed peacefully with his Beth by his bedside. He is survived by his wife, family in Illinois and Wisconsin, and friends all over the world. A private funeral will be conducted at St. Thomas Episcopal Church in Huntsville. In lieu of flowers, donations may be sent to St. Thomas. ([www.laughlin-service.com](http://www.laughlin-service.com)).

## CHRISTIAN MERCADANTE

Christian Joseph Michael Mercadante, 22, of Mountain Top, passed away on Saturday, July 18, 2020 in Geisinger Wyoming Valley Medical Center,



as the result of a motorcycle accident.

Born in Hazleton, he was the son of Joseph and Kelly Karpowich Mercadante and graduated from Crestwood High School, Class of 2016. He was serving his country proudly in the United States Marines and enjoyed hunting, fishing, riding his motorcycle and his quad.

He was preceded in death, in addition to grandparents, by his infant sister, Kayla Mercadante and brother, Shawn Camm.

Left to cherish Christian's memory, in addition to his loving parents, are his brother, Mark (Stephanie) Mercadante of Ha-

nover Township; sister, Caitlyn Callahan of Ashley; twin sister, Christina Mercadante, Mountain Top; sister, JennaRae of Mountain Top; brother, Anthony Mercadante of Mountain Top; maternal grandmother, Constance Karpowich; nieces and nephews, Alex, Alexis and Grayson Raczkowski and Jeovanna Jo Mercadante. He is also survived by aunts, uncles and cousins.

Funeral service were conducted July 25, from the Desiderio-Lehman Funeral and Cremation, 436 S. Mountain Blvd. Mountain Top.

Interment followed with Military Honors in St. Mary's Cemetery, Hanover Township.

Visit the funeral home website at [www.DesiderioFuneralHome.com](http://www.DesiderioFuneralHome.com) for additional information.

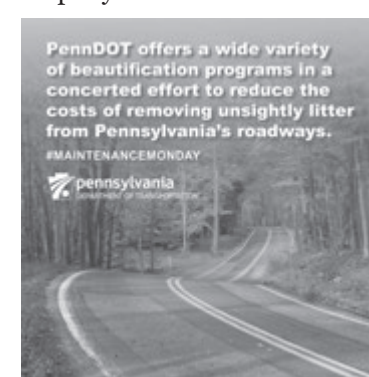
## SCAM ALERT Granparent Scam: COVID

Since the start of the coronavirus pandemic, scam attempts have skyrocketed across the country. While the volume has increased, the types of crimes have largely remained the same, albeit with a COVID-19 twist. One of the most prevalent scams right now is the "grandparent scam" where an impostor claims to be a grandchild in urgent need of financial help because they are sick with the coronavirus.

According to the FBI, victims in New Jersey and New York alone have lost \$1 million to the grandparent scam in recent months. If you get a call from a grandchild or someone claiming to be with your grandchild in urgent need, hang up and call your grandchild on a known number, or another relative who would know their whereabouts. Then report the scam to authorities at [ftc.gov/complaint](http://ftc.gov/complaint).

Be a fraud fighter! If you can spot a scam, you can stop a scam.

Visit the AARP Fraud Watch Network at [www.aarp.org/fraudwatchnetwork](http://www.aarp.org/fraudwatchnetwork) or call the AARP Fraud Watch Network Helpline at 1-877-908-3360 to report a scam or get help if you've fallen victim.




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**JOHN  
A.  
DIAS**



We cannot see you with our eyes  
Or hear you with our ears,  
But thoughts of you are with us  
Still and often dry our tears.  
You whisper in the rustling leaves,  
That linger in the fall,  
And in the gentle evening breeze  
We're sure we hear you call.  
A part of you remains with us  
That none can take away  
It gives us strength to carry on  
At the dawning of a new day.  
We think of happy times we shared  
And then we softly sigh  
But this we know we'll meet again  
And never say goodbye.

**Love, Your Family**



# Mullery bill included in House Democratic package to provide relief to restaurant, bar and club workers

A bill introduced by state Rep. Gerald Mullery has been included in a legislative package announced by House Democrats to provide relief to owners and workers of Pennsylvania restaurants, bars and clubs impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

“The food service industry is among one of the hardest hit industries in Pennsylvania due to COVID-19,” Mullery said. “These hardworking business owners and their staff lost wages and profits through no fault of their own and they need assistance now. We need to do everything we can to ensure their businesses survive this pandemic.”

Mullery’s bill would waive the liquor license renewal fee for any bar, restaurant or club that suffered more than a 25%

downturn in business due to the virus. The other bills in the package include:

- Earmarking CARES grant funding from the federal government to be directed to small, community restaurants instead of national chains to ensure those dollars are invested back into the region.
- Earmarking CARES grant funding from the federal government for Pennsylvania breweries, distilleries and wineries forced to reduce capacity to protect patrons. Most of these businesses are small and family-operated and help support multiple community efforts, and this funding will help keep them in operation.
- Expanding access to outdoor dining for restaurants and diners, including re-

moving limitations concerning public thoroughfares, fees and delays in approval. Scientific evidence is growing that outdoor activity is a much lower risk than indoor dining, and helping restaurants add space outdoors can help them stay open while giving people an opportunity to get out and enjoy themselves.

- Increasing the discount for restaurants and bars holding liquor licenses when they purchase wholesale alcohol from 10% to 15%, putting more money back in the pockets of operators to keep their doors open and staff employed.
- Eliminating the \$500 off-premise catering permit fee to allow more restaurants to safely cook food in

kitchens and deliver it to safe outdoor locations, as well as remove the March deadline to submit an application to do off-premise catering, and end the 52-event-per-year cap.

- Eliminating sales tax late payment penalties on restaurants and bars purchasing alcohol from wholesalers and allowing for a repayment grace period when the industry has recovered.
- Requiring business insurance policies to pay damages and benefits when a disaster emergency is declared. An insurance policy that doesn’t pay the holder when emergencies arise is worse than no coverage at all — it is money that could have been used to reinvest in the business thrown

away. When the pandemic hit, many policies invoked an “Act of God” loophole to not pay damages, and businesses have suffered.

- Allowing license holders with licenses in safekeeping relief from paying the license renewal or validation fee for one year. Just a few months ago, many of these businesses were making renovations and improvements that would have put them in a position to remove their license from safekeeping and start operating — the virus delay shouldn’t stop these entrepreneurs from reinvesting in their communities.

Mullery said quick action is needed on the bills to help mitigate the financial burdens faced by these small businesses.

## Veterans Corner

Commentary by John Kearns, USCG Ret., [chiefk@pa.metrocast.net](mailto:chiefk@pa.metrocast.net)

### Mud Ducks and Puddle Pirates

By 1778, things looked bad for the new nation seeking to be free of the tyrannical rule of Great Britain. Washington’s army was struggling to continue the fight without food, materials, or ammunition. The US Navy consisted of converted merchant ships and were hopelessly outgunned by the British fleets that blockaded all American ports. The well-equipped British had a chain of supply provided by a fleet of merchant ships anchored out of gun range offshore, using “Longboats,” to bring the supplies ashore to their army as needed.

Sitting in the pubs and taverns were the angry and frustrated American merchant sailors and fishermen who, because of the British blockade, had no work and no pay. Fed up, they decided to act. Using the smaller fishing boats called Cutters, which were small, but fast - designed to “Cut through the seas,” they waited in the early morning fog for the British supply boats heading to shore to offload, then attacked. The lightly armed longboats were easily overtaken and the supplies transferred to the cutters and given to Washington’s army.

Hearing of the success, the

call went out via the taverns for merchant sailors and fishermen to take up arms to help supply Washington’s army.

The British started sending armed patrols to protect the supply-carrying longboats and declared any attacks on British supply boats was piracy punishable by hanging, so the American pirates, as they were known, changed tactics. These armed escorts with soldiers and a small cannon, were larger and drafted much deeper in the water than the longboats or the cutters.

At night, the British rowed the longboats at times 2 to 3 miles to shore, were guided by a bonfire on shore. The Americans overwhelmed the British onshore and extinguished

their bonfire, then built another a mile down the coast, luring the longboats into tidal pools and shallow water while the trailing armed escort ran aground. This left the shallow draft cutters to loot the British supplies while the escort was stuck on the rocky reefs.

These American pirates played a valuable role keeping our Army supplied. These unsung heroes faded away by war’s end in 1781.

The British blockaded American merchant ships several years later, abducting American sailors forcing service in the British fleet. These ships offloaded offshore to avoid paying revenues on cargo to our new nation. The United States needed the reve-

nue, so Alexander Hamilton, then secretary of the treasury, again called upon these “Pub Pirates” to collect revenues, seize cargos and assist American sailors at sea from ships damaged by the British. They became so successful that on August 4th, 1790, Congress authorized them into service as the United States Revenue Cutter Service, the birth of the United States Coast Guard. Called many things over the years from the shallow water beginning: “Mud Ducks, Shallow Water Sailors, Puddle Pirates” and so on, the U.S. Coast Guard rose from a humble beginning to a world-renowned maritime service serving the United States worldwide.

# Packer Township looks at changes to zoning and land use

by Seth Isenberg

Packer Township supervisors held a Zoom meeting on July 7 from the municipal building.

In reports, permit/ zoning shows one building permit inspection, and one violation notice.

The Planning Commission met on June 29 and went over the update of the township's zoning, subdivision and land development ordinances. The

changes will be advertised, and a public hearing is scheduled for August 10 starting at 7.

Supervisors extended the declaration of disaster emergency for another 60 days.

The water drainage issue on a Sand Spring Road property is getting another look. The township is talking with landowners, seeking cooperation.

The pipes replacement and road paving project on Wetzel Run Drive is underway, with

weather delaying completion.

Supervisors will buy a Stihl 12.5' pole saw and power unit from J.C. Small Engine, and buy the adaptors for a brush cutter and string trimmer.

The new sound system was to arrive mid-month according to secretary Stephanie Stolpe. Supervisor Terry Davis offered to help Stolpe in setting it up. It was also decided to buy up to five new desk-sized tables for the meeting room, "to facilitate

social distancing." Stolpe is also working with Verizon on a telephone problem on the township's number.

Supervisors were unanimous in welcoming Beaver Meadows as a member in the UCC Joint Board of Appeals.

Income was \$6,850, including \$4,224 in taxes and \$1,455 in sewage and building permits.

Bills of \$10,773 were approved from June. The big items are \$3,710 to Barber Ford for repairs \$1,392 for

tools repair, \$1,358 for fire protection from Citizens Fire Co., \$782 for attorney Robert Yurchak for legal services, \$740 for SEO Bill Brior's work, \$574 for Barry Isett planning and zoning work, \$509 for Carbon Engineering for Wetzel Run and Round Head roads work, plus 12 smaller items.

The meeting wrapped up in 12 minutes.

Packer supervisors meet next on Tuesday, August 4, at 6 p.m. via Zoom.

## Penn Lake

Continued from page 1

Council agreed to buy another six grinder pumps, at a cost not to exceed \$13,000, at PA Co-Star prices. A discussion of this led to a plan to get quotes from at least three suppliers of the pumps, then buy at the lowest cost.

Nature Works, with their air boat, will be through to spray the lake weeds. Cost is a maximum of \$3,700.

Mayor Deb Krysicki gave

the police report, listing 27.25 hours of work including responses to a vehicle accident, an identity theft, a domestic, a disorderly conduct, a report of a stolen boat, a traffic ticket, and a water rescue.

Council member Shaun Kuter reported that there are still a few geese hanging around.

Council member Jill Rosenstock reported that there is no news yet on the recreation grant, but her hopes are that bids can be done for August, and the work can start by October. She reported that mayor Krysicki had supplied

spray disinfectant for the playground.

Krysicki reported that wrist bands are in effect for the beach, and seem to be helping.

There was one right-to-know request, a complaint about trash (property owner notified), a complaint about high grass, and one about concrete trucks.

Seth Isenberg (this writer) of CANWIN was authorized to prepare a mailing to Penn Lake property owners about the upcoming electronics recycling on August 15. The mailer is to circulate in early August.

The meeting wrapped up with a robust discussion about short term rentals and how to enforce any rules.

The next Penn Lake council meeting will be on Thursday, August 13, via an internet GoToMeeting, to begin at 7 p.m. Council hopes that by the September meeting, citizens will again be able to meet in person.

Visit our website at [pocononewspapers.com](http://pocononewspapers.com) for in-between-issue stories and events

## Archives...

Continued from page 2

Carbon County is planning to do spraying for gypsy moths, and listed coordinators in each local municipality to contact if you want your property included.

Cherba's Floral Designs on Hudsonale Street in Packer Township advertised its grand opening to be held from 9 to 8 on August 11.

Dr. John Biernacki was selected as Optometrist of the Year by the NEPA Optometric Society.

A sports photo inside this issue showed the 1990 Holmberg Homes T-Ball Team of the White Haven Area Sports Association.

The Pennsylvania Turnpike advertised to retirees and empty nesters, looking for toll-takers.

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Fill in the blank squares in the grid, making sure that every row, column and 3-by-3 box includes all digits 1 through 9.

# Seth's Sightings

In our search for different things, we drove through Hickory Run State Park on Friday night to have a meal at the Albrightsville Fire Company in support of their work (and a good meal, too). Afterwards, on our way home, we took a short ride into the State Park campground, sighting families who set up tents, and a few RVs, to enjoy the beauty of the park and time away. It was coming on dark, so the campfires were lit and families were gathering 'round them.

There were far more tent campers in the park this weekend than what we have seen in the past. It was great.

Saturday after a bit of work in the morning, we stopped through Wilkes-Barre to do an errand for Slater. That done, we decided to escape up the Susquehanna River, driving along on a narrowing state road (PA 92) along the river which took us through little riverside towns. Driving north out of the Wyoming Valley, you start getting into the Endless Mountains, and what's special about this road is that it tucks in real close to some of these "mountains,"

and through areas lush with hardwood forests.

We reached Tunkhannock, where the road separates from the river, in time for a snack stop. Since we were there, we added a quick ride through the modest downtown before heading south on our return journey. There was still daylight, so we took a detour around Harvey's Lake. Once at the lake, we just gawked at the homes and the boathouses, and the various gatherings as we drove past. We were home by last light.

Sunday was more work and a bit of shopping. Our reward for this was a quick ride after the stores to a remote dairy that makes its own ice cream.

On our drives, we noticed that quite a few Subway shops were closed up, including the one in Jim Thorpe. Also, the BB&T branch in the Giant in Lehigh is closed.

Other sightings including cats with kittens in White Haven and Weatherly. The stray cats in both boroughs appear to have had kittens. We're not 100% sure that the White Haven cats are strays, but they are roaming loose. The cats in

Weatherly are community fed.

One of our friends sighted a bear one evening, up near the Schwab School in Weatherly.

Among our other sightings are lots of butterfly plants, but not so many butterflies.

With the extended heat and the virus, we are also sighting a bunch of new swimming pools so families can keep cool, and shelter safely at home.

Ice hockey starts up again this week. While I finished this column, I was also monitoring the exhibition game between the Penguins and the Flyers. The season resumes this weekend and we'll buy the NHL TV access to watch. Baseball is back, though off

to a bumpy start after the Marlins beat the Phillies two games out of three, then came down with cases of COVID-19. I'm not sure what that says about the Phillies, except that they missed some games afterward.

Colleges will start welcoming their football teams soon to get them ready for the season. I'm hoping the coaches and staff can keep the athletes safe — because I want to see them play. For those colleges who cancelled their football and fall sports seasons, I predict big cuts to athletic budgets for them, including other team sports eliminated as the financial reality hits... no revenue sports = no more

golf teams, swimming & diving, tennis, fencing, rowing/crew, sailing, wrestling, gymnastics — pick three and trim the deficit by perhaps a half million dollars...

To wrap up, I had mowed and something I cut attracted one of the neighborhood skunks on garbage night. Ruth had a narrow escape as she walked through our back yard, fortunately surprising the little critter as much as herself... she took the long way around afterwards.

On a related note, over the years I have planted a nice mix of lilies. Some of the more exotic flowers were blooming this week — and suddenly were gone, eaten by deer.



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# LVHN giving back to the community

July 15 was National Give Something Back Day. Colleagues from Lehigh Valley Health Network–Hazleton wanted to give back to the community who has been so supportive to them, especially during this pandemic, so they held a food drive to help supply local food pantries. Donations came flooding in and were distributed equally to Catholic Social Services' (CSS) St. Joseph Pantry, Commission on Economic Opportunity's (CEO) Hazleton Pantry, and Mountain Top Food Pantry at St. Paul's Lutheran Church.

To give to these pantries and others in our area, search the internet for food pantries in the area you are looking to donate, or call CSS at 570-455-1521, CEO at 570-455-4994, or St. Paul's Lutheran Church at 570-474-6616.



**At Mountain Top Food Pantry-St. Paul's Lutheran Church, shown from left are Flossie Pedley, Mt. Top Food Pantry coordinator/volunteer; Linda Banos, physical therapist, Lehigh Valley Health Network Health Center at Mountain Top; and Jane Dodson, Mt. Top Food Pantry volunteer.**



**At St. Joseph Pantry-Catholic Social Services shown from left are Christine Duffy, volunteer; Stephanie Cuadros, coordinator; and Lisa Marie Halecky, LVHN.**



**Gaylene Hunter, left, president of GFWC Mountain Top, presents a check for \$750 to Florence Pedley of the Mountain Top Food Bank. Checks were also presented to the Mt Top Ambulance Association (\$750), Mt Top Medical Clinic (\$500), and Crestwood School District Food Backpack Program (\$750). GFWC Mountain Top has been serving the Mountain Top community since 1954. For additional information about the club or joining email [wcmtnetop@gmail.com](mailto:wcmtnetop@gmail.com).**

## Shepherd House has emergency food available

The Shepherd House Food Pantry in Weatherly will distribute food between 10 a.m. and noon on Saturday, August 22. If you have an emergency and need food before this date, contact Charlie Hettler at 570-427-8981. If there is no answer, please leave your name and phone number on the answering machine and he will get back to you.

The Food Pantry is located at 335 Third Street in Weatherly.

Future Distribution Dates:  
August 22  
September 26  
October 24  
November 21  
December 19

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**10 a.m.-8 p.m. Tues., Wed. & Thurs.  
10 a.m.-9 p.m. Fri. & Sat.  
11 a.m.-8 p.m. Sun.**



# Museum open every Saturday

The Weatherly Area Museum is open now through the end of October on Saturdays from 1-4 p.m. The museum volunteers are also willing to open the museum for private visits upon request. More information can be found

on their Facebook page.

Anyone interested in volunteering at the museum should make contact through the Facebook page as well. New volunteers are always welcome!



Shown in the front row from left are Michèle Pokrifka, York County solicitor; Dan Vogler, Lawrence County commissioner; Jim Martin, Adams County commissioner; and Lori Vargo Heffner, Northampton County council member. Back row are C. David Pedri, Luzerne County manager; Daryl Miller, Bradford County commissioner; Benjamin Kafferlin, Warren County commissioner; Dave Kovach, Columbia County commissioner.

## County Leaders graduate from Center for Excellence

The County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania Center for Excellence in County Leadership, a premier professional development program for county officials, recently graduated eight leaders from its intensive two and a half-day training program.

The 2020 graduates include Lori Vargo Heffner, Northampton County council member; Benjamin Kafferlin, Warren County commissioner; David Kovach, Columbia County commissioner; James Martin, Adams County commissioner; Daryl Miller, Bradford County commissioner; C. David Pedri, Esq., Luzerne county manager; Michèle Pokrifka, Esq., York County solicitor; and Dan Vogler, Lawrence County commissioner.

CEL training focuses on fostering individual growth through high-level classroom training aimed at enhancing communication, management and leadership skills. CEL includes classes in styles of leadership, managerial versatility, interpersonal dynamics, crisis communication, media management, daily communication problem solving, decision making and other areas. The program is open to county commissioners or council members, chief clerks, county administrators and solicitors of Pennsylvania's 67 counties. Key county leaders and department heads also are eligible.

The 2020 CEL program was produced by The Professional Edge, Inc. ([www.theprofessionaledgeinc.com](http://www.theprofessionaledgeinc.com)).

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WHJ



# White Haven looks at problem properties

by Ruth Isenberg

White Haven Borough Council looked at a dozen properties in the borough during their Zoom workshop meeting on July 27, and began the process of ranking the problem spots. Atty. Sean Logsdon walked council through the process of what could be done about the properties, which ranged from a commercial lot on Main Street to private residences throughout the borough, some empty and some occupied.

Cost is a factor in how much the borough can do about the problems, which have all been the subject of citizen complaints about safety and health issues. Atty. Logsdon said the first step is to send a notice of violation to the property owner, laying it all out, including the necessary remedies and process for an appeal. The property owner must be given a time period to correct the situation.

If no reply is received to the notice of violation, the borough can file with the district justice, for a fee. A hearing may be scheduled. He warned that property owners don't always show up.

If a judgment is issued in the borough's favor, they then have to collect on that judgment. The matter can be transferred to the Court of Common Pleas, which can impose a lien on the property.

The borough can condemn a property if it poses a clear safety danger. This course makes it illegal for the owner to go back in to the property, but doesn't provide any extra money to take it down.

If properties are given over to the borough, as was recently done, the borough needs to find grant money to tear it down.

Borough manager Linda Szoke noted that serving the property owner is an additional cost.

Council member Bob Lamson said they need a cost and a budget. He suggested identifying the properties with a real effect on safety and welfare of the public. Those need to be addressed. Trying to act on all 12 properties at once could cost thousands of dollars, but the borough would end up getting nothing out of them. "It's not going to be a positive thing on our budget," he noted.

Atty. Logsdon said a lot of enforcement activity has been pushed back because of

COVID. If a property with a notice of violation goes up for tax sale and is purchased, the whole process starts over.

It was agreed to rank the offending properties based on length of time on the list, and the effect on neighboring property owners, while determining whether the properties are locally owned, and their current tax status, before taking further action.

## AMVETS to meet

AMVETS Post 253 of White Haven will meet Sunday, August 2, at the VFW Post 6615 at 1:30. All members are urged to attend. Commander Robert Mengle, Sr., will preside.

## Hearing continued

The Packer Township Zoning Hearing for the application of Broad Mountain Power, LLC to construct and operate a Wind Farm is continued to August 31, at 5 p.m. and at the Packer Township Municipal Building. Visit [www.packertownship.com](http://www.packertownship.com) for more information.

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## Streets...

Continued from page 1

Eurana Avenue  
Fourth Street  
Fifth Street  
Smith Street  
East Main Street (finish)  
Blakeslee Avenue  
Spruce Alley (between 2nd & 3rd St.)  
Dean Gray Alley  
**Wednesday August 5**  
Fell Street  
Pardee Street  
Packer Street  
Carbon Street  
Spring Street  
Wilbur Street  
Sixth Street  
Seventh Street  
Edgewood Lane  
Oak Alley  
Church Street  
**Thursday, August 6**  
Fairview Street  
Maple Street  
Kline Street South  
Yeakle Street  
Doney Run  
Kline Street

Butz Street  
Washington Street  
Entwistle Street  
Hudsondale Street  
West Main Street  
The Rocks  
Sunflower Alley (Hudsondale to Maple St.)

**Friday, August 7**  
High Street  
Dunnigan Lane  
Franklin Street  
Jefferson Street  
Dunnigan Street  
Yunker Lane  
Briar Lane  
Lauderburn Avenue  
Rebar Street  
Monroe Court  
Plane Street  
Race Street  
West Main Street  
Alleys on West Side  
Please be sure that all vehicles are off the roadways on the dates indicated.  
Should the weather not be conducive to street cleaning on any particular day, the schedule will advance to the next clear day in the order as listed above.

## Capriotti's food sale to benefit Salem UCC

Salem United Church of Christ will hold a Capriotti's frozen food fundraiser sale on August 27.

Items available are a 5 pound bag of frozen chicken fingers for \$26.50; a personal 9 inch heat and eat Italian Stromboli for \$7.50; a container of 25 frozen homemade meatballs for \$16.50 and a bag of 4 dozen frozen pierogies for \$16.50.

Orders and payment by check are due by August 17, with checks made out to Salem U.C.C.

Pick up will be on August 27 from 5-7 p.m. at the church. Place orders by calling Teresa at 570-427-4321; Dolores at 570-455-7962 or Margaret at 570-427-4136.

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# PA Turnpike approves 2021 toll increase

The Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission (PTC) has approved a six-percent toll increase for all E-ZPass rates systemwide and for PA Turnpike TOLL BY PLATE rates that had been established before last month's permanent conversion to All-Electronic Tolling (AET) at these locations:

- Beaver Valley Expressway (I-376);
- Delaware River Bridge (NJ border);
- Gateway Toll Plaza (Ohio border);
- Greensburg Bypass (PA Turnpike 66);
- Keyser Ave. and Clarkes Summit Tolls (Northeastern Extension); and
- Southern Beltway (PA Turnpike 576).

The increase — slated to take effect at 12:01 a.m. on Jan. 3, 2021 — will enable the PTC to continue to maintain and operate its system and ensure safe travel for up to 500,000 daily customers.

"The primary driver of the annual toll-rate increases continues to be our quarterly transit payments to PennDOT and the resulting debt service that comes along with the legislatively mandated funding obligation," said PA Turnpike CEO Mark Compton. "As a result, the PA Turnpike has delivered almost \$7 billion in funding to PennDOT in the last decade, primarily to support mass-transit operations in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh."

Compton said the PTC's debt-service costs on outstanding Act-44 bond debt are \$440 million annually and growing; this amount must be paid each year even if the Commission seeks, and is granted, deferment of a quarterly Act-44 payment — as it recently did to partially offset revenue impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

## New TOLL BY PLATE Rates Set

As part of its recent system-wide change in toll operations, the Commission today also approved new TOLL BY PLATE rates at toll facilities converted to AET in June. The new rates, which also take effect Jan. 3, 2021, include an average 45% increase over the 2020 cash rate for TOLL BY PLATE motorists to reflect the costs of collections for this tolling method. The new rate will not be applied at the previously mentioned TOLL BY PLATE facilities converted before 2020.

"The new TOLL BY PLATE rate reflects the higher costs the Commission incurs to process the toll and collect payment — a pricing approach used by tolling agencies across the nation to cover the costs of administering AET systems," Compton explained. "This balanced approach allows us to maintain a lower rate for those choosing a payment

method that is less costly to manage, while those who choose a pricier payment option absorb those costs."

Because of today's action, the most common toll for a passenger vehicle will increase from \$1.50 to \$1.60 for E-ZPass customers and from \$2.50 to \$3.90 for those choosing TOLL BY PLATE. The most common toll for a Class-5 tractor trailer will increase from \$12.20 to \$13 for E-ZPass and from \$17.30 to \$26.60 for PA Turnpike TOLL BY PLATE customers.

With the PA Turnpike TOLL BY PLATE option, high-speed cameras capture license-plate images as vehicles pass by. The registered owner receives an invoice for trips made through the tolling point. Invoices can be paid online, by phone or by mail. Upon receipt of a TOLL BY PLATE invoice, recipients do have an option to open an E-ZPass account and pay the lower rate.

The PTC is exploring options to offer TOLL BY PLATE discounts to motorists through pre-registration options. More details on these programs will be announced later this year.

Compton encouraged travelers to consider E-ZPass, since it is the most convenient, least costly way to travel in Pennsylvania and is accepted in all neighboring states and across the eastern United States.

E-ZPass is the largest interoperable toll-collection program in the United States, consisting of toll agencies in 18 states from Maine to Florida and west to Illinois. It was recently announced that Florida's Turnpike Enterprise (FTE) will start accepting E-ZPass later this year, joining the Central Florida Expressway Authority's toll-road network in Metro Orlando in accepting E-ZPass for payment of tolls.

"Currently, 86 percent of our customers have chosen E-ZPass, with more switching every day. Now that hundreds of grocery stores in the commonwealth offer E-ZPass, chances are you regularly pass by at least one of them," Compton said. "Because of our low administration and enrollment fees, and the ability to set up an automatically replenished or cash-funded E-ZPass account, there's simply no reason not to get it."

Most of PA's top grocery chains offer E-ZPass GoPaks, including Giant Eagle, Acme, Giant Food Stores and Wegmans. In addition, travelers can pick up an E-ZPass GoPak — which includes a transponder that must be registered before it is used — at all 17 Turnpike service plazas and Pennsylvania AAA offices. To find a location nearby, visit <https://www.paturnpike.com/toll/sales.aspx>.

The PA Turnpike no longer accepts cash or credit cards on the system after having permanently converted to All-Electronic Toll (AET) collection last month. Since the PTC began studying, planning for and implementing AET, more than 30 agencies in 14 states have established systems using proven AET technologies.

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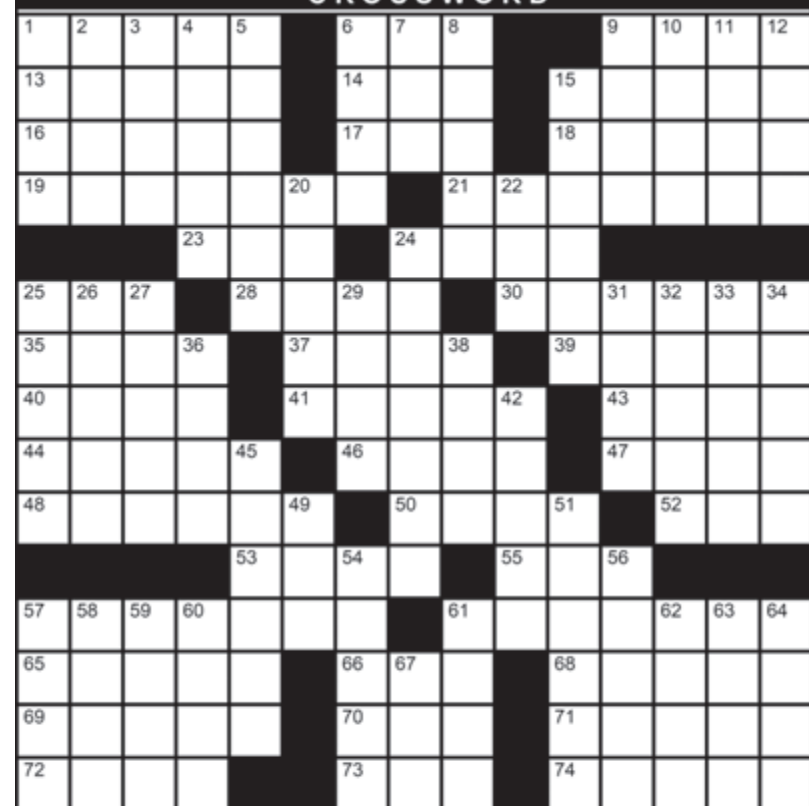
# THEME: WHO SAID IT?

**ACROSS**

1. Involuntary twitch
6. World's oldest national broadcaster
9. Pilgrimage to Mecca
13. Pacific island greeting
14. "\_\_\_\_\_ the ram-parts..."
15. Prefix relating to sun
16. Not so crazy
17. Maiden name indicator
18. Greet the day
19. Mentally prepared for something scary
21. \*\*"There's no place like home"
23. Liveliness
24. Answer to this clue, e.g.
25. Winter bug
28. Hatha or bikram
30. Incense burner, in a church
35. Bubonic plague spreaders
37. Bottle plug
39. Part of TNT
40. Bad luck predictor
41. \*\*"D'oh!"
43. Cleopatra's necklace
44. Red Cross supply
46. Have supper
47. Female crab, or crybaby in Australia
48. Belonging to Cree, e.g.
50. Byproduct of combing wool
52. Be nosey

24. Global problem?
25. \*\*"Two roads diverged in a yellow wood"
26. Coeur de \_\_\_\_\_, "Titanic"
27. Embryo cradles
29. Well-behaved
31. Lice eggs
32. "Sesame Street" prominent architecture feature
33. Not right
34. \*\*"Yo, Adrian!"
36. Give the cold shoulder
38. Bingo-like game
42. 1837 to 1901, to Queen Victoria
45. Ronald McDonald or Mickey Mouse
49. \_\_\_\_\_-di-dah
51. Hanukkah's eight
54. Must-haves
56. "Faster!" to a horse
57. Tea servings

58. Fishing decoy
59. Month before Nisan
60. Half a golf round
61. "\_\_\_\_\_ Good Men"
62. Like the White Rabbit
63. Inviting sign
64. Like a hand-me-down
67. Baron Munchausen's statement

**CROSSWORD****DOWN**

1. Fresh talk
2. Surveyor's work
3. Excellent
4. Pen dweller
5. \*\*"Don't worry 'bout a thing, 'cause every little thing is gonna be alright."
6. \*\*"A martini. Shaken, not stirred."
7. Samantha of "Full Frontal"
8. Words to live by
9. Submarine sandwich
10. Climbed down
11. Potluck offering
12. \*\*"It's a moo point"
15. Habituate, like a plant
20. Historical period
22. Tolkien humanoid

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# LVHN-Hazleton introduces new MedEvac helicopter to Northeastern PA fleet

Lehigh Valley Health Network (LVHN) introduced an EC-145 helicopter to its fleet to enhance the health network's continuum of care in northeastern Pennsylvania. This aircraft features a larger cabin, which allows additional members of the care team and equipment to be used in flight.

"No matter what hospital in the health network patients visit, they have the backing of an entire health network," says John Fletcher, President, Lehigh Valley Hospital (LVH)—Hazleton. "Patients who normally would require ground transport due to life-saving equipment and care team members who need to accompany them, can now be flown to the Lehigh Valley."

"NICU patients often require space for equipment such as an isolette, which keeps the baby warm during transport, ventilator equipment with oxygen, cardiac monitors, and IV pumps in addition to the care



team," says Nathan Hagstrom, MD, Chair of Pediatrics at LVHN and Physician in Chief, Lehigh Valley Reilly Children's Hospital. "This aircraft provides the space needed to help these little patients arrive to Lehigh Valley Reilly Children's Hospital quickly while receiving the acute care they need." At Lehigh Valley Reilly Children's hospital, patients have access to over 30 specialties, just for kids.

Patients requiring extra-corporeal membrane oxy-

genation, or ECMO, also will benefit. ECMO is often used for patients who have heart failure, cardiogenic shock or cardiac arrest. During the procedure, blood is drawn from the body and run through a machine that acts as an artificial lung. It requires an in-flight team of at least three people – a critical care transport registered nurse, critical care transport paramedic, perfusionist, and sometimes even a cardiothoracic surgeon. Today, these patients can be connected to all the services of Lehigh Valley Heart Institute in a fraction of the time

through MedEvac air transportation.

LVHN partners with Air Method to operate a fleet of four helicopters here in northeastern Pennsylvania. All MedEvac vehicles, whether helicopter or ambulance, are staffed by experienced critical care professionals capable of administering care beyond the scope of Advanced Life Support ambulances. The EC-145 will be centrally located in a hangar at Hazleton Regional Airport and will serve Luzerne, Schuylkill, Monroe and Carbon counties for patient transport.

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# Saints' Alvin Kamara is a player to watch in NFL 2020

by Michael Gutierrez

At 75%, Alvin Kamara is better than most NFL running backs at 100%. Want proof? Even though Kamara was injured for a good share of last season, he still suited up for 14 games. Despite physical limitations, Kamara racked up nearly 800 rushing yards and over 500 receiving yards. He placed in the NFL's top three in receptions for a running back at 81.

And if you think that was good (it is), then get ready to see what Kamara will do in 2020. Here are three reasons why I think he'll motor to the top of his class.

**Adding Emanuel Sanders Benefits Kamara:** This off-season the Saints signed 10-year vet, Emanuel Sanders, to a 2-year, \$24 million deal. That made the Saints' offense -- already one of the NFL's best -- a whole lot better. The move benefits Kamara because it opens up the

field for him. New Orleans already has Michael Thomas, who can lineup anywhere, and adding Sanders opens things up even more. Look for a significant uptick in Kamara's receptions now that Drew Brees has two outstanding WRs who'll get plenty of defensive attention.

**Kamara Will Be 100%:** The only question is whether Kamara can get back to the numbers he had in 2018 when he rushed for nearly 900 yards, caught over 80 passes

for 700 yards, and scored 14 touchdowns. This year, I think he'll beat those numbers. If he stays healthy, 1000 rushing yards, 1000 receiving yards, 100 passes caught, and 20 TDs aren't out of Kamara's reach.

**Kamara's Rookie Contract Is Up After This Season:** It's a matter of self-interest, isn't it?. In the last year of his rookie contract, Kamara wants to impress General Managers and head coaches so that he'll be able to sign a

new and more lucrative deal. Of course, the Saints have a vested interest, and the team will have a big decision to make. Will they re-sign Alvin? That's a question to monitor all season long.

It all adds up to this: Alvin Kamara will be a player to watch as the NFL season unfolds.

*Texas-based Michael Gutierrez writes on the NFL and NBA for The Sports Column.*

## 'To play or not to play' isn't the right question

by Roger Barbee

After reading several newspaper articles recently - the most recent about how 14 members of the Marlins' baseball organization have tested positive for COVID-19 - I no

longer think that the driving question is whether to play or not to play. It's whether the right to play matters more than personal and social responsibilities.

And the implications of that matter are very close to home.

High schools around the country are deciding whether there will be school-sponsored sports this fall. Earlier in the week, I read an article carrying this headline: "Athletes protest to save their seasons." The very next day, the paper's editorial board wrote, "it's neither safe to be together nor smart to have teenagers on the field colliding with one another for hours each week."

As I read both articles, different language choices came to mind. Think of the word, lost, and then consider what it means to say, taken away. Both 'lost' and 'taken away' refer to the speaker. Something that belonged to the speaker ('possessed' is the right word) is no longer in his/her own-

ership. The speaker, then, becomes a victim of somebody else's problematic action.

The full expression might be communicated this way: "We've lost our senior year. It has been taken away from us!" Just a few months ago, the reference wasn't to athletics, it was to 'lost' graduations, and proms that were 'taken away.' More recently, it's about not being able to enjoy summer vacation the way we're accustomed.


That language, of course, is self-serving and denies the fact that experiences like those are never 'owned.' But when experiences are presented as lost or taken away, the unspoken assertion is that rights trump responsibility.

And when that happens, those who exercise responsibilities (such as board members of a state high school athletic association) are viewed as 'the problem,' and right-seekers (players, parents, and coaches, for example) view and present themselves as victims of a harmful deed perpetrated against them.

If there was ever a time in America when responsibilities should supersede rights, it's today. America is experiencing a deadly pandemic spread by person-to-person contact. But when the right to play is considered more important than doing what's in the public's good, then the conversation no longer is about sports. It's about society and what we value as a people.

There's another participation option this fall. It's everybody doing his or her part to stem the tide of a pandemic. It's the responsible thing to do.

*Roger Barbee lives in North Carolina and writes for The Sports Column.*



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# Journal Sports

## Four days into MLB season, things already unraveling

by Steve Stallone  
Sports Editor

### On the Sly

Rarely does a day go by that someone - or multiple people - doesn't ask me the million-dollar question: Do you think we'll have high school sports in the fall?

My answer to them has been pretty consistent. "I'd like to think there will be, and I hope there is, but I really don't know," I'll say. "With a lot of the colleges and universities postponing their fall seasons, and delaying the start of their winter sports seasons until at least January, I'm not sure that there will be a high school sports season this fall."

This country's four major professional team sports - baseball, football, basketball and hockey - have a plan in place to play out their 2020 schedules, and are moving ahead with those plans. It is a path lined with speed bumps, land mines and plenty of doubt.

Over the weekend, we already learned how difficult it will be to play sports - and do so safely - during a pandemic as wide-spread and deadly as COVID-19 has proven to be.

Major League Baseball was the first of the major sports to begin playing official games. With all the testing, cleaning and abundance of caution in place, it took just four days for things to implode. During the Miami Marlins' season-opening trip to Philadelphia, at least 14 members of the Marlins - including 12 players - tested positive for the coronavirus. Some of them actually

played in a game against the Phillies at Citizen's Bank Park knowing they were infected.

Now, those players and coaches are in quarantine, at least the Marlins' next two games have been postponed, as has the Phillies' scheduled game against the New York Yankees on Monday. It is likely more members of the Marlins' travel team will test positive in the coming days. If they follow the recommended 7-10 day quarantine length, that means no contact with one another whatsoever, and no games. You can already see this having a domino effect on the rest of the league and the already compressed 60-game schedule. And it's a pretty good guess what is happening within the Marlins team is going to happen to other teams as they travel from city to city in close contact with one another.

According to some accounts, some of the Phillies players had been alarmed all week-end by how the Marlins had appeared to not stagger their arrivals and workouts, and how few people in the Marlins dugout were wearing masks. Both of those practices go against MLB protocols in this pandemic startup.

Baseball rolled the dice, and it didn't come up "seven" on the first weekend of play. There are more rolls this week and the next, and no guarantee that it won't come up

"snake eyes" on them.

Certainly, the folks in the NFL, NBA and NHL are watching with concern.

The NBA begins play this week and NHL players have also arrived, although their entire schedules and practices will be played inside a "bubble" in Orlando (NBA), and in two cities in Canada (NHL).

The NFL, on the other hand, is opening camps this week and is following baseball's plan to keep its players in their home city and travel for games. The risks for football in general seem even greater than baseball. The NFL has more people involved per team, and more close contact than baseball. That said, you would expect that the virus would be more easily spread through an NFL team than a baseball team.

So, if Major League Baseball can't pull off their plan of playing in home markets while players and staff are living at home in their communities with their families, how can we expect the NFL to

do the same?

While it's far too early to tell if sports during the coronavirus pandemic can work - or is even a good idea - the early evidence isn't exactly promising.

While professional sports is giving it a go, some colleges and universities are also moving ahead with plans on practicing and playing perhaps a conference-only schedule, including the Big Ten. As of this writing, the PIAA is giving high school teams the green light to continue offseason practicing - with precautions and social distancing guidelines in place - for what they hope will be a fall sports season.

That brings us back to the question I hear on an almost-daily basis: Do you

think we'll have high school sports in the fall? As a sports writer and a guy who has always loved competing in and watching sports, nothing would make me happier than to see scholastic sports return in the fall.

Do I think it's a good idea for sports to return so quickly? After seeing what happened to the Miami Marlins, and listening to my inner voice, I say it's probably too early. With so many Americans still becoming infected and reeling from COVID-19, I don't think we have a handle on this thing just yet.

As I said earlier, the return of sports is a path lined with speed bumps, land mines and plenty of doubt. I'm not sure it's worth rolling the dice on right now.

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