

## Spring Fling '06



DOUG MINIER/Sun-Gazette

Wilson Michael, top left, and Renn Elementary School Principal Bill Napsack compete in the final round of the pie-eating contest during the school's annual Spring Fling Carnival Saturday in Lairdsville. Above, an unidentified student prepares to dunk school custodian Tim Stahl at the dunk tank. Students who hit the bulls-eye but did not trigger the mechanism were allowed to press the button. At left, Zachary Fry, 8, leads his tug-of-war team to victory.

## Legislative panel airs paintball safety bill

By MARTHA RAFFAELE  
Associated Press Writer

HARRISBURG — A bill that would require commercial paintball fields to be insured and ban children 9 years old and younger from playing the game drew some criticism from paintball industry representatives during a legislative hearing Monday.

It was unclear when the House Tourism and Recreational Development Committee would vote on the measure sponsored by Rep. Robert Belfanti Jr., D-Northumberland.

Belfanti, who began playing paintball 13 years ago at the urging of his two sons, said the measure was intended partly to make sure that paintball fields are insured in the event of liability lawsuits filed by anyone who is injured.

"There are a number of fields ... where the field owners do not have insurance, and if there is an accident, it's very simple go bankrupt and see the injured party not have their injury redressed," Belfanti said.

Paintball fields would have to carry at least \$500,000 in general liability insurance and at least \$10,000 in secondary health insurance under the bill.

But Bob McGuire, president of the American Paintball League, based in Johnson City, Tenn., told the committee that mandating insurance would be financially burdensome.

No other state has passed legislation similar to Belfanti's proposal, McGuire said.

"Its effect could be to force many small private enterprises out of business, and to chase paintball games underground, where more of the games are not properly supervised," McGuire said.

William M. Gardner Sr., president of Smart Parts Inc., a Latrobe-based maker of paintball equipment, asked the committee to remove language from the bill that would allow children 10 to 12 years old to play only if they are supervised by a parent who is also participating in the game.

"This is comparable to requiring parents or guardians to be on the field participating with young Little Leaguers, or playing baseball, football or soccer," Gardner said. "It just is not very practical."

The measure also would ban children 9 years old and younger from playing and require children 13 to 17 years old to have written parental permission to play.

Additionally, players would have to wear goggles that meet safety standards approved by the American Society for Testing and Materials and would have to use paintball guns with barrel-blocking devices and safety switches.

### Warrior Run School District

## Coal cost up 20 percent; board mulls alternatives

By MIKE REUTHER  
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TURBOTVILLE — Warrior Run School Board's approval Monday night of a bid for coal could mean at least \$10,000 more in fuel costs for the district.

The lone bid from Nicholas Coal Yard of Muncy, for \$148.75 per ton, was \$25 per ton — about 20 percent — more than the district paid the company last year for the energy source.

Based on usage of 400 tons of coal per year, the district faces a \$59,500 bill for the coming year. However, the actual cost could decrease with respect to usage, officials noted.

In the meantime, the district is working on alternative energy sources to further bring down future energy costs, Superintendent Daniel Sheaffer said.

"We are trying to upgrade our boilers," he said.

Also being developed are plans for solar energy at Turbotville Elementary School and a wind-driven turbine at the district's water-treatment plant.

Each project would serve as an educational tool for students, he said.

The board held a 30-minute executive session to discuss possible litigation related to tax exemptions. The board turned

**"We are trying to upgrade our boilers."**

Daniel Sheaffer,  
district superintendent

down the tax exemption requests of two residents, both of which came after the Nov. 30 deadline.

In personnel matters, the board hired three assistant varsity football coaches, but not without first a brief discussion.

Board member David Baker asked if the hirings were really necessary.

"How many players do we have?" he asked.

Sheaffer said the team consists of 50 to 55 players and the coaches are specialized by position.

The coaches hired, each at a salary of \$3,396, were Jason McCormick, Joseph Bowman, and Robert Keister.

## Montgomery will have fireworks after all

By MIKE REUTHER  
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MONTGOMERY — Thanks to some additional money from a neighboring municipality, fireworks will light up the sky over the borough for the community's Fourth of July celebration.

Brady Township's commitment of funding for the fireworks prevents the borough from canceling the event this year.

"It's a done deal," Mayor Andrew Onufrak said.

The fireworks will be held Monday, July 3, in order to give families more time for other activities on the holiday.

Borough officials had announced at a recent meeting that the fireworks were in jeopardy of not happening for the first time in recent years.

At the time, Onufrak said budgetary constraints made it tough to justify dipping into borough coffers for fireworks, even though the event is popular in the community, drawing hundreds of people.

When township officials heard about the funding problem, they stepped forward and offered support, he said.

**"It was one of those deals where it's just a traditional thing that's been happening and we wanted to see it continue."**

Ray LaForme,  
Brady Township supervisor

"Brady is the one who pushed it," Onufrak said. "They increased their regular funding."

Township supervisor Ray LaForme said he and others simply did not want to see the fireworks canceled.

"There was a group of us many years ago who started the fireworks," he said. "It was one of those deals where it's just a traditional thing that's been happening and we wanted to see it continue."

Onufrak noted that the fireworks are cheaper this year than in past years. Previously, the borough and the Montgomery Water and Sewer Authority split the

\$6,000 cost to hire Pyrotechnique of Allentown.

A local company, Liberty Fireworks of Allentown, will work for \$4,950. That means a cost of \$1,650 for the borough, the authority and the township.

"They are giving us the same fireworks for almost half the price," Onufrak said.

Private contributions would decrease the costs to the borough, township and authority, added John D. Lynch Sr., borough manager.

So far, a pair of \$200 donations have been made, including one from the Montgomery Lions Club.

## Board prepares to sell land near Avis Elementary

By STEPHANIE FARR  
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JERSEY SHORE — The Jersey Shore Area School Board adopted a resolution Monday night to begin the process of selling about one acre of land near Avis Elementary School in Pine Creek Township.

### Jersey Shore Area School District

The land, situated near Avis Elementary Lane, would be split into four developable lots, according to district superintendent Richard J. Emery. The grassland is not used for any school-related functions, the resolution said.

The land must be put out to public auction or sold through a sealed-bid process because it is public property, district solicitor J. David Smith said.

"Generally, with property of this kind of value, you get a better price with an auction or

sealed bid anyway," Smith said.

The board can set a minimum-bid price and can reject any bids it chooses, Smith added.

The first step in the sales process would be to have the land appraised by one or more qualified appraisers, Smith said. (See BOARD, Page B-3)