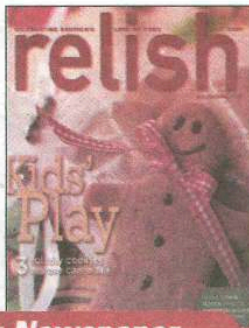


FESTIVE TREATS

Each month "Relish" celebrates America's love of food. For recipes, tips, gifts and more, see this week's special supplement.



THREE CHEERS

The Shaler Area cheerleading team wins pair of state championships. See Page 2.



HISTORY LESSON

Ancestors of Simon Girty explain the somewhat clouded history that surrounds his legend.



See Page 3.

A Gateway Newspaper

Pine Creek Journal

Serving the Route 8 area

50 cents

Wednesday, December 5, 2007

An edition of Trib Total Media

PINE/RICHLAND

Staying in the black by going green

By Kristy Locklin
STAFF WRITER

In the North Hills, buildings far outnumber green pastures. But many communities are giving back to Mother Nature by taking an environmentally friendly approach to development.

The Pine Township Community Center, which opens this spring, was designed with conservation in mind.

Recycled materials make up the flooring, ceiling tiles, carpets and other interior products. When rooms are not occupied, sensors will switch off the lights. The installation of "no flush" urinals will save thousands of gallons of water each year.

GREEN continued on Page 10

Volume 2 Issue 8
50 cents

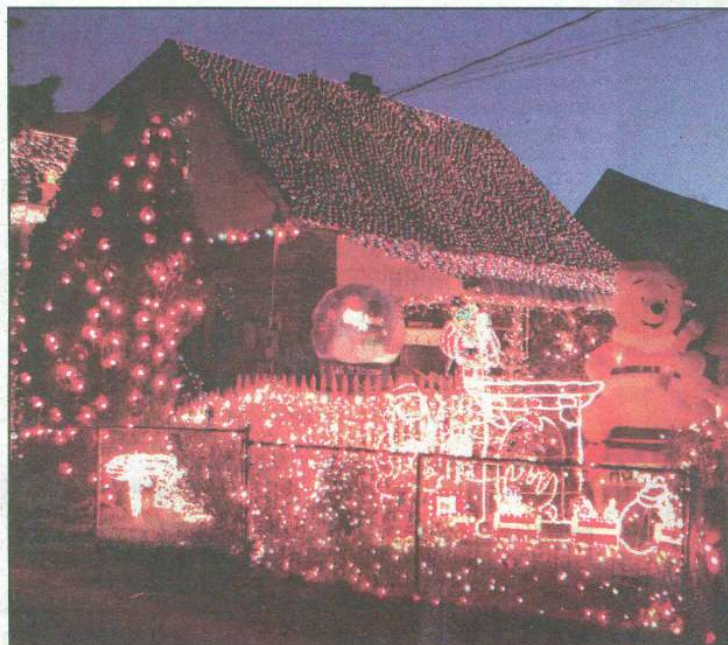
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SHALER



The holidays are in full swing in Shaler thanks to Bill Hart. The 17-year-old Shaler junior has created a yuletide masterpiece.

PHOTO BY LOUIS RAGGIUNTI

Lighting up the holidays

By Aaron T. Bruckart
STAFF WRITER

Bill Hart needs a little more than a weekend to put up his Christmas lights.

The 17-year-old Shaler junior has decked his house out in thousands of Christmas lights and decorations, complete with synchronized music.

Bill started playing with Christmas lights back when he was 5, he says. His exhibit has grown each year, with this year being the pinnacle so far.

This is the first time Bill has been

able to set the lights to music. He has 15 different Christmas songs and three special requests from his friends at school. He started working on synchronizing the music all the way back in January.

"This is the first time it became year-round because of the computer and music," Bill says.

If putting up the lights doesn't take him long enough, the first sequence alone of music took him nearly 160

LIGHTS continued on Page 8

HAMPTON

Contract squabbles remain unresolved

DISTRICT STRIKE STILL POSSIBLE

By Aaron T. Bruckart
STAFF WRITER

The Hampton Township Education Association overwhelmingly voted to authorize their bargaining team to call a strike if they deem it necessary, said Arleen Starr, PSEA chief negotiator for the union.

Starr informed the teachers at the general membership meeting on Nov. 27 that the union and administration are still apart on 55 issues.

While Starr did not have the exact vote tally, she said that probably only seven teachers of the approximately 200 present voted no on strike authorization.

Starr said salary and wages were not among the 55 issues, but called the issues a matter of working conditions.

While one of the issues is health care premiums, Starr said the teachers have never been unwilling to contribute to their health care. She said the teachers proposed a health care premium on Oct. 30, but declined to say specifically what it was.

While there are no immediate meetings planned for the general membership, Starr said she is hoping the mediator will reschedule the next bargaining session. The union representatives cancelled the bargaining session scheduled for Dec. 11 after being unhappy with the session on Nov. 13.

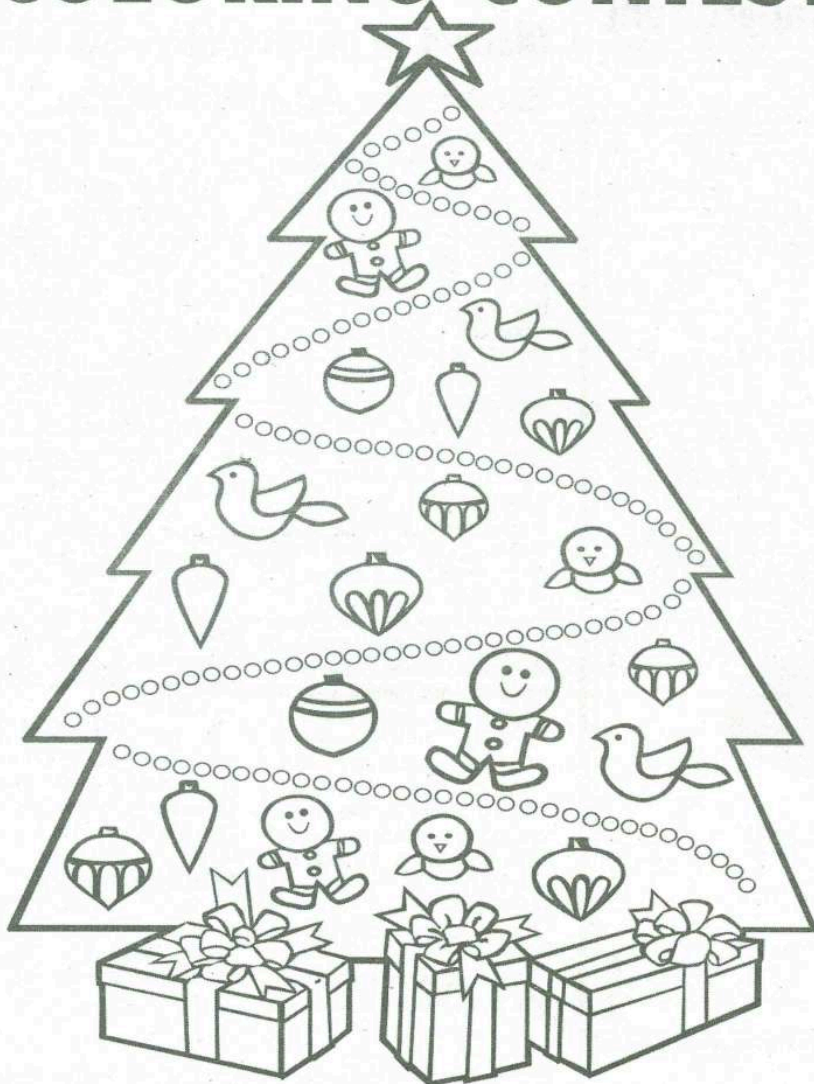
District solicitor Patrick Clair said he isn't surprised for the union to make that move at this point in the bargaining process. He said, however, that just because they authorized a strike, doesn't mean they're going to strike.

"This is a labored cycle of negotiations," Clair said.

"The idea that we're still talking should be encouraging to everyone."

The teacher contract expired on June 30 and covers approximately 225 teachers.

COLORING CONTEST



Show your creativity and enter our Christmas coloring contest. Color the tree and fill out the entry form. Include your age and telephone number. First and second place prizes will be awarded.

Address your envelope to:

Christmas Coloring Contest
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 610 Beatty Road
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ENTRY FORM

NAME _____ AGE _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

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Age Groups: 4-6 Yrs. • 7-9 Yrs. • 10-12 Yrs.
DEADLINE: DECEMBER 22, 2007

PINE/RICHLAND

Staying in the black by becoming green

GREEN continued from Page 1

The facility boasts wall and roof panels made of energy-efficient steel and expanded polystyrene insulation, which will lower the township's annual heating and cooling costs.

Using an Energy Harvest Grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), the township plans to install a 50-kilowatt wind turbine on park property. It will generate electricity for the entire center while displacing approximately 156 tons of ozone-depleting greenhouse emissions.

In Richland, a hot topic of conversation is the new municipal building's geothermal well system.

Water runs through a series of wells and is heated to a constant 57 degrees by the earth, eliminating the need for a boiler or air conditioning units. Pumps located at strategic points throughout the building will either raise or lower the water temperature as needed.

The new facility will also utilize recycled materials, white flat roofs to reflect the sun's rays, smart light switches, energy-efficient bulbs and low-volume plumbing fixtures.

"In planning and designing the new building, the Richland supervisors took great care to use affordable green technologies that promote environmental solutions which reduce energy costs," says Dean Bastianini, township secretary.

Children in the Pine-Richland School District will get a crash course in eco-friendly development when Eden Hall Upper Elementary opens in August.

Eckles Architecture's goal was to make indoor spaces feel like outdoor spaces. Wood paneling will keep noises down while maintaining a comfortable temperature inside classrooms, which will also boast CO2 sensors.

Natural light will filter into the building via skylights and large windows.

Because the district strongly emphasizes its elementary

science program, the walls, countertops, carpeting and accents throughout the school will feature colors representing the Earth's five biomes — aquatic (dark blue), desert (tan), forest (dark green), grassland (light green) and tundra (light blue).

Even small business owners are going "green."

Wende Goncz, of Pine, is saving the Earth, one pizza at a time.

She plans to open several Pizza Fusions throughout Pittsburgh, starting in Richland's Grandview Crossing development on Route 8. The franchise is certified by the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, or LEED, system.

In addition to organic pizza, focaccia sandwiches, wraps, desserts, salads and gluten- and lactose-free options, Pizza Fusion serves up a hearty helping of social responsibility.

The restaurant will recycle oven-heat to eliminate the need for water-and-air-heating units. It will also utilize low-flush toilets and efficient faucets, Energy Star appliances, paints that are devoid of volatile organic compounds and insulation made from recycled blue jeans. Recycled bottles from existing stores in California, Nevada, Colorado, New Jersey, Georgia and Florida and reclaimed wood from a barn in Chicago will become countertops and furniture, respectively.

For Goncz, an anesthesiologist and mother of two, the eco-friendly features are an added bonus.

"We weren't looking for a 'green' business per se, but when we tasted the product and got more information it seemed like a great opportunity," she explains.

"I think people are very open to green buildings. I'm sure we'll get people to come because it has green features, but the most important thing to me is that the product is good."