



8 95567 00003 3  
 Section A Section B  
 Editorial .....A 3 Sports B 1  
 Church..... A 4 Notices.... B 7  
 Obituaries.A 10 Classified .. B 8  
 Social.....A 11

# Jeffersonian Democrat

Thursday, February 12, 2015

BROOKVILLE, PENNSYLVANIA • VOLUME 151, NUMBER 7 • SINGLE COPY PRICE 75¢

VALENTINE  
 DAY GUIDE  
 Page A6, A7



## Jefferson County supports Regional Rail Authority

By Randy Bartley

BROOKVILLE — Tuesday the Jefferson County Commissioners took the first step toward restoring rail service in the region. The resolution unanimously adopted by the commissioners expressed the county's "wish to participate and explore the actual forma-

tion of a Regional Rail Authority in North Central Pennsylvania."

Commissioner Jeff Pisarcik said the Rail Authority would be operated through the multi-county North Central Regional Planning & Development Commission. Pisarcik said the regional organization would

allow the authority to apply for grants to support projects that would rehabilitate rail service in the region.

Commissioner Paul Corbin said Brookville Locomotive and others had expressed interest in returning rail service to the region.

"The goal is to expand eco-

economic opportunities in the region," said Corbin. "It is a goal we need to continuously work for."

According to a report in the Courier-Express, the initial proposal is for the reconstruction of a 20-mile corridor of rail between DuBois and Curwensville.

"This is a big deal and the economic impact from projects like this is significant," North Central Regional Planning & Development Commission's Executive Director Eric Bridges said. "We're really excited for the prospects of this project."

Currently, North Central,

RJ Corman Railroad Co. and Genesee & Wyoming are working to navigate the details necessary to the creation of the public-private partnership to bring life back to the rail corridor.

Timothy Potts, general manager North Operation, RJ See RAIL, Page A9

## Lions roar against bullying



**GETTING OUT THE MESSAGE** — At Monday night's basketball game against Venango Catholic, Clarion-Limestone's student-led anti-bullying group, S.T.A.N.D (Students Teaching Against Negative Decisions) hosted a blue-out basketball game. The ultimate goal is to show support for victims of bullying and to stand tall against the negative behaviors, decisions, and circumstances that affect our students. The Lions won the game and clinched the KSAC North title. Details on Page B1. (Photo by George Powers)

## Brookville board looks at bids, bonds

By Patti Slaughter

BROOKVILLE — Saving money for the district's taxpayers prompted lively discussions at the monthly work session of the Brookville School Board Monday evening.

Rod Osborne, director of building and grounds, said that he is "excited, very happy with the bids" that came in for the replacement of the roof on the high school.

The board had estimated that the roofing project would cost somewhere between \$1.2 and \$1.4 million. However, "we did get a better proposal than we had originally anticipated," Osborne said. The low bid of \$1,020,000 was awarded to American Roofing of Altoona. Additional costs to be decided would be the scoping of about 30 drains on the roof, at an estimated cost \$700 per drain where repairs are needed. Alternate options are also available for annual inspections of the roof.

Five bids were submitted for the project, which will begin as soon as the current school year is finished. Business manager Ellen Neymen said that all the bids came in under \$1.2.

The board also discussed at

length the refinancing of three series of general obligation bonds.

Alisha Reesh, managing director for Janney Montgomery Scott, presented several options "to maximize the district's savings of the existing debt service." She said that "this refinancing is highly advantageous to the district, even if you add no cash." Should the district decide also to contribute cash to downsize the amount of refinancing, the savings would be even greater.

She presented three options for a cash payment as part of the refinancing. A \$220,000 payment would save the district \$672,905; a \$1 million payment would result in \$776,664 in savings and the maximum payment of \$1.96 million would result in \$865,499 in savings to the district.

The board discussed the options, wanting to reduce the amount of the annual payments, but cautious about spending so much of the district's reserve funds. When asked what her recommendation would be Neyman said she would recommend the third option. A straw

See BIDS, Page A9

## Marcellus Shale slowdown impacts Jefferson County

By Randy Bartley

BROOKVILLE — The Marcellus Shale Gas bonanza has stalled, at least temporarily.

"You will probably not see a lot of activity from us until gas prices go back up," Josie Shultz, Community Advisor for EQT told the Jefferson County Commissioners last week.

Shultz said EQT has drilled the "top hole" at their Washington Township site but the horizontal drilling has been delayed.

EQT's activities in Jeffer-

son County presently focus on the five-well "Monarch Pad" in Polk Township, and the "Frano Pad" in Washington Township.

EQT is not the only driller active in Jefferson County. Seneca Resources has been working on a well site on Sulgar Road in Washington Township. Seneca hopes to build a pad in Heath Township after completion of the Washington site. It will be a one well pad.

According to the Philadelphia Inquirer, "The slowdown in domestic oil drilling is spilling over into the Marcellus

Shale natural-gas region. Several large drilling companies have announced plans to reduce 2015 capital-spending plans in Appalachia in response to low energy prices. Some producers and service companies have already announced layoffs.

Range Resources Corp. announced that it will cut its capital spending for 2015 to \$870 million, from \$1.3 billion. Range spends 95 percent of its budget in the Marcellus.

Spot-market natural-gas prices have fallen in recent months nationwide because

of abundant supplies and the mild winter. Gas prices are even lower at several key Marcellus trading hubs, where local growth in gas supply has outpaced construction of new pipelines to deliver the fuel to market.

Few drillers are sinking new wells in the face of depressed local gas prices, which have dropped as low as 58 cents per thousand cubic feet, said Lou D'Amico, president and executive director of the Pennsylvania Independent Oil and Gas Association.

"You're not going to bring too many new wells online at 58 cents," he said.

There were 137 drill rigs operating in Pennsylvania at the peak in 2011. Today, there are five.

According to the federal energy reports Marcellus wells in Pennsylvania and West Virginia now produce 7 billion cubic feet of gas per day. That's about 25 percent of all shale gas production nationwide, and nearly double the Marcellus production of the previous year.

The Marcellus could con-

tain "almost half of the current proven natural gas reserves in the U.S.," a report from Standard & Poor's said, while other experts noted the powerful combination of resource, cost and location is altering natural gas prices and market trends across the nation. In other words, natural gas that used to come all the way from the Gulf Coast or Canada to feed the power-hungry Northeast is now coming from Marcellus producers.

See SHALE, Page A9

## Memories of a WW II Bridge Builder: Into the 'Bulge'

By Laura Lynn Yohe

(This is the third installment of the World War II experiences of Corsica native Howard Jones - Ed.)

BROOKVILLE — It was misty on Saturday, December 16, 1944 when the combat situation dramatically changed for the Allies as the Germans mounted a last-ditch counter-offensive.

"We were starting down a road, when we were stopped, and couldn't advance," Howard said, "the Germans were pushing back."

Recorded in the 8th Volume of one of the official histories of the U.S. Army, authored by Hugh M. Cole, it can be learned that Howard's unit was one of many comprising four and two-thirds American divi-

sions with an effective strength of 83,000 men. Along with tanks, tank destroyers and artillery, the troops and weapons were deployed "on a meandering front of 104 miles".

From later drawings on maps, the resurgence of enemy hostility would come to be known as "The Battle of the Bulge", referring to the way the front line expanded in one area under the heavy German onslaught mounted with 200,000 troops and 1,000 tanks in the Ardennes Forest.

That initial enemy assault covered sixty miles of the front. Their fire power outnumbered the Americans by four-to-one.

Relating that "We had no proper clothing for a Winter campaign," Howard recalled that they were issued "body

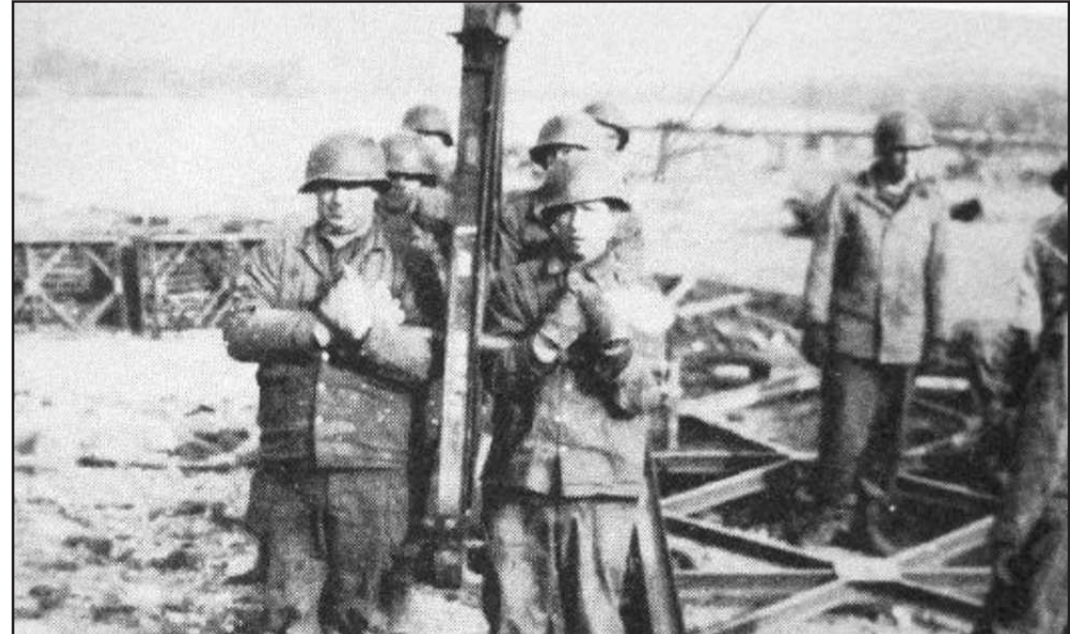
bags" as sleeping bags, just to try and keep warm. Faced at times with snow thirteen or more inches deep, keeping warm with any suitable type of gear was acceptable.

Caught off guard, Howard's unit was among those who raced into Holland during that first night to get into position to "blow" German bridges.

As the intense conflict raged on, front line American soldiers were brought to the rear, many of them suffering from "battle fatigue". "They would just sit there in the Jeeps, staring," Howard remembered.

Although he would not have known it, Cole's Army history documents the events of Tuesday, January 2, 1945, Howard's 22nd birthday.

See BULGE, Page A8



In this close-up of photo from the commemorative book of the 148th, Howard A. Jones is the combat engineer in the right front of the image from the building of the Hodges Bridge during WWII.

**DIAGNOSTIC TESTING** -The staff at Penn Highlands Brookville knows what it's like to go for a diagnostic test. That's why we treat you like a friend or family member when you come to us for testing. We offer state of the art digital mammography, CT, Ultrasound and MRI scanning, as well as a host of cardiac and respiratory tests. Find out more at [www.phhealthcare.org](http://www.phhealthcare.org)



Penn  
 Highlands  
 Brookville