

MORE INSIDE



Replacing eggs and chickens

A San Francisco start-up business backed by Bill Gates is scouring the planet for plants that can replace chicken eggs in everything from cookies to omelets. **A4**



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Steelers lose

The Miami Dolphins beat the Pittsburgh Steelers 34-28. **B1**

Obituaries

A9

• James E. Hanson, 78

Tomorrow's Forecast



Mostly cloudy with a 40 percent chance of snow. Highs in the upper 20s.

Full report, **A2**



Dec. 9
16 shopping days to Christmas

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Lifestyles **A6**
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Sports **B1**



75 Cents



The Alderton family provided buggy rides down Main Street in Brookville Saturday afternoon as part of the Victorian Christmas celebration. (Photo by Randy Bartley)

Tri-County Area jobless rates dip despite 800 fewer people working

By Nick Hoffman

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Unemployment rates in Clearfield, Elk and Jefferson counties fell or remained unchanged in October, but not because more people found work.

The numbers resumed Thursday after the federal government shutdown scuttled September's release and delayed the October data.

Clearfield County's jobless rate stood at 7.6 percent, down from 8.3

percent in August, the last release prior to the shutdown.

In Elk County, the rate fell to 6 percent, down from 6.7 percent in August.

Jefferson County's rate dipped to 6.5 percent, down from 7.5 percent in August.

The October rates compare favorably to year-ago numbers, when Clearfield County's jobless rate was 8.4 percent, Elk County's stood at 6.5 percent and Jefferson County logged in at 7.4 percent.

In the three counties combined, there were 800 fewer people with jobs in October than in August and the labor pool declined by 1,600. The work force stood at 80,900 in October, compared to 82,500 in August. The number of people working totaled 75,300 in October compared to 76,100 in August.

In the latest analysis in Clearfield County, the civilian labor force totaled 40,800, down 200 from August. The number of people with jobs was 37,700

See Unemployment, Page A9

Additional money needed to finish playground project

By JoAnn Seltzer

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ST. MARYS — Playground equipment is in place at South St. Marys Street Elementary School but additional money is needed to finish the play area.

During Thursday's St. Marys Area School Board meeting, school Principal Bob Grumley said although the school typically has just one fundraiser a year, a pie sale, this year is a little different.

He said the Parents Teachers Organization is still working to raise \$75,000 to \$77,000 for the new playground.

The money was raised to purchase the land next to the school and install the equipment already. Currently, students must cross the four-lane South St. Marys

St. Marys

Street (Route 255) to get to the playground on Chestnut Street.

The students aren't able to play in the playground yet because money is still needed to put a rubber play surface in place. The additional money will also be used to put in benches, sidewalks and landscaping.

Efforts to raise money have included selling hoagies, St. Marys Dutch clothing, bricks in honor or in memory of others, a spaghetti dinner will be held at the high school Friday and a raffle for an all-paid trip for four to Walt Disney World is being held.

More information is available on the district's website at SMASD.org.



The 3-year-old class from Sonny Days Preschool dressed up for the annual Christmas play that will be held this week at the First United Methodist Church. All the students will dress as angels, shepherds, wise men, Mary and Joseph and animals to sing Christmas songs for their families. From left are Marc Angheloiu, Zack Ymalay, Tori Youngdahl, Stella Albers, Zoey Hanzely and Addison Gradowski. Missing from the photo is Conner Cannito. (Photo submitted)

DuBois man sentenced to state prison in home invasion

By Julie Rae Rickard

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CLEARFIELD — A DuBois man accused of invading and robbing an elderly couple's home and breaking into another residence where he assaulted a man pleaded guilty Friday in Clearfield County Court.

Jeffrey A. Sprague, 29, 509 W. Washington Ave., DuBois, pleaded guilty to robbery, burglary, criminal conspiracy to commit burglary, false imprisonment and criminal mischief.

He was sentenced by President Judge Fredric J. Ammerman to seven to 14 years in state prison. That sentence will run consecutive to a two- to five-year sentence he was given in July for a probation revocation.

In the second case he pleaded guilty to burglary, aggravated assault, criminal conspiracy and assault and was given a seven- to 14-year concurrent state sentence.

His co-defendant, Austin Cory Eheart, 20, 9 Green Ct., Palmyra, Va., also pleaded guilty last week in both cases. He was sentenced to eight to 16 years in prison.

The charges stem from an incident on Thunderbird Road in Sandy Township June 17 when they and Eric W. Britton, 30, 139 Main St., Falls Creek broke into an elderly couple's home and removed \$1,000 in cash.

Charges in the second case come

from an incident in DuBois June 12 when the trio allegedly broke into a residence where they assaulted a man.

Also on Friday, Eheart's attorney, Christopher Pentz, asked Ammerman to reconsider Eheart's sentence. He claimed Sprague was the aggressive one and Eheart should have a lesser sentence.

Ammerman pointed out that with the probation violation sentence, Sprague is actually going to serve more time, a total of nine to 19 years in prison. Ammerman said he would take Pentz's motion under advisement.

At a preliminary hearing in June, one of the elderly victims testified that he was asleep in bed when he was awakened by his wife by a masked man asking for his money.

Before he left, the man ordered them not to call the cops for 10 minutes. After he was gone, they discovered a tool box which had \$1,000 in cash in it was missing. The victim identified the man as Sprague.

Eheart testified for the commonwealth at that hearing. He said he was in the area visiting Britton. Sprague, whom he met through Britton, told him that the victims had a couple thousand dollars at their home and he knew where it was located.

The plan was to get in through a window, but when they got there, it was locked. They ripped off a screen door and Sprague forced open the main door. After they entered, he heard a woman asking what they were doing there. Britton stayed in

See Sprague, Page A9

Ohio man killed in I-80 crash

CLEARFIELD — An Ohio man was killed and three people were injured in a one-vehicle accident on Interstate 80 in Pine Township around 10:20 a.m. Sunday.

Clearfield Co.

Clearfield-based state police say a 2001 Nissan Quest driven by Darnell J. Lewis Sr., 24, Youngstown, Ohio, was westbound around milemarker 113.2 when his vehicle went off the road and hit an embankment. It re-entered the road and overturned onto its roof and came to rest in the right lane.

Lewis was partially thrown from the vehicle and killed.

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