

Accidents may get traffic light for New Hanover intersection

By Diane Van Dyke
Berks-Mont Writer

The possibility of a traffic signal at the intersection of Route 663 and Buchert Road in New Hanover Township is starting to look like a reality.

Sadly, it took two additional accidents since June to make that happen.

Township Manager Anne Klepfer confirmed at the board of supervisors meeting on Sept. 10 that an accident occurred that morning. There was also an accident at the site the day before, Sept. 9.

Fortunately, there were no injuries.

"We have already called Traffic Planning and told them to complete the application for PennDOT," said Klepfer.

In March the supervisors retained the services of Traffic Planning and Design, Inc., Pottstown, to conduct a feasibility study before the township submitted a formal request to PennDOT for a traffic signal.

In June, Klepfer announced that the results of the feasibility

study showed that the intersection was "two accidents short" of meeting PennDOT's warrants for a signal.

According to Traffic Planning's report, there needs to be five or more accidents in a continuous 12-month period over the past three years. The accidents had to be susceptible to correction by a traffic control device, said Klepfer.

Klepfer could not confirm whether the recent accidents could have been prevented if there were a signal.

Of the accidents previously reviewed, one was missed that actually qualified, said Klepfer, which means that the township only needed one more accident.

Township officials have also directed Traffic Planning to proceed with preparing a design proposal for the signals.

According to New Hanover Chief of Police Michael A. Dykie, the accident on Sept. 10 occurred when 77-year old Larue Brunner of Rhoads Road, Gilbertsville, made a left-hand turn from the east side of Buchert Road into the southbound lane of Route 663.

A vehicle driven by Matthew Christy, age 19, of Lake Lane, Pottstown struck Brunner's car. Christy was heading northbound on Route 663.

The accident on Sept. 9 occurred when Jennifer Martin, Red Hill, was on the west side of Buchert Road making a left turn into the northbound lane of Route 663.

A vehicle driven by Jason Weikel, Pottstown, struck Martin. Weikel was heading south on Route 663. The accident occurred at 8:15 p.m.

Dykie said that perhaps a signal might have helped prevent these accidents.

"Even if a signal is put in, the hill will have to be shaved down to improve the sight line," said Dykie. "The hill will need to be adjusted somehow -- a car (traveling north on Route 663) will need to see if there are three to four cars lined up on the hill for the light."

"There isn't a tremendous amount of volume of traffic at this intersection even with development," Dykie also said. "There are other intersections in the township with a higher volume of traffic."



Borough takes aim at Spatz homestead

By Fred G. Phillips
Times Editor

Boyertown Borough Council is going to fire off a warning shot at General Carl Spatz and his relatives.

Although the famous World War I and World War II pilot and general, and former Boyertown Area Times editor, is no longer here, council wants his former home cleaned up.

At the Monday night meeting council voted to send a notice of violation to the owners of 101 West Sixth Street. The notice will tell them they are violating the borough's property maintenance code.

The home was Spatz's when he lived in Boyertown and is still owned by the family.

The property has been empty for a number of years and fallen into disrepair. The borough wants it cleaned up.

Council explained that the notice is only the first of what could be many steps to force the remaining owner to fix up the property.

The notice warns of fines and possible further legal action. The home of the famed aviator

has been owned by the family since the general's death. No apparent attempts have been made to turn it into a local, county, state or federal landmark or historic site.

While most of the meeting concerned minor borough business, council went in to executive session to discuss changes in a land lease.

The borough currently rents land from a cell phone mono-pole. Formerly renting to Conestoga Telephone, the poles are now owned by Mountain Union of Alexandria, VA.

While no decision was reached, the new rental agreement would include an increase in rent and provision for emergency communications antennas on the structure.

Council did approve the 2001-2002 contract with Severn Trent Environmental Services of Gilbertsville. The firm operates the borough's water and sewer treatment and distribution systems.

The contract shows about a \$5,000 increase over the current budget of \$656,250.

Council also approved placing a handicapped parking sign at 16

E. Fifth Street and selling the police department's 1995 Chevy Caprice.

The borough will get \$2,782 for the car which was the highest of five bids received.

In an aside just before council excused itself to executive session, members said they were also going to discuss an apparent snafu in the contract for street work.

Money that returns to the municipality from the state's liquid fuels tax, is used to repair streets and pay for street lighting.

But this fall there will probably be no street work in the borough unless borough employees do it.

Council members said they had received no bids for road work because of an error by the current engineering firm serving the borough.

Members said the money may be carried over for work next year.

The mayor, as he left the room, was asked if it was time to find another engineering firm?

"Oh you can bet on it," he said.

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Bank robber is busted

A 27-year-old Port Carbon man is in jail after trying to steal baby formula from the Weis/King's foodstore in Oley.

The problem was, just after his arrest by Oley Township police, authorities found he was wanted for a series of bank robberies!

In a hearing before Oley District Justice Ronald Mest, Michael S. Leskin, Jr., of 527

Valley Street, was charged with retail theft, conspiracy and receiving stolen goods as well as other charges.

He and two other co-defendants were nabbed as they tried to make off with 18 cans of powdered baby formula worth about \$205.

After his arrest, police said they were notified Leskin was

wanted in connection with at least two (and possibly more) bank robberies in the Muhlenberg area.

Bail was set at \$75,000 and he was taken to prison.

A co-defendant, Roy L. Honacker, 28, of 596 Sunbury Street, Minersville was also charged with the same crimes. His bail was also set at \$75,000 and he was also taken to prison.

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By: Mark A. Fluharty, CIC



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FREE GIFTS!

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**Thun/Janssen Auditorium
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Career Opportunities at The Reading Hospital

The Reading Hospital School of Surgical Technology Open House

An informal, free event for those interested in a career as a surgical technologist.

- 10-month certificate program
- up to 75% tuition reimbursement

**Wednesday, September 26,
6 - 9 p.m.**

Education Center at The Reading Hospital
Advance registration requested; call 610-988-8546

The Reading Hospital School of Radiologic Technology Open House

This open house features a video presentation, tours, refreshments, and socializing with faculty and students. Our school features:

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- training in latest technology
- up to 100% tuition reimbursement

**Thursday, November 8,
10 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. or 7 - 9:30 p.m.**

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Advance registration required; call The School of Radiologic Technology at 610-988-8993

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An informal mingling of faculty and students featuring an audiovisual presentation, tours, refreshments. Learn more about our:

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Saturday, October 6, 10 a.m.

Wednesday, November 15, 7 p.m.

Sunday, December 2, 2 p.m.

Education Center at The Reading Hospital
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