

Election workers still have much to do before results are official

By CALEB STRIGHT
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MERCER — The 373 absentee votes from Tuesday's primary election have been added to the unofficial totals on the county's Web site, but the primary's numbers are still a ways from being official.

County elections workers still have to process provisional ballots and write in votes before the county elections board signs off on the final numbers, all of which is scheduled within the next three weeks.

Provisional ballots — ballots given to voters whose eligibility is in question or in instances of other complications — will be processed during a public meeting at 10 a.m. Wednesday in the commissioners conference room of Mercer County Courthouse, which is where all public elections meetings will be held.

County Elections Director Jeff Greenburg said that as of Friday, his office



Greenburg

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MEMORIAL DAY



R-A file photo

(Above) This photo from 1967 shows an honor guard bearing the colors near the College Avenue railroad crossing near the Shenango Valley Cemetery, where residents and guests will gather again during a Memorial Day observance Monday. (Right) Reynolds sixth-grader Bella Palmer took time recently to help John Straub plant flowers in Fredonia Park in preparation for the Memorial Day celebration at the park. Palmer, 11, the daughter of Valerie and Stephen McCorry, said "It seemed like a nice thing to do, and I like to plant flowers." Palmer said she plans to help Straub weed and water the flowers during the summer. See the RA Calendar (below) or Page B3 for Memorial Day observances.



Contributed photo



Tom Chapin/R-A

WEST SALEM TOWNSHIP — Dakotah Mutdosch (left), 15, here with his dad, Jim, displays a football signed by Pittsburgh Steelers Maurkice Pouncey and Ike Taylor, who were at Children's Hospital in Pittsburgh around the same time Dakotah was there when doctors began to suspect he had Kleine-Levin Syndrome.

Best treatment for teen's rare sleep disorder: Calm, quiet

Kleine-Levin Syndrome so rare, it's often misdiagnosed

By TOM CHAPIN
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WEST SALEM TOWNSHIP — Fifteen-year-old Dakotah Mutdosch, a freshman at Reynolds High School, didn't realize his chance to appear on TV until he was leaving through some unchecked e-mail.

A representative from "Anderson Cooper Live" wrote that an episode about Kleine-Levin Syndrome (KLS) was in the works, and asked if Dakotah would be willing to talk about it, given his unique knowledge of the disorder. But by the time he found the e-mail, it was too late to reply.

"I was just going through the inbox, and I read it and was like, 'Wow. That could have been something,'" he said.

Dakotah's not a doctor, but he can attest to living with KLS, a rare neurological disorder found primarily in adolescents that is marked by excessive sleep and abnormal behavior during the periods that the person is awake.

"I would not want anyone to have to deal

"I would not want anyone to have to deal with it. Horrible."

— Dakotah Mutdosch, 15, who has lived with Kleine-Levin Syndrome since December 2011.

Learn more about Kleine-Levin Syndrome. **PAGE A5**

with it," he said. "Horrible."

The son of Jim Mutdosch of West Salem Township and Susan Langdon of Greenville, Dakotah has missed several events as a result of KLS, including about 57 days of school last year and most of this semester. He started a job a few weeks ago, but experienced another episode, and his employer had to give the post to someone else. He missed Easter last year and Christmas the year before, when his symptoms of KLS started to emerge, and his family had no idea what was wrong.

When an individual experiences a KLS episode, See KLS, Page A5

Pa. Fish & Boat Commission: There's 'no easy fix' for invasive species of fish at Lake Wilhelm

By CALEB STRIGHT
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NEW VERNON TOWNSHIP — Goddard State Park's Lake Wilhelm is known for being rich in panfish, specifically the bluegill, but another species has invaded the New Vernon waters and is challenging that reputation.

"There's no easy fix to something like this," said Allen Woomer, area fishery manager for the Pa. Fish & Boat Commission.

Woomer and others who are studying the lake don't know how the gizzard shad got into Lake Wilhelm, but since first being found in 2004, the fish's numbers have exploded, meaning smaller-sized bluegill and smaller numbers of other fish.

"They're taking food out of the mouths of the fish we fish for," Woomer said.



Caleb Stright/R-A

NEW VERNON TOWNSHIP — Pa. Fish & Boat Commission Area Fishery Manager Allen Woomer (left) speaks Friday afternoon at Goddard State Park's marina pavilion about the invasive gizzard shad species of fish, which is affecting the lake's bluegill population. Sitting to the right of him is Brian Ensign, a fishery biologist with the commission.

The shad eats the same things as bluegill but reproduces more quickly.

"One shad can produce tens and tens of thousands of eggs," he said.

While studying the lake in 2004, the Fish & Boat Commission pulled

its nets out of the water to find a total of four gizzard shad. It was the first time they were found in Wilhelm, but six years later, when the same nets were pulled out, the number

See Species, Page A5

DEATHS

MARENCHIN — Donald A., 78, formerly of Hermitage.

WEATHER

TODAY
Clear. High of 61F. Breezy.

TONIGHT
Clear. Low of 37F.

Sunset 8:43 p.m.
Sunrise 5:54 a.m.

SUNDAY
Clear. High of 66F.

MONDAY
Overcast. High of 75F.

RA calendar

Sunday

■ Stevenson Cemetery Memorial Day service, 2 p.m.

Monday

- Transfer Memorial Day parade, 8:45 a.m.
- Greenville Memorial Day parade/celebration, 9 a.m.
- Jamestown Memorial Day parade, 10 a.m.
- Oak Hill Cemetery observance, 10 a.m.
- Mercer Memorial Day 500 parade, 11 a.m.
- Rocky Glen Memorial Day service, 1 p.m.
- Fish for Free day, statewide.



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SPECIES Continued from Page A1

had exploded to 1,922. The large number of shad creates a kind of feeding bottleneck, meaning less available food for bluegill, which in turn limits their growing potential. Previously, a bluegill could grow to eight inches over four to five years in Wilhelm. "Now they get to six inches and stall out," Woomer said. Shad and bluegill both feed on zooplankton — tiny aquatic organisms — but they're just one link in the food chain. Even some larger fish, such as bass, that feed on the shad are being affected. There's still a good number of large bass, but the total number of the fish is shrinking. Although as they grow, bass can feed on the smaller fish and thrive — "They're fat and sassy right now," said Brian Ensign a fishery biologist with the commission. "They're full of gizzard shad." — while bass are young and small, they're in competition with the shad. Because the lake's walleye and musky also feed on the invasive fish, one tactic the commission is

taking to combat it is to promote more walleye in Wilhelm. Walleye don't spawn in the lake — it's too turbid — so the Fish & Boat Commission stocks the fish. And while it had been stocking 17,000 fingerlings in years past, it has doubled that number, which is twice the amount the commission would stock in an average lake. "We want to boost the predators we have," Woomer said. Another option would be for residents near the lake and those who frequently use it to form a watershed group that would monitor the nutrients washing into the lake. Goddard Park Manager Bill Wasser encouraged fishermen to educate others on the lake about catch-and-release techniques, meaning anglers can throw back bass that might feed on shad. "If we stick together and work together as a team, we stand a better chance," Wasser said. There's also a chance the shad's population may adjust over time. Their population will hit a ceiling when they reach the capacity of what the lake can sustain. Their

numbers will then plateau, and then their predators will adjust. There's a "backlash," Woomer said, and other species will take advantage of them. For example, the shad is present in Pymatuning and Shenango lakes, but because they were introduced longer ago, they're no longer an issue. "The community has become accustomed to having the shad around," Ensign said. Woomer had hoped that would have already happened, but because it hasn't, that's why the commission is taking action. "I'm as sick about it as anybody," Woomer said. Wasser had Woomer and Ensign speak as part of the park's annual meeting Friday. Wasser also talked about other projects at the park: ■ The Department of Conservation and Natural Resource's regional office has purchased a large Bobcat — a piece of equipment used for excavation — with a tooth system that can clear brush and even small trees. Goddard has used the equipment to clear habi-

tat for the woodcock. The park has worked in recent years on the project — for which it has also received a \$10,000 grant from the Ruffed Grouse Institute — and Wasser said the park has already seen the woodcock population grow. ■ The park has rebuilt a kayak rack at boat Launch 3 that had been torn down by vandals last year. ■ The park has worked along its bike trail, the Goddard-McKeeever foot path trail, and cold-patched the driving areas around the marina. It's also added benches to the bike trail, reroofed two buildings and sided a pole building. ■ The park's dam will be inspected this year, which Wasser said means Wilhelm's water level will have to be dropped about a foot so that inspectors can properly access the dam. Wasser said the water level won't be dropped until after Labor Day. After it happens, Launch 1 may be low, but the park's other launches should still be accessible.

RESULTS From Page A1

was aware of only one provisional ballot but will continue looking, sure to "leave no stone unturned." Write-in votes will be approved at a public meeting at 10 a.m. June 4. Greenburg plans to post those results to the county site the same day. After all the votes are approved and tabulated, the county board of elections will perform the first signing of the books on June 5 and the second on June 12, both meetings at 10 a.m. In addition to the absentee ballots that have been added to the totals, so has one military ballot, which was filed for Delaware Township. To find the unofficial primary results for Mercer County, visit www.mcc.co.mercer.pa.us.

KLS Continued from Page A1

sleep patterns can be excessive, anywhere from a few weeks to, in some cases, several months. Not to be confused with narcolepsy — which is characterized by overwhelming daytime drowsiness and sudden attacks of sleep, according to the Mayo Clinic — a person with KLS can wake up to eat and use the bathroom. But during that time awake, he or she may display childish behavior, eat excessively, become disoriented or experience hallucinations, according to the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS). While in a KLS episode, Dakotah may also display unusual personality traits, such as being standoffish or impolite. But according to his family, that's the KLS talking. "Each one of us, he says we are not real," Nancy Mutdosch, his grandmother, said about his emotional state during a KLS episode. "He says, 'You're not my dad,'" added his dad, Jim. Initial symptoms of an oncoming KLS episode are progressive and similar to that of the flu. "I know it's coming," Dakotah said. "I can wake up at 3 a.m. and feel fine, but I know it's coming back."

WHAT IS KLEINE-LEVIN SYNDROME?

<p>Kleine-Levin Syndrome (KLS) is a rare disorder that primarily affects adolescent males (approximately 70 percent of those with KLS are male). It is characterized by recurring but reversible periods of excessive sleep (up to 20 hours per day). Symptoms occur as "episodes," typically lasting a</p>	<p>few days to a few weeks. Episode onset is often abrupt, and may be associated with flu-like symptoms. Excessive food intake, irritability, childishness, disorientation and hallucinations may be observed during episodes. Mood can be depressed as a consequence, but not a cause, of the disorder.</p>	<p>Affected individuals are completely normal between episodes, although they may not be able to remember afterwards everything that happened during the episode. It may be weeks or more before symptoms reappear. — <i>National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke</i></p>
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but in the end, there's always the time to come home. Thus, the Mutdosch family must keep locks on the doors and windows to keep Dakotah safe during a KLS episode. A motion detector sounds if he wakes up and walks around at night, and there are video cameras around the house to monitor him while he's sleeping or moving around — all so his family knows where he is at all times while an episode continues. "You always have to check the locks in the house when he's experiencing an episode," Jim said, with Nancy adding, "He can figure those out, too. He smiles when he does it." It has an effect on everybody," Dakotah's grandfather, Randy, said. "We're locked down, too." Dakotah again proved that he has indeed figured out the locks around 2 p.m. May 10, about a week after his last episode began. While Randy was in the house, Dakotah left in only his pajama bottoms and a hoodie — but without shoes — to escape his KLS episode. Once Randy realized Dakotah had left, he alerted the family, who then called 911 and reached out to friends via cell phone and Facebook to keep a watch for Dakotah, who walked from his home just north of Summit Road — with a few rides along the

way — all the way from a friend's house near Thiel College and then to the home of another friend along South Mercer Street, where he was found safe. Once this episode of KLS had dissipated completely by May 16, Dakotah had only a vague recollection of his walk into town. The only evidence was the many blisters on his bare feet that, his family said, would hopefully prevent another hike into town in the near future. Dakotah's first-ever KLS episode was Dec. 7, 2011. That lasted between 14 and 20 days, Jim said, and then his condition was normal for about two weeks. This pattern continued about five or six times, ending April 20, 2012. Dakotah's family hoped that he could reach a year without an episode, but he experienced another episode March 21 — his seventh overall — just about a month shy of his goal. That episode ended April 8, and his most recent began Thursday, May 2, just eight days before Dakotah's trip to town. Signs that something was wrong began as a severe flu, but as his behavior became odd, his alarmed family took him to Children's Hospital in Pittsburgh, where doctors "ran every test under the sun," Jim said, and one doctor said he was "pretty sure" it was KLS.

For Dakotah's family, Nancy said their best answer: "Keep things calm and quiet." KLS tends to occur in adolescents — mostly male — who perform well academically in high school. Before his episodes started, Dakotah was scoring A's in school, his family says. But his condition means Dakotah misses a lot of school. But Nancy, a retired Commodore Perry teacher, stays in close touch with Dakotah's teachers, guidance counselors and the principal to maintain his homework schedule and to prepare him so he's on the same page as his classmates when he returns to school. "Reynolds has been fabulous," she said about the district helping Dakotah. "She basically helps me get prepared for all the tests," Dakotah said, adding, "She's the only reason that I passed this year." "Without her, he'd be in even more trouble," Jim added. Ultimately, the good news for Dakotah — who said he would like to possibly explore acting or programming when he gets older — his family and others affected by KLS is that it tends to dissipate in one's 20s. But that's still a few years away. He admits that sometimes he gets down about his situation, saying, "I know it's just going to come back. Hopefully, this is the last for the year." But by the same token, he said, "I'm just going to get through it and hope for the best."

That was confirmed at Sharon Regional Health System, Nancy said, where physicians came to that diagnosis after "eliminating everything else." Because KLS is so rare, it is often misdiagnosed as depression or just a child being childish. Randy admits that during a trip to UPMC Horizon, he thought Dakotah was using drugs. "There are no funds for research, so it's hard to zero in on the cause," Randy said. "It's a learning experience every time. We learn something a little different." The family has found resources and other people experiencing the same thing via the Internet and elsewhere, where they trade information and experiences. "Everybody has tried everything, such as medications, and they tell what they've tried," Nancy said. According to the NINDS, there is no definitive treatment for KLS, except for "watchful waiting at home." "You want to help your kid, but there's no medication; just keep them safe and sound," Jim said. "It's hard for people to experience it; we didn't even know it existed."

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