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Community Help Centre opens thrift store

At 86, Port Matilda's mayor not looking back

Spring Creek Canyon: Consultant challenged to provide answers

Post-election race relations

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Alison Campbell: Area's youngest professional artist

Opinion: Centre County speaks on human rights

Cosmo, Birdwatch, Our World and more

December 2008/January 2009



When the test fails the student

How standardized tests don't measure what special needs students learn

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Centre County's Independent
Community Newspaper

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Let's keep reaching out to one another

What a difference a day makes! Nov. 4, 2008 will go down as one of the most significant elections in our history. Unfortunately, the current disastrous economy is making history as well. We await the inspiration and leadership we hope the new administration will bring to these critical times.

Our local struggles and victories continue as well. The food banks and fuel bank are seeing increased numbers of needy families, many of us wonder how to make the next paycheck stretch farther, our jobs don't seem as secure as they used to be and we watch our savings dwindle as we fight to keep up with the bills.

It will take more than any one of us can do to survive this. It will take collective effort on the scale my generation has never witnessed, effort we've only read about in books describing America during World War II or the Great Depression.

I was fortunate enough to run the phone bank for one of the presidential candidates the last four days before the election. It was amazing to see so many people walk in and

from the desk of general manager
Suzan Erem

say, "I just want to do something, anything." That's the civic pride, the engagement in the democratic process and the hunger to make change we must keep alive to be successful.

Those of us who are able can reach out like so many did during the election, feel that brief sense of discomfort approaching a stranger, then offer whatever assistance we can. More often than not, we make a new friend or bring a smile to a tired face. Those are days worth living for.

Voices opens our pages to all readers who wish to barter or trade items or services on the *Voices* Web site (www.voicesweb.org). If you're in need or have anything to give, please go there and post...then send an email to everyone you know encouraging them to do the same. Help us build that online community person by person and it'll become an important resource.

There's no better proof that *Voices* is the product of collective effort than what hap-

pened this month, when half of our volunteers were knocked out with viral bronchitis and other miserable by-products of winter in Soggy Valley. As one would go down, another would stagger up to cover a meeting or do an interview. It's incredible the dedication of the people this little paper draws. Without that we wouldn't have an independent news source in Centre County. (We always could use another pair of hands, so contact me if you'd like to join in!)

Without our readers we wouldn't have this paper either. *Voices* lives or dies on support from readers and advertisers. Whether you picked up the paper at almost 400 locations around the county or you received a free copy at home this month, we hope you'll decide to donate for home delivery so we can build a truly independent revenue source and keep providing you edgy, informative reporting.

The volunteers at *Voices* wish you and your family the very best in 2009. Together, we'll get through these tough times, stronger than we've ever been.

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