



Local small towns fight
to survive

Postal Service cuts costs
but at a high price

Chestnut tree research
brings new hope

Reviews: Mike's Election
Guide, Horseshoe Curve

Hearing impaired student
leads a normal life

Law students launch
workers' rights education

Local impact of national
political campaigns

Opinions and columns:
Solkoff, Markle, Quinn,
Cosmo, Birdwatch
and more

October 2008

Sex Ed at State High

What our young people aren't learning

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Community Newspaper
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Our part in our victories and struggles

Centre County is a fascinating place to live these days. There's so much civic engagement at such a hot pace that it's hard to keep up. There's a new energy in the air, a glimmer of light in the distance.

It's been sheer people power fueling this hope. The hard work and organizing of the Spring Creek Alliance has caused Sen. Jake Corman to let the fast-track deal with Penn State for the Rockview land expire. And we all must wonder what's driving Gov. Ed Rendell to keep his promise to Penn State for land we suspect it will use to spread manure from its Confined Animal Feeding Operation. If it had no place to put its poop, maybe PSU would decide industrial ag isn't the be all and end all of food production.

The presidential campaigns have hundreds if not thousands of volunteers knocking on their neighbors' doors. When a local community gets this mobilized it gives us all a good excuse to get to know our neighbors a little better and maybe make a few

from the desk of general manager
Suzan Erem

new friends.

The new State College Area School Board is working hard to generate community interest in its facilities planning process so that the same criticism cannot be leveled against it that its supporters leveled against the last board. Now is the time to jump in on that discussion, not a year from now when the planning process is complete.

And to reflect and encourage these discussions, *Voices* opens its pages, both print and Web, to anyone in the community who wishes to contribute. This month we focus on an issue near and dear to parents of high school students. But we also explore the impact of the U.S. Postal Service's privatization trend that is hurting our local economy by replacing long-time living-wage jobs with contracted-out, high-turnover jobs with lower wages and no benefits. And we

dedicate a large space to how our small towns are trying to survive. *Voices* will continue to explore these trends throughout our county and ask the questions we expect policymakers and business leaders to answer.

And when this election is over, we hope you will consider taking some of that energy and putting it into your truly local, volunteer community newspaper. We desperately need an hour a month of your time to help distribute *Voices* in bulk to locations around the county. Others you know have been doing it for a few years, and now it's time for some fresh faces. It's easy. It's quick. And you get to meet new, interesting people near you. Many hands make light work. Can you help? E-mail me today at voices@voicesweb.org for more details.

Finally, we bid farewell to Ben Brewer who served as managing editor for almost a year. He's off to a great career in the labor movement. We wish him the best and thank him for his excellent work building *Voices*.

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