

State association honors Centennial school board VP

By GARY WECKSELBLATT
STAFF WRITER

Mark Miller can get quite passionate when the topic is public education. Tuesday night was one such example.

"It's fitting that this is Veterans Day," Miller said during Tuesday's meeting of the Centennial School Board, where he is vice president. "Public education is under attack. There's a war on public education."

He specifically took aim at privatization, standardized tests and publicly funded cyber charter schools, saying they are "wrong."

"The new governor," he added of Gov.-elect Tom

Wolf, "he made some promises. We're going to hold him to cash them."

It's that type of fire and enthusiastic effort in support of public education that earned Miller the Timothy A. Allwein Advocacy Award, which recognizes outstanding leadership in legislative advocacy efforts on behalf of public education and students.

The award was established in 2011 by the Pennsylvania School Boards Association in memory of Allwein, the association's former assistant executive director for governmental and member relations.

In the audience at

Centennial's meeting Tuesday were PSBA executive director Nathan Mains, who called Miller a "tremendous advocate and champion" of public schools, and the award's three previous winners, all school board members: Lawrence A. Feinberg, of Haverford, Roberta Marcus, of Parkland, and Tina Viletto, of Cheltenham.

State Sen. Stewart Greenleaf, R-12, Upper Moreland, handed Miller a congratulatory citation from the Senate for Miller's legislative advocacy on behalf of public education.

"Mark looks like a calm, gentle guy," Greenleaf said.

"Take off that coat and put on a Superman costume and he's a strong advocate for public education. He definitely deserves the award."

Miller, vice president of the PSBA, has testified before House Education Committee on topics such as charter/cyber school reform, career and technical education, strike free education, the Keystone Exams and funding. He has been praised for his leadership capacity in various other public education roles, including PSBA Region 11 director, which covers Bucks and Montgomery counties, co-chair of Keystone State Education

Coalition, board member of the Network for Public Education, and Federal Relations Network delegate.

Miller, who also celebrated his birthday Tuesday, said that as someone who knew Allwein, "I am truly honored."

The award was officially given to Miller last month at a ceremony in Harrisburg. He was happy that his parents, Bernard and Mildred, former public school teachers in Philadelphia, "shared the event with me."

Jane Schrader Lynch, president of the Centennial School Board, put the honor in context, saying "We don't

want Mr. Miller to get a big head." But there are 501 school districts and 4,500 school board members in Pennsylvania, "so to be one of that large group is quite an honor," she said.

Also Tuesday night, Keith E. Froggatt, Sr., chairman of the Upper Southampton supervisors, thanked the board for having the William Tennent High School band perform at the dedication of the veterans memorial at Veterans Field.

Miller, who attended the event, called it "a very moving ceremony."

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Tullytown OKs \$8.8M preliminary budget

By JOAN HELLYER
STAFF WRITER

The Tullytown Council approved a 2015 preliminary budget for the borough on Tuesday night that totals \$8,793,736.

The proposed balanced budget includes just over \$6 million in revenues from various taxes, interest, investments and fees, Tullytown auditor Biff Coyne told council members before they voted on the spending plan. It also includes about \$2.78 million from the town's savings

to help cover projected expenses.

About \$3,822,000 of the budget will be used to pay Tullytown property owners \$6,000 each in property improvement allocations, Coyne said.

In addition, about \$1.7 million will be used to cover police operations and about \$531,000 will cover public works operations, he said.

The borough has allotted more than \$300,000 for the town's parks, including a project to build a park

behind the Wal-Mart off Levittown Parkway. Tullytown is pursuing a state grant to help cover most of those expense, officials said.

The 2015 proposed budget is about \$800,000 more than the current spending plan.

The initial approval enables Tullytown staff to make the "financial road map" available for public review for 10 days this month, Coyne said.

The budget will be available at the temporary

borough hall off Main Street, on the town website and cable channel, council members said.

Once the public review window ends, the council will be able to vote in December on whether to adopt a final 2015 budget, Coyne said. That adoption could come during the council's regular meeting on Dec. 2.

The new budget will take effect in January.

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Dome do-over



CHLOE ELMER / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Men work on the roof of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Byzantine Catholic Church in Bristol Township on Tuesday afternoon.

Langhorne Manor to repair Route 1 access roads

By MICHAEL MACAGNONE
STAFF WRITER

Langhorne Manor is looking to fix up its access roads along Route 1 over the next few weeks, according to the council.

Councilman Nick Pizzola said the township's contractor, Hotham Paving, submitted a bid of \$4,800 to patch 2,000 feet of cracks along the northbound access lane of the superhighway. He said that initially the borough was hoping PennDOT would

step in and take responsibility for the access roads, but that isn't happening yet.

He said there are cracks running hundreds of feet and small potholes littering the northbound access lane, and those will only get worse. The borough engineer will still have to sign off on the project.

"If we don't do anything, the only thing I can guarantee you is it will get worse over the winter," he said.

Pizzola said the

contractor will have to wait for the right weather conditions — the crack sealing can only be done when the air is warmer than 45 degrees — and likely do the patching over a weekend, to minimize the disruption.

He said they will have to airblast the cracks to clean them, put the sealant in, and sand over the top before allowing traffic on the access roads again. He said they estimate they will get several winters out of the sealing

process.

PennDOT proposed a revamp of that section of Route 1 earlier this year, but the project, its funding and scope have not been finalized, and it could be years before the plan is complete, according to the agency.

The council also voted to call off its second November meeting. The council will meet again Dec. 2.

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Volunteers to study suicide prevention

Every year, dozens of families across Bucks County lose a loved one to suicide.

And now the families are being recruited in a campaign to end self-inflicted death.

Family Service Association of Bucks County said it is seeking new members for its suicide prevention steering committee, meeting monthly at FSA offices in Middletown.

Members of the

committee must have suffered the loss of a family member to suicide, organizers said.

Chaired by Bucks County Commissioner Diane Marsaglia, the committee's goal is to "shape, inform and enhance community-wide suicide prevention efforts."

Bucks County reported 81 suicides in 2012. That's up from just 66 in 2006, according to the county.

For more information about the committee, contact Nancie Miller at nmiller@fsabc.org or call 215-757-6916, ext. 205.

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