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PENNSYLVANIA LOCAL NEWS

Real-Time Updates & Breaking News from Central PA

Fire chief: Report of girl in Susquehanna River unfounded

by MATTHEW KEMENY, Of The Patriot-News

Monday August 31, 2009, 3:32 PM

A call authorities received Sunday about a woman who had possibly fallen into the Susquehanna River at the Dock Street Dam was unfounded, Harrisburg fire officials said this afternoon. After receiving the call about 4:20 p.m. Sunday, crews from Harrisburg River Rescue, the Harrisburg Bureau of Fire and the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission searched the water, while a state police helicopter flew overhead. None found a girl, Harrisburg Fire Chief Dan Soulier said. Rescuers left the scene about 7 p.m.

LancasterOnline.com:News:Guilty plea in turtle cruelty

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[More than 100 reptiles seized from Lititz home in December.](#)

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By PAULA WOLF, Staff Writer

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Aug 30, 2009 00:14 EST

Lititz

A Lititz man pled guilty Friday to animal cruelty and other charges stemming from a Dec. 12, 2008, incident in which more than 100 turtles and tortoises — suffering from widespread neglect — were removed from his home.

Paul Russell Cooper, of the first block of Green Acre Road, had been charged by the Humane League of Lancaster County with eight summary offenses of animal cruelty and by the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission with seven summary offenses of having illegal turtles in his possession.

Cooper's guilty plea came before Magisterial District Judge Daniel Garrett. Danielle Ball, the Humane League officer who investigated the case, said Cooper was taken into custody under a bench warrant and brought before Garrett because he had refused to respond earlier to the charges, which were filed a while ago.

Last December, the Humane League seized 109 turtles and tortoises from Cooper's house, while the Fish & Boat Commission removed several others

that were on the endangered species list.

Ball said Cooper was breeding and selling the reptiles. "It was like a black market" operation, she said.

There were probably 130 or so turtles and tortoises in Cooper's residence, Ball said, and some — in decent shape — were left behind.

But the vast majority were underfed and living in unsanitary conditions, she said. Some were stuck in a box without water, among a handful of dead turtles, Ball said.

There also was a turtle in a baby pool with rotten food and dirty water, she said. Next to that was a bucket of dead turtles, Ball said.

The Humane League had a reptile expert along to help identify which turtles and tortoises needed to be rescued, she said.

Cooper is paying more than \$2,000 in fines for the offenses, Ball said; some of that is restitution to cover veterinary and other costs, she said.

Among the endangered species in Cooper's possession were spotted turtles, which the Fish & Boat Commission now have, Ball said.

The 109 reptiles taken by the Humane League represent a host of species, including sulcata and pancake tortoises, red-eared slider turtles and box turtles.

Those turtles and tortoises are now in foster care. Humane League officials will decide which will be placed for

adoption and which will be transferred to other rescue organizations.

Paula Wolf is a staff writer for the Sunday News. She can be reached by e-mail at pwolf@lnpnews.com.

LancasterOnline.com:News:Guilty plea in turtle cruelty <http://articles.lancasteronline.com/local/4/24/1588>

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Drowning reported after boat accident at Yough Dam Reservoir

By A.J. Panian

TRIBUNE-REVIEW

Tuesday, September 1, 2009

Authorities are investigating the reported drowning Monday of an unidentified man at Yough Dam Reservoir in Somerset County.

"There is a confirmed drowning due to a boat accident near the Yough Lake boat launch," said Dan Jones, spokesman for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Pittsburgh District.

Dennis Tubbs, aquatic programs resource specialist for the state Fish & Boat Commission, reported the accident in Addison at 1:04 p.m. yesterday, said Somerset 911 coordinator Dave Fox.

Tubbs reported that a 47-year-old man fell out of a boat near the lake's boat launch area, Fox said.

"He said it would be a recovery effort, not a rescue, and that dive teams are on the way," Fox said.

Dan McGuire, state Fish & Boat Commission waterways conservation officer, was joined at the scene by state police at Somerset and two divers provided by Addison and Markleysburg-Henry Clay volunteer fire departments.

Corps officials provided the responders a remote-operated underwater imaging vehicle to attempt to locate the victim, Jones said.

The incident occurred in the state's portion of the lake, which straddles the

border with Maryland, Jones said.

"It happened across the lake from the Reason Run tributary," Jones said.

"Right now, we're not sure whether to search in the main channel of the stream or another one to the side of it."

The area where the incident occurred was about 35 feet deep, Jones said.

"By the dam, it's about 100 feet deep, so it's kind of in the mid-range of that," Jones said.

A.J. Panian can be reached at apanian@tribweb.com or .

NEWS / BREAKING NEWS

The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission released the name of a 47-year-old man who was thrown overboard yesterday

afternoon during a boat accident on the Youghiogheny Dam Reservoir in Somerset County.

Richard Makovich, of Perryopolis, Fayette County, was thrown into the water while riding with his mother, Constance

Makovich, 69, of Westmoreland County, when their 16-foot aluminum boat hit a wake. The mother and son were near the

lake marina when the accident happened.

The Fish and Boat Commission has taken charge in investigating the incident. The commission is teaming up with state police,

a Greensburg dive team, park rangers, volunteer firefighters and the Pittsburgh District Army Corps of Engineers to find the

man. The corps' rescue team will use a remote-operated underwater camera.

"The plan is to search as long as necessary today, weather permitting," said Jan Gonzales, southern area manager for the Army

Corps of Engineers.

Mr. Makovich was not wearing a life vest or any flotation device when thrown overboard, said Emil Sovetahor, a law

enforcement manager for the Fish and Boat Commission. Mrs. Makovich wore a personal flotation device when the incident

occurred.

"We're still investigating. It doesn't appear anything out of the ordinary happened (to have caused the man to be thrown into

the water)," Mr. Sovetahor said.

First published on September 1, 2009 at 10:57 am

Boater missing in Yough identified

Tuesday, September 01, 2009

By Michel Sauret, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Boater missing in Yough identified <http://www.post-gazette.com/pg/09244/994686-100.stm>

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