

Bedford supervisor rips board antics

By **JAY SKEBBA**
BLADE STAFF WRITER

TEMPERANCE — Bedford Township Supervisor Greg Stewart has seen and heard enough.

In an entry titled "Isn't It a Pity and Other Quotes," Mr. Stewart issued a plea to township trustees on the cover of the spring edition of the Township Update, a newsletter mailed to residents.

"I see the board meetings deteriorate into name-calling and personal agendas," he wrote. "I know it is hard to watch these meetings, see the dysfunction of the board due to intolerance of other's opinions, and personal attacks."

Mr. Stewart, whose first term is up in November, said the accomplishments of Bedford residents have been overshadowed by the board's antics.

"Bedford deserves better," he wrote. "I now wish to make an appeal for public civility.

Call for civility in letter draws trustees' ire

Most of all we are destroying the reputation of a great community."



Stewart

Two trustees took exception to the note and to using the township's newsletter.

"To comment on Greg's wording and that diatribe he had in the newsletter, I'm clueless. I don't know what he was referring to, I thought it was confusing," Nancy Tienvieri said.

Mr. Stewart said he has received positive feedback from several residents since his words were published.

"I just felt it needed to be said publicly," he said. "We broadcast the meetings and have them on our website. But

I have a hard time watching that. I can't be proud of this, I can't be proud of what I'm seeing here."

Paul Pirrone, who is running for supervisor in the August primary, felt Mr. Stewart's words were unnecessary.

"He didn't run it by me, and that's probably where he screwed up," Mr. Pirrone said. "I'm the type of guy who's going to ask certain people in my life before I do something like that. What he did is just a big mistake. It could be detrimental to his campaign."

Mr. Stewart said the in-fighting doesn't stem from any specific issues or occurrences, but Mr. Pirrone believes one of the causes is a long-standing question from a citizen concerning health insurance.

Bedford resident Dale Track often appeared at board

ings wanting to know what township employees were paying for insurance. Mr. Stewart refused to provide him with the information for more than a year, an issue in which certain trustees and residents took exception.

"[Mr. Stewart] made it seem like the township is in shambles because of people being negative," Mr. Pirrone said. "Well, the bottom line is all this negativity is because of Greg. If Greg would have answered concerned citizens' questions, this stuff would have never gotten that bad."

Mr. Pirrone and Mrs. Tienvieri said Mr. Stewart is in charge and should be the one to put a stop to any arguments during meetings that may get out of hand.

Trustee Rick Steiner pointed out that residents have

mented on meetings getting out of hand, at times turning into "sideshows."

"I think each individual has to be cognizant of how they come across," he said. "If you really have something you want to talk about [with another trustee], think twice, and maybe talk to that person separately instead of trying to lash out during a public forum."

Mr. Stewart admitted he occasionally joins the bickering. He said he will start closing each meeting with something positive about the community.

"I don't want to blame anybody [on the board]," he said. "It's not a case of thinking there's somebody out there doing it on purpose. I'm talking about good people here, they just need to be reminded to act in a respectful way."

Trustee Larry O'Dell did not respond to a request seeking comment. The board's next meeting is 7 p.m. Tuesday.