

June 2002

THE MORNING CALL

# Perkasie council seeks input from youth

Board plans to add high school student advisory position.

By **Dalondo Moultrie**  
Of The Morning Call

When Jessica Frankenfield learned that Perkasie Borough Council was starting a junior council program, the Pennridge High School junior jumped at the chance of having her voice heard by borough lawmakers.

So earlier this week, she e-mailed Borough Manager John Cornelius about her interest in the position.

"No one at school is talking about it," said Frankenfield, 16. "I e-mailed the borough as soon as I heard about it to find out what I could."

The junior council program, which began in Wesleyville, Erie County, places a high school junior or senior on a borough council in an advisory

position, according to Nicole Faraguna, the Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs' director of communications.

Despite Frankenfield's interest, the council is still in the early stages of implementing the program. Cornelius and other borough officials are fine-tuning criteria for candidates and drawing up an ordinance authorizing the program.

"To get the ordinance written, the selection process protocol written and take it to borough council to get it passed, that's what I want to do in the next month," said Councilman Rich Hendricks, who is credited with bringing the idea to his colleagues.

Council members told Hendricks and Cornelius that the opportunity should be open to students across the Pennridge area.

"The sentiment on council was that it not be restricted to public school students but it should be open to all schools,

including homeschooling," Cornelius said. "It'd be nice to have a student from Perkasie."

Because residents don't elect them to council, junior council members can neither vote nor attend executive session meetings, Faraguna said. Still, junior members are valuable to councils.

We're always interested in different viewpoints," said David L. Woglom, Quakertown borough manager, where the borough council's second appointed junior council member, Alex Riley, attended his first meeting Wednesday. "A junior council person brings the perspective of a young adult. It provides a great opportunity for a young adult to get a perspective on local government."

Riley, a Quakertown High School junior, will be sworn in at borough council's December meeting. At his first meeting, council members approved renovation plans for the borough's pool.

Riley said he sees the pool

project as of major interest to his peers and hopes other youths will come to him with concerns to take to the council.

"I can certainly talk about the pool and tell them things to make more kids come, and make more money off of it," he said. "I hope that I could possibly come up with some ideas that could help the kids in the community. Other than that, I'm just more of an observer."

If given the chance, Frankenfield hopes to take a more active role in borough affairs.

"Teenagers are not represented on the council. I'll bring up more issues that reflect what teenagers are interested in and what affects them," she said. "I think I'm an open-minded person and I'd be willing to listen to any concerns another person would have. I'm pretty good at asserting my views and having them heard."

[dalondo.moultrie@mcall.com](mailto:dalondo.moultrie@mcall.com)  
215-529-2612