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THE DALLAS POST

Melting snow to flush toilets

Water problems plague Back Mt.

Water has been a major topic of conversation among Back Mountain residents during the past few weeks but in no way related to flood waters. It is because many residents in various sections have been without water or have had very little for days at a time.

Parts of Shavertown, Noxen and Dallas have been the most seriously affected and two sections of Dallas in particular.

Residents of the Stonehedge area of Dallas Borough have been without water or at least only some water in the basement for the past week or more until Monday of this week.

The John Molski family of Highland Boulevard had no water for eight days. It was especially difficult for the Molskis for they have a three and a half month old baby. Molski purchased drinking water from Glen Summit and also obtained some water from his mother's home. They melted snow to use for flushing toilets and took their clothes to laundromats to launder them. Mrs. Molski found the most difficult part was having enough water to sterilize the baby's bottles and to make the formula.

They moved into their home on Dec. 8. At that time the pressure was so low, Molski thought that the water was not turned on and called the company only to learn that it was.

The Perry Karnofsky family had water in the basement but none upstairs for more than a week. They had to bathe in no more than an inch of water, which "isn't easy," according to Joan Karnofsky. This week they had a hydraulic pump installed to aid in pumping the water to the upper level of their home.

A third resident in the same area had a pressure pump installed in order to correct the situation. It was done at a cost of several hundred dollars, but according to them, it was worth it to have the water. The entire family was ill with a virus and they had no water except in the garage. Ill as they were, they had to carry it from there to take care of the sick.

According to one of the families, "don't ever get out of water on the weekend" because you will never get in touch with the Dallas Water Company. The answering service merely responds that they have no idea how to get in touch with the manager or repair men.

The residents said that Leonard Venable, manager of the water company, told them that they would have to live with the situation until the new sewer lines go in. One of them stated that the storage tank which supplies their area is never more than half full.

On Monday, however, all were delighted to be able to turn on the shower and actually be able to take a 'stinging' shower.

Residents of College Manor also went days without water, traveling to friends' homes in Wyoming Valley to obtain drinking water, to bathe and to wash clothes.

Larry Johnston, president of the College Manor Homeowners Association, said that on the top of the hill there were at least 10 families who had no water for 12 days. The families at the bottom of the hill, according to Johnston, had a little water. On certain days had water in their basements but not upstairs.

He and other families in the Manor are concerned about new building because of the lack of water. Their major concern is that the water company does not do anything about additional sources for water supply. They believe that the company should consider bodies of water such as Harveys Lake or other lakes or dams in the Back Mountain area.

hard for our home and I would rather tear it down than go into debt," she said.

Grants and loans to pay for sewer hook-ups are available from the Farmer's Home Administration. Most funds are released in the form of grants. If funds are obtained through the Administration in the form of a loan, interest rates are adjusted to individual ability to pay.

At a Harveys Lake Council meeting the last week of January the council tentatively approved commercial and residential rates set by the Sewer Authority. Cost of hook-ups will be \$350 each. If paid within 60 days after notification, cost will be \$300. Yearly rental fee is estimated at \$234.52 and inspection fee set at \$15.

According to Bill Owens, inspector at the Municipal Authority, the sewer hook-up will go into effect within the next month.

Applications for grants or loans may be obtained from the Farmer's Home Administration, 71 North Market St., Nanticoke, Pa. 18634.

Venable, manager of the Dallas Water Company, said that during the past two weeks, frost coming out of the ground makes the mains brittle, then they crack and break.

He stated that there were three major breaks in the past two weeks. Finally, on Monday they found a large break which, after it was repaired, remedied the lack of water. Venable said that he is trying to extend the mains so lines will go up West Center Hill Road and interconnect.

The broken lines are the result of frozen pipes during the severe cold this winter. Venable also added that the frost line was never as low as it is this year. With approval of the home office and permission from the Dallas Area Municipal Authority he wants to install new lines at the same time as sewer lines are installed. This could alleviate the low pressure problem.

While some areas had no water, other areas had more than adequate water supply but voiced complaints about high water rates.

Customers of Trucksville Water Company pay a flat rate of about \$21-\$22 per month. Those on a meter must pay a minimum of \$12 monthly. The Trucksville Water Company is owned by PG&W, as are Shavertown-Kingston Township Water Company, Hilcrest Water Company and Homesite Water Company.

While Trucksville Water Company pays their water bill monthly, the other three are billed quarterly as are customers of Dallas-Shavertown Water Company.

David Williams of PG&W said that the approximate annual rates for the four companies owned by PG&W average as follows: Trucksville Water Company, \$218 annually; Shavertown-Kingston Township Water Company, \$110 annually; Hilcrest Water Company, \$162 annually and Homesite Water Company, \$137 annually.

No estimated amount was received from Dallas-Shavertown Water Company but most, if not all of their customers are on meters.

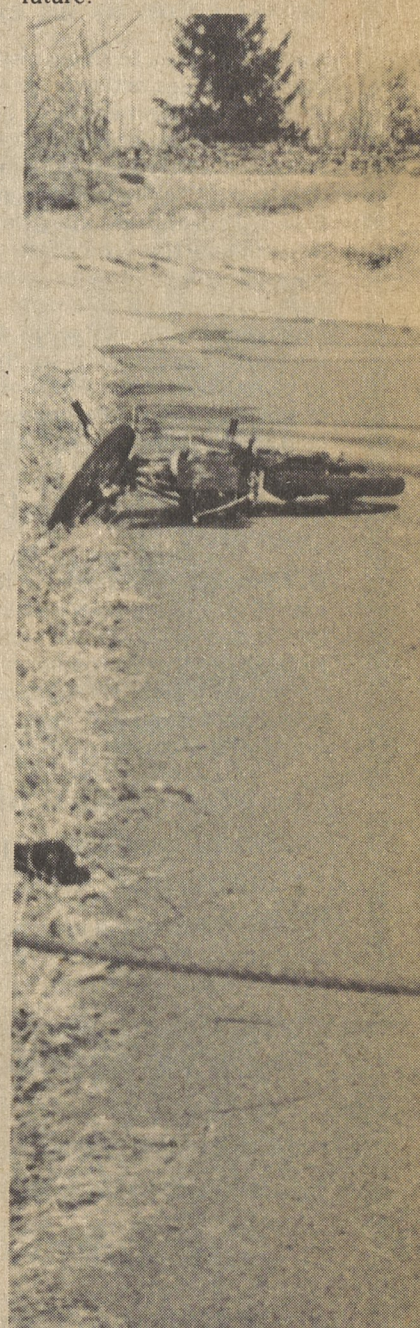
Williams said that some PG&W consumers also were out of water due to the freeze and broken mains. The company tried to keep the customers adequately supplied and has trucked water to the area.

He stated that wells are low, and because of the deep frost in the ground water is running off instead of penetrating.

Williams also acknowledged some local rates are higher than many companies. But because of the small number of customers, he said, the company receives no return on its investment.

The mild weather this week appears to have eased the problem and most of the residents said Tuesday that they now have water.

In the meantime, Venable hopes to obtain permission to install new lines to help prevent such problems in the future.



THIS IS WHERE--This is the scene of the cycle accident where John Hebda, 14, was fatally injured while riding his bike on this private road in Dallas Township. Details, see page 2. (Photo by Fay L. Broody Studio)



FINAL CONCERT--Sinfonia DiCamera will present the final concert of the season, March 12, 8:30 p.m., in Walsh Auditorium College Misericordia. Sharon Ruotolo, left, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph P. Ruotolo, Harveys Lake, will play the solo part in the Overture on Hebrew

Themes. A junior music education major at College Misericordia, she will be accompanied by Karen Kruska, student at the college, who will also play a piano solo in the same selection. Ferdinand Liva, standing, is the conductor.

Lake council probes cable TV franchising

The Harveys Lake Borough Council acted on a variety of issues at its meeting Thursday night, concentrating on the service provided to Lake residents by the Back Mountain Telecable Company.

Cable company representative, Murph Hislop, informed council that a problem has arisen in the council's request for information on issuing the company a franchise to operate in the area.

Hislop stated that when he contacted the State on the matter he was told that boroughs are not authorized to issue such a franchise. He also stated that the Federal Communications Commission says that the company cannot operate in an area without a franchise. He told council that it might be better to wait for action by the state concerning the matter before his company makes a definite proposal to council.

When asked by council president Guy Giordano for an estimate of the income the borough might expect to receive from the company, Hislop stated that the company usually pays the local authority three percent of the income collected in the operating area. As an example, based on 600 subscribers the borough would receive approximately \$1300 annually.

Giordano asked if there was any way that council could receive retroactive payment from the company for prior use of borough facilities. Hislop informed him that, in his opinion, the chances were "slim". Giordano questioned Hislop about the company policy and response to complaints over the sometimes poor reception in the area. He said that council had recently advertised in the local newspapers for Lake residents to report any service problem to the council so that council might be better able to assess the problem in the borough.

He said that to date only three people had responded to the notice and that he would like to hear from other area residents concerning the problem. He said that any complaints

should be filed with the borough secretary by calling 639-2113.

Hislop said that company policy regarding service problems was to send a repairman to the home as soon as possible. If the customer was still dissatisfied with the service he could request that the company disconnect his service until the time when service improved. At that time, the company would reinstall the service at no charge to the customer.

The borough also considered a complaint from Mr. and Mrs. Robert Muller, Philadelphia, concerning a building permit issued to a neighbor for the construction of a carport. Muller who owns property at what is designated as Keefer plot 48,

Township notes water problem

A serious water condition in the area was brought to light at the regular monthly Dallas Township Supervisors meeting Monday night in the township building. Larry Johnston, president of the College Manor Homeowners Association, told the supervisors that residents of that development had been without water for 11 consecutive days. He said that service had just been restored Monday afternoon at 4 p.m.

Chairman Phillip Walter said that he had no idea there was any problem with water in the area. Johnston said there is a very low water table right now due to the winter drought. Before the ground had time to become saturated with water it froze and the lack of rain and snow during the winter months is the cause of the drought condition, Solicitor Frank Townsend noted.

Johnston reported that he had talked with Leonard Venable, present manager of the Dallas-Shavertown Water Company and Venable said that there are no shut-off valves to control the water flow if there is a

problem. Lakeview Road, stated that prior to the construction of the carport the neighbor constructed a retaining wall. The wall was used to help raise the area where the carport was to be built. The neighbor allegedly began to build the carport on the site without acquiring a building permit.

When a former zoning official was informed, he visited the site and was told by Muller's neighbor that he had been issued a permit to build a tool shed. The official ordered the neighbor to halt construction until the board could evaluate the situation at its meeting.

The board later approved a variance in the zoning ordinance to allow the carport.

Muller claimed that, since the construction of the retaining wall, he and some of his neighbors have received damage to their properties caused by the increased runoff as a result of the ground being elevated by the wall. He also accused zoning board chairman, Joseph Ruotolo, of failing to notify him of the permit's approval.

Muller said that Ruotolo had promised him notification at a zoning board meeting and that the promise was recorded on tape which is used by the secretary to help record proceedings.

In response to the charge, Ruotolo stated that the zoning board is only required to notify the person who applied for the permit and that a permit is not required to build a retaining wall. He also said that he had no recollection of a promise to notify Muller.

Giordano interrupted and stated that there was obviously a problem with the notification procedure and recommended that the procedure be amended to allow for a 30-day period in which appeals could be made concerning issuance of permits.

He reaffirmed that a permit for a wall was not required in the borough but that there was a State law prohibiting the diversion of water flow for erosion protection. He said that the borough secretary had inspected the

site and had found that the water flow had not been altered by the retaining wall.

Councilman Jack McManus added that he was not aware of the relationship between the retaining wall and the carport construction or why the road was not surveyed before the permit was issued, but he said that he would "go over immediately and make temporary repairs until the council could find funds to make permanent improvements to the road."

In other business the council approved the mayor's annual clean-up project. The project is to take place on two consecutive Fridays, May 13 and May 20 and would follow a schedule similar to last year's.

People who receive weekly trash

(Continued on P. 4)

Federal grants, loans available for Lake Sewer hookups

Grants and loans are available to low income or senior citizens who cannot afford the Sewer Authority hook-up at Harveys Lake.

In a recent news release, Rep. Frank J. O'Connell stated that he had been informed of the plight of several Luzerne County senior citizens who are unable to pay for sewer hook-ups. He recently received a letter from a widow in Harveys Lake who said her only income was her Social Security check and could not afford the new sewer hook-up.

"My late husband and I worked too

DAMA to meet this Thursday

The Dallas Area Municipal Authority (DAMA) will hold their regular monthly meeting Thursday, March 10, at 8 p.m. in the Sewage Treatment Plant executive office. R. Spencer Martin will preside.

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