

County wants to plan '96 bug spraying now

By GRACE R. DOVE
Post Staff

BACK MOUNTAIN - Ron Rugletic doesn't want to say, "I told you so," but he did so August 15 at a special meeting of the Harveys Lake Borough council.

"Last year nobody listened to me when I warned the public about a possible heavy infestation this spring by caterpillars of the elm spanworm, fall cankerworm and two different species of tent caterpillars," he said. "When the caterpillars were so bad in June, I had people literally crying on the phone because they couldn't get help."

This past spring the elm spanworm, fall cankerworm, Eastern tent caterpillar and forest tent caterpillar munched their merry way through 132,000 acres of Luzerne County. The Back Mountain was the hardest hit, with some areas nearly stripped of leaves, said Rugletic, who heads the Luzerne County Office of Special Projects.

Federal funding doesn't cover spraying for bugs which are native to Pennsylvania, Rugletic said. Federal money pays only for control of imported pests such as the gypsy moth.

Representative Phyllis Mundy has initiated a \$5 million program through the Department of Environmental Protection to spray for the caterpillars next spring, but Luzerne County officials aren't optimistic that it will be passed because Mundy's party is now the minority, Rugletic said.

"We want to have a program in place in case the state doesn't approve hers," he added.

The Luzerne County commissioners have allowed Rugletic to make contracts for private spraying available as a public service to homeowners. Under the program, spraying will cost \$14 per acre for parcels of 10 or more contiguous acres, while individual plots will cost \$40 per acre.

Rugletic plans to visit municipal meetings in the Back Mountain to spread the news of the spraying program and to leave spraying contracts with local officials.

It is the residents' responsibility to sign up interested home-

owners and establish a system of contact persons and responsible persons to collect the money for the spraying. The system must be in place by January, so that spraying can begin as soon as possible in the spring, Rugletic said.

The spray, a naturally-occurring virus which attacks the caterpillars' digestive systems and causes them to starve to death, must be applied before the bugs reach a certain size and become too strong for it to affect them. Once applied, it lasts for up to 28 days, he said.

"From what I know, these infestations run in cycles, with several light years followed by two or three heavy years," Rugletic said. "Weather also plays an important role - the infestation seems to be heavier after a relatively warm winter."

Contrary to popular belief, no one released flies as natural predators against the caterpillars last spring, Rugletic said. Some natural predators tend to follow the caterpillar infestations and leave when the infestation collapses, as in the case of the bald-faced wasp and yellow-shafted flicker following the gypsy moth, he added.

Mundy is working with 34 co-sponsors and the House Committee for Environmental Resource and Energy Conservation to get the \$5 million spraying bill passed.

"The caterpillars were a very serious problem last year," she said. "It's scary to think of the consequences of a third straight year of defoliation. I'm doing everything I can to bring the bill to a vote."

If the House doesn't pass her bill, she plans to suggest that the Luzerne County Commissioners set up a county-wide spraying plan, funded either by tax dollars or homeowners who want their properties sprayed. Another possible solution would be to have Luzerne County join with neighboring counties in a joint spray program, Mundy added.

Rugletic advises homeowners interested in the spraying program to contact their municipal governments or to call the Luzerne County Office of Special Projects at 825-1840.



POST PHOTO/GRACE R. DOVE

Showing off Ladder 31

Kunkle firefighters show off the 1960 aerial ladder truck with a 75-foot ladder, which they purchased from Triton Hose Company in Tunkhannock, which will be on display at the August 26 open house and chicken barbecue between 2 and 7 p.m. Free blood pressure and sugar screenings, Tot Finder stickers and invalid stickers will be available. Smoke alarms and fire extinguishers will be for sale. Firefighters are: Susan Denmon, chief Jack Dodson, secretary/ambulance chief Dorothy Dodson, assistant chief Ted King, assistant chief Doug Higgins, Dave Oshirak, Joh Bush, president Bruce Biggs, Larry Hilbert, assistant chief Scott Hoyt, captain Chris Traver, assistant chief Bill Fedrow, assistant chief/ambulance chief Bob Smith and (in cab) captain Mike Freeman.)

Harveys Lake hires new road foreman

By GRACE R. DOVE
Post Staff

HARVEYS LAKE - Personnel matters were the main item of business at the regular August 15 council meeting.

Charles Musial was unanimously appointed road foreman, at a wage of \$8 per hour, while Fred Goodrich was unanimously hired to work in the public works department for \$7 per hour. He will have a 180-day probation period.

The council unanimously approved a job description for the workers in the public works department.

The council unanimously accepted the resignation of patrolman Edward Dubiak because of "scheduling and communication problems."

The council unanimously accepted a \$106,000 bid from Vincent Construction to pave Baird and Green streets.

Mayor Rick Boice noted that any burning in the borough is banned until further notice due to the extremely dry conditions. Violators will be cited, he added.

Ann Russin, Nancy Barnard promoted by Visiting Nurses

Visiting Nurse Association/Home-Health Services recently appointed two Back Mountain nurses to new positions at the nonprofit United Way agency.

Dallas resident Ann Russin, R.N., M.S.N., has been named Director of Home Health Services. She previously served as VNA's director of education and program development, as well as working as a staff nurse.

Prior to joining the VNA, Russin was on the faculty of the Nursing Department at Wilkes University for 12 years.

A graduate of Dallas High School and Cornell University-New York Hospital School of Nursing, she earned a Master's Degree in nursing from College

Misericordia.

She is a member of Sigma Theta Tau, a national honor society in nursing and the Drug and Alcohol Council of Dallas High School.

She has two daughters, Emily and Abby.

Nancy Barnard, a B.S.N., a life-long resident of Dallas, has been appointed assistant director of Home Health Services. She has been employed at the VNA for 17 years, most recently as quality assurance manager. She is a graduate of Dallas High School and Villanova University and is currently pursuing a Master's Degree in health administration at Wilkes University.

Professional activities include



NANCY BARNARD, RN



ANN RUSSIN, RN

membership in Sigma Theta Tau, serving as treasurer of both the MHA Student Association and the American College of Health Care Executives at Wilkes University. Barnard is also active in the Dal-

las School District's Parent Teacher Organization and Gate of Heaven Church.

She and her husband, George, are the parents of two sons, Matthew and Patrick.

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