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Water co. customers could pay price if drought continues

By KASIA McDONOUGH
Post Staff

BACK MOUNTAIN - Harveys Lake residents may be required to boil their water if the record lack of precipitation continues. And customers of municipal water systems may find themselves paying more for excessive use.

According to a United Water official, the company's water supply has been severely affected by the rainfall shortage. The well which provides water to our

Dallas and Shavertown customers is at a historic low right now," said Dave Bradley. "The wells which serve Noxen and Harveys Lake are also very low."

The ground water levels are so far below normal that United Water may be forced to draw from a reserve supply in order to meet the demands of its customers in the Harveys Lake area. "It is not uncommon for the Harveys Lake well to be low, but if it drops much further we may have to go to an alternate supply," said Bradley.

"If we get into a rationing situation rate penalties would go into effect."

Dave Bradley
United Water

The reserve, unlike the wells in Dallas, Noxen and Shavertown, is not regularly utilized. "Supplies in those areas are on-line and operating each day but the

standby in Harveys Lake has not been used in some time," said Bradley.

A boil advisory would be implemented as a health precaution if the secondary source is required. "The advisory would last a short while, until we and the DEP (Department of Environmental Protection) are satisfied the water meets appropriate standards."

While most areas are not facing water quality issues like Harveys Lake, the quantity of available water is nearing a critical juncture. "The drought emergency decla-

ration is the highest we can go," said Susan Obleski of the Susquehanna River Basin Commission. "It gives us the authority to take a look at water usage permits which have been issued in the past and possibly modify levels previously authorized."

These changes may affect groups or corporations that regularly use large quantities of water. "The review is done to ensure that should we get into dire cir-

See WATER, pg 8



Rachel Kasper, one of three Lake-Lehman seniors who ran a field hockey camp last week, coached during a scrimmage.

Field hockey camp is fun, games and credit

By REBECCA SCOTT
Post Correspondent

LEHMAN - Three incoming seniors at Lake-Lehman High School were faced with a challenge. How could the best friends work on a senior project together that met all of the requirements to pass, and keep field hockey part of their summer plans? For Melissa DeCesaris, Rachel Kasper, and Jonelle Perlis, the search turned out not to be so difficult.

The past three years Lake-Lehman field hockey head coach Jean Lipski and assistant coach Sandy Boyle have run a summer field hockey camp for girls in fourth through sixth grade. This year

Melissa, Rachel, and Jonelle stepped in and took over. They started in February planning drills, attending meetings, ordering materials, and organizing the complete camp to ensure the participants would have fun and get "a taste of field hockey," as Rachel described it. The camp ran July 19-23, and more than 40 girls received a stick, ball, shin guards, mouth guard, shirt, and experience.

Rachel Kasper's interest in field hockey was sparked in seventh grade by her aunt playing on the team, and her friend Melissa DeCesaris joined her. They dared Jonelle, an admitted tomboy, to play "so she would have to wear a skirt." It was

clear these friends like to work together and their enthusiasm for the sport spilled over to the young participants.

"I love them all," said Paige Selenski, fourth grade, as she hugged Jonelle, who she affectionately called Inchie. This lighthearted playfulness between the leaders and campers was evident throughout the camp. "You create a sistership with the kids," Rachel said.

"They are creating friends and so are we," Melissa added.

It was all fun and mostly games when the

See CAMP, pg 7

Ruling has potential to bring down Dallas tower

By RONALD BARTIZEK
Post Staff

BACK MOUNTAIN - A decision that blocks construction of a cellular telephone tower in Kingston Township may have repercussions for an existing tower in Dallas Township.

Judge Thomas F. Burke, of the Luzerne County Court of Common Pleas, ruled July 19 that the Kingston Twp. supervisors "committed an error of law" when they concluded a proposed 150-foot-tall tower was a "semi-public" use. Burke went on to write in his decision that even if that determination was correct, a variance would have been required before construction.

Atty. Mark McNealis represented David and Patricia McMahon, who live across Rt.

309 from the proposed tower, in an appeal of the township's approval. He said the supervisors' interpretation of its zoning ordinance would have allowed construction of a tower anywhere in the township, and the judge agreed.

Dr. Roger Landry appealed a similar ruling in Dallas Township several months earlier. In that case, Cellular One initially proposed a 280-foot tower, but constructed one about 100 feet shorter after receiving approval from the township. That tower was built before a ruling on Landry's appeal, and McNealis said it is possible it may have to be taken down if the appeals stand. That will not be decided for some time, he speculated, since "the courts are literally riddled with these cases."

"It's a huge relief for now," Patricia McMahon said. It wasn't a battle she and her husband fought alone; she said two other families — Robert and Gina Sabol, and Dave and Susie Koziel — had helped defray the cost of the appeal. McMahon said about 300 people had signed a petition opposing the tower, and eight families first retained McNealis to represent them at a township

"I would love to carry it on until they take it down."

Dr. Roger Landry
Dallas Township

See TOWER, pg 8

Local vets star in Wheelchair Games

By KASIA McDONOUGH
Post Staff

BACK MOUNTAIN - Local military veterans share a love of sport and a zest for each new day, despite disabilities.

The annual Wheelchair Games held in San Juan, Puerto Rico, featured two Back Mountain veteran athletes who are eager to prove life in a wheelchair — or motorized scooter — can be as fulfilling as any other. Andy Chacko, of Dallas, and Dan Conte, of Harveys Lake, recently joined disabled vets from around the nation in a competition where everyone who shows up is already a winner. "If someone told me to go bowling five years ago, I would have said, 'What? You're crazy; I can't even stand,'" said Chacko.

"But next thing you know I'm getting medals from the Lieutenant Governor of Puerto Rico."

"I might be disabled but I'm not unable."

Dan Conte
Harveys Lake

Conte brought home some gold as well, earning first place prizes in the target shooting and archery events. "I've been going to the wheelchair games for three years now and I've seen other people competing who are a lot worse off than I am," he said. "It really pumps you up and makes you try harder."

Giving that extra effort is not something new for these gentlemen, who are both combat veterans. Conte, a former Marine who has Multiple Sclerosis, fought in the Vietnam War and Chacko is a veteran of the Korean War and was injured twice while in uniform. "I signed up for the Air Force

at 18, thinking I would avoid the army and stay away from the worst of it," said Chacko. "My first assignment they put me in a tank attached to the 65th Infantry."

Ironically, the 65th Infantry is from Puerto Rico. "It was something to go there all these years later," said Chacko.

The trip, which is funded through donations from corporate sponsors, was something both men and their families enjoyed. "We got better than royal treatment," said Chacko. "UPS (United Parcel Service) employees were at the airports to take care of our luggage and the police blocked traffic in San Juan. The hospitality was just fantastic and the EPVA (Eastern Paralyzed Veterans of America) could not have run things better."

Organizing outings is some-

See VETS, pg 8



Andy Chacko of Dallas won a gold medal in ramp bowling in June at the Wheelchair Games.

■ **Healthy fun**
Water aerobics proves helpful to the "Golden Mermaids" at College Misericordia. Pg 3.

■ **2 champs**
Back Mountain Major League and Senior League softball teams take titles. Pg 9.

INDEX

14 Pages, 2 Sections
Calendar.....14
Classified.....12-13
Crossword.....14
Editorials.....4
Obituaries.....2, 10
School.....11
Sports.....9-10

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