

Chris Berish unlocks the critters hiding in nature. Page 3



# THE POST

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SERVING THE COMMUNITIES OF THE DALLAS & LAKE-LEHMAN SCHOOL DISTRICTS



POST PHOTO/CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK

## How green is our valley?

Frank Harvey, Centermoreland, drove his Percheron draft horses up the slope at Hillside Farms so his passengers could get a view of the valley below. The rides were part of a special day for the North Branch Land Trust that included a bake sale, raffle, nature walks, rides and — of course — Hillside Farms ice cream. More photos on page 4.

## Planner experienced in sprawl to do study

By ERIN YOUNGMAN  
Post Staff

**BACK MOUNTAIN** — In an effort to start "smart planning" practices in the region, the Back Mountain Council of Governments (COG) has appointed a firm experienced in urban sprawl issues.

COG members said Kise, Straw and Kolodner's work in areas such as suburban southeast Pennsylvania and State Route 1 in Delaware put the Philadelphia firm ahead of competing consultants. The firm beat out 12 other such companies for the \$100,000 job, which will assess water supply, traffic, zoning and create the first Back Mountain regional master plan. The project is expected to be completed within 18 months of its contract date.

"I know people are going to say why didn't we hire someone local," said Frank Wagner, COG president. "But," said Wagner bluntly, "I think they know what we want better than the others."

Joe Moskovitz, Dallas Borough Manager, said the COG executive committee voted 7-0 for the firm. "In many ways," he said, "the Back Mountain faces similar challenges as southeast Pennsylvania faced 20 years ago."

Moskovitz described those challenges generally as urban sprawl issues such as loss of open space and lack of regional planning.

Moskovitz said a proposed "big box" retail store in Dallas Township is just one indication of the need to support planning on a regional Back Mountain level, planning that is consistent with what the community wants and needs.

The concern that a big box will spawn similar developments weighs on the minds of residents, Moskovitz said. "Another Wilkes-Barre Township out on 118 is not what we want."

Moskovitz named the Route 1 corridor in Delaware as an example of the planning firm's experience. He said their work there has achieved a balance between keeping traffic moving and providing opportunities for drivers to pull off. "Something Dallas is interested in doing," he added.

He said the firm is also "a known commodity in being creative," with significant experience in designing and planning village centers; something Dallas Borough has been investigating within the context of its visioning exercise for some time.

Moskovitz said he thinks a regional plan will lead to "something that has not previously been achieved in the Back Mountain area," smart-

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## Huntsville United Methodist will note 125 years

By ERIN YOUNGMAN  
Post Staff



Huntsville United Methodist Church

**JACKSON TOWNSHIP** — Ask long-time members of Huntsville United Methodist Church what makes their congregation tick, and you'll hear phrases such as "like a family," "friendly people," and "a pastor that just won't think of himself!"

But that, of course, just scratches the surface. As two women fold, bag and sweep up fellowship hall after a rummage sale — which they have done for decades — a story of the

### Church & Community weekly page starts this issue. Page 12.

long history of involvement and commitment at the church unfolds.

In addition to rummage sale duties, Norma Wright and Shirley Nicely have been teaching Sunday school since the 1950s.

Every Sunday the women gather crafts, music, snacks and Bible-themed lessons to share with the children.

As they discuss their two classes, one for ages 3-7 and the other for 8-12-year-olds, they talk about how the Sunday school program used to be much larger, how it ended for a time and how it seems to be growing again.

Both Wright and Nicely have spent an enormous share of their lives in the church. For Norma, now 69, her work is the continuation of the commitment her parents and grandparents made before her.

Some of her fondest memories are

See HUNTSVILLE, pg 2

## Pool could be busier

□ Dallas facility has helped swim team, more public use is sought

By ERIN YOUNGMAN  
Post Staff

**DALLAS** — The Dallas School District opened the doors on its first swimming pool last fall. After a year of an ambitious combination of public and school programs, Matt Stretanski, pool manager and swim coach, reviews what worked, what didn't and that awesome 2002-03 varsity swim team season.

Not long after the \$3 million natatorium opened at the middle school, the district put in place programs designed not just for children, but for anyone who lived in the district. The reason for opening the pool to the public was simple, said Stretanski, "It's a community owned facility, therefore the community should be able to use it."

The public programs were kicked off in the spring with a five-day a week public swim program. Stretanski said due to low participation, however, the district initially lost money

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POST PHOTO/ERIN YOUNGMAN

## Windsor or four-n-hand?

Lake-Lehman High School Co-Principal Michael Gokay helped Phil Kurello tie on his borrowed tie Tuesday, so a photographer could take a snapshot of the 2003 Homecoming Court. Meet the entire group on page 8.

## Volunteering helps keep Marge Banks feeling young

By M.B. GILLIGAN  
Post Correspondent

**DALLAS** — Volunteerism is alive in the Back Mountain but it may well be floundering. Cries for more volunteers are coming from fire and ambulance companies, the library auction committee, local children's sports organizations and, now, the Girl Scouts.

"We have a serious shortage of Girl Scout leaders this year," said Margie Banks, co-manager for Penns Woods Girl Scouts Service Unit 119, which includes much of the Back Mountain. "We have a lot of girls on a waiting list because we don't have enough leaders. People just want to be assistant leaders."

The world needs more people like Margie Banks. In addition to her volunteer time with the Service Unit, which entails responsibility for maintenance and success of Back Mountain troops from Daisies to Senior Girl Scouts, she is also the leader of two Cadette troops. She estimates that she spent over 500 hours as a Girl Scout volunteer last year alone.

"I try not to laugh when people tell me they're too busy. I just point out that I have two troops and it is

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