

# THE POST

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4-Hers bring back ribbons from state show.

Page 7

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

## Study will assess open space, rec places

A \$50,000 grant will pay for a thorough assessment of region's assets and potential.

By RONALD BARTIZEK  
Post Staff

Factories inventory their warehouses, stores list unsold items left on their shelves and the Census Bureau counts how many people live in each town.

The Back Mountain Council of Governments is preparing to carefully record something else — open space — with an eye toward preserving some of the precious commodity.

The COG, consisting of Dallas Borough and Dallas, Kingston and Lehman townships, has snagged a \$50,000 grant that will be paid to a consultant who will survey open land as it now exists and recommend how protect it.

The bonus amount is in addition to a \$100,000 intermunicipal planning grant that was approved earlier this year.

"Other than traffic, we think it's (open space) the most important part of the plan," said Joe Moskovitz, Dallas Borough Manager and administrator of the COG.

The original application for the larger grant at first did not include an open space ingredient, and was rejected by the state because of the omission. Moskovitz said the COG then included a stripped-down open space study to satisfy the requirement, knowing it would not be comprehensive.

Then an angel appeared, at least a planning angel. Ellen Ferretti, at the time director of the Pennsylvania Environmental Council's Northeastern office, called Moskovitz to suggest that the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources would be able to add \$50,000 to a grant being used to develop an open space plan for all of Luzerne and

See SPACE, pg 3



## Big kitty in the back yard

Karen Attanasio and her family live in Sutton Hills, Jackson Township. She sent this photo, the latest sighting of rare or unusual wildlife in the Back Mountain. This is what she wrote about the experience.

"Last week I was walking by my living room double doors and saw what I thought was one of our cats that had gotten out. Instantly I went for the door knob to let it back in and look what I found! Do you think it would've asked my cats if they were relatives before it used them for dinner?"

She also said a neighbor across the street had a bear on their back porch last summer, and another spotted what they thought might be a mountain lion.

Game Commission experts warn against approaching wild animals, even if they don't appear threatening.

## Signs of the creek



John Cybulski and Frank Kus, Dallas Borough maintenance workers, install the first of 12 signs that identify where Toby Creek crosses under a roadway. This one is at the corner of Machell Avenue and Route 415.

FOR THE POST/CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK

## Signs identify creek crossings

By RONALD BARTIZEK  
Post Staff

DALLAS — It took a while to get them, but 12 signs now identify where Toby Creek crosses below roadways in the borough.

Borough Manager Joe Moskovitz applied for the signs in August 2003, through a program administered by the Pocono Resource, Conservation and Development District.

Walter Chamberlain, District Manager of the Luzerne County Conservation District, which is

headquartered in Jackson Township, serves as vice chairman of the RC&D.

"That opportunity came along, so we took advantage of it," he said. "We were able to get quite a few municipalities involved," including the borough, Jackson Township and Fairmount Township.

Moskovitz said the RC&D covered up to \$75 for each pair of signs, while the borough took care of installation. The process, which was lengthened by unanticipated demand, tried his patience, but, "I just wanted those signs," he said.

## Companion program gives elderly a lift

By M.B. GILLIGAN  
Post Correspondent



FOR THE POST/M.B. GILLIGAN

Donna Pitts is a Friendly Care Giver for Irene Witek, visiting regularly and taking Witek out to run errands. Witek is grateful for the company and assistance.

Irene Witek is a grateful participant in the Friendly Care Givers program. "It is wonderful, I'll tell you, especially when you don't have any family nearby," said Witek, whose two daughters live near Philadelphia.

Once a week volunteer Donna Pitts picks up Irene at her Dallas home and takes her out to run errands. "We go grocery shopping or to Wal-mart or The Medicine Shoppe," said Donna, a student in College Misericordia's School of Social Work.

"It started out with a commitment through our community service class but I'm interested in working with the elderly so I continued with this program."

Friendly Care Givers is funded by Catholic Social Services and the Diocese of Scranton. The program matches clients, age 60 or older, who live alone and are homebound with a volunteer visitor.

"Our volunteers must be over 13 years old and are required to interact socially for at least one hour a week," said Ginger Walsh, director of marketing and recruitment at Catholic Social Services. "We get a lot of calls about community service but this program requires a commitment for at least one year."

Friendly Care Givers can simply stop in for a weekly social visit, but most partnerships evolve from that point.

"I lost my ring when I was out to dinner in Tunkhannock with friends," said Witek. "Donna took me all the way back there to get it and we went out to lunch while we were there. It's a wonderful program and I don't know what I'd do without it."

Friendly Care Givers and its sister program, Telephone Reassurance, have a waiting list of clients in the Back Mountain area and an ongoing need for more volunteers. Anyone interested in signing up may call Catholic Social Services at 822-7118.

## ELECTION 2004

## Huge voter turnout was heartening

Most local polls drew about 70 percent of eligible voters. Dallas Township had problems.

By RONALD BARTIZEK  
Post Staff

Polls in Pennsylvania opened Tuesday at 7 a.m. But when poll workers arrived an hour before that to prepare the Lehman Township fire hall for voting, they found people waiting outside.

"We sent them for coffee and when they got back there were 20 people in line," said Jerry Sutton, a majority election inspector.

It was like that all around the Back Mountain through the morning. At 1:20 p.m., the lines that had formed seven hours earlier at the Trucksville fire station had finally dissipated. "This is the first break we've had since 7," said Nancy Crane, an inspector there.

At that point more than 1,100 votes had been cast. That compared to a total of about 1,200 all day in the 2003 election cycle, which featured hot contests for supervisor and the county home-rule ballot question.

Even at that, a steady stream of voters continued to walk into the hall, where, if they were not regulars they were asked to show identification before casting a ballot.

That requirement, and new log books being used for the first time, got some of the blame for backups. Near 2 p.m., Phil Conrad, his wife Virginia and daughter Carissa had been in line for nearly an hour at the Dallas Township Middle District polling place, and they had another 15 to 20 minutes to go.

Phil Conrad was not bothered by the delay. "Great turnout," he said. "It's nice to see."

Ahead of the Conrads, three College Misericordia students, all first-time voters, were nearing the voting booth. Kelly Ward, Kelly Denlea and Melissa Butler had all registered at school earlier this year.

See ELECTION, pg 3

## Inside The Post



Dallas El kids get a lesson in fire safety. Page 2

A.D. cautions against outside athletes. Page 7

## 12 Pages, 1 Section

Calendar	.....12
Church	.....11
Crossword	.....8
Editorials	.....4
Obituaries	.....5
School	.....10
Sports	.....7-9

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