

Residents voice concerns about gas drilling

EnCana Gas and Oil spokeswoman says company would be required by the state to correct problems.

By JEN MARCKIN
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Stefanie Spezzia and her husband, Howard, live just outside of a one-mile radius of an exploratory drilling well site in the Back Mountain.

The Spezzias built their Shady Lane home nearly four years ago, but now they worry about the possibility of water contamination due to drilling into the

Marcellus Shale for natural gas. It was one of many concerns talked about at a Tuesday evening meeting for neighbors within the proposed "Salansky" gas well site area, as it is called by the company.

"We don't have the money to put a new well up," said Stefanie Spezzia. "If the water is contaminated and they can't fix it, we have nowhere to go."

EnCana Oil and Gas Inc., which operates from its head-

quarters in Denver, Colo., has about 8,700 gas wells across the United States. This is the first time the gas company is drilling into the Marcellus, according to Wendy Wiedenbeck, spokeswoman for the eight-year-old natu-

ral gas company.

"How safe are we from you polluting our water on your first endeavor?" asked one of the estimated 130 in attendance.

EnCana is attempting to establish a baseline for water qual-

ity and quantity conditions by requesting property owners participate in a water sampling assessment, which will be collected by Rettew Associates, a third-party environmental-testing firm based in Lancaster.

Letters were mailed April 8 to landowners located within a mile radius of the well covering Lake and Lehman Townships, and Harveys Lake Borough.

Wiedenbeck said the gas company would be required by the state to correct water contamination problems.

"We will take every safeguard to not impact your water," she said to concerned residents.

Wiedenbeck said the company is committed to responsible development and protecting the water by baseline water testing.

But, residents such as the Spezzias and homeowner Libby Davis, who resides with family at their Meeker Outlet Road property just within the well drilling radius, remain skeptical.

Davis, of Lake Township, has not signed an access agreement that would allow the collection of water samples.

Township officials voted unanimously on April 13 to allow the company to drill near Peaceful Valley Road.

WORLD

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Detroit Free Press where she hired the entire design team before being promoted to design director of the newspaper.

While in that position, she was asked to redesign the Aberdeen American News in South Dakota.

"I didn't know at the time that was a test," she said.

Directly after she completed that task, Withey took a six-month leave of absence to teach journalism and design at the University of Navarra in Spain.

"I thought I'll see if I like teaching and I'll also get the experience of living in another country," she said.

The day Withey was to return to the U.S. in 1995, she received a call from the vice president of the Knight Ridder newspaper chain, asking her to be the design consultant for the company. She agreed.

In her new position, Withey completely redesigned 10 to 12 newspapers of various sizes across the country. Part of her job was to make each paper look and feel like its own community.

"I did the design but always partnered with someone at the newspaper...it didn't belong to me; it was theirs," she said. "One of the ones that I enjoyed the most was the Philadelphia Daily News. I just liked the format and it was the underdog."

Withey also enjoyed redesigning the San Luis Obispo Tribune because it was located in a beautiful area of southern California, she said.

"It was a challenge because it was seen as the city paper but it covered the central coast," she said of the California newspaper.

While serving as president of the Society of News Design, Withey met her husband, Juan Antonio Giner, at a conference. Giner, who is from Spain, was the president of the Society of European Design at the time.

Always wanting to visit the native country of her father, John Oliver Withey, who was born in Wales and immigrated to the U.S. at age 2, Withey spent her honeymoon in Wales.

While there, she and her husband spotted a home for sale in St. David's, Pembrokehire, and the owners asked them to come for a drink at sunset. After seeing the sunset over St. Peter's Cathedral, the newlyweds bought the house.

Withey was at a conference in Washington, D.C. in 2003 when she was offered a job by Virginian-Pilot Editor Denis Finley who asked her to become managing editor for visuals and joint venture publications at the newspaper in

"I think the thing that's most important to me is just how all creative processes are very collective. A creative process is very collective and newspapers always have been and, hopefully, will always be a place where people of all disciplines can come together and shine as a unit."

Deborah Withey
Former BMT resident
now living in Wales

Norfolk, Va.

"He kept after me and, secretly, I thought this was something I should do," she said.

Thinking the job would be a good opportunity because she wanted to do creative writing for a newspaper and didn't want to leave the industry without one more experience, Withey took the job in 2004 and moved with her husband and their son, Tam, now age 9, to Virginia.

She left the position in 2009 to return with her family to their home in Wales. That year, she also illustrated "Children of Valor," a book created by the U.S. Army for young readers which celebrates the lives and children of fallen American service men and women. For her illustrations and contributions to the Valor project, she has been awarded the Civilian Service Medal of Excellence from the Army.

"It was really an honor because the armed forces decided they needed to explain the funeral process to children because so many people were dying in Iraq and Afghanistan," Withey said.

Withey's latest project is founding Cheese + Pickles Studio in St. David's, a place where she creates art and a place that is home to community art and adult art education.

She is currently working on Gyoatoku, the ancient art of Japanese fish printing, and painting sea stones.

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telling them not to worry; Mommy will be coming," George said.

George has been married to her husband, William, for 52 years. The couple has two grown children, Marcia Walsh, of Sweet Valley; and William George, of Turbotville, as well as five grandchildren.

After her retirement, she plans to travel, enjoy her home, work in her yard and bake.

"I would have retired five, six years ago, but after I got a principal - he's just been a delight - and a nurse, I decided to stay on," George said. "I just figured it's time to go, time to do what I want to do with my husband."

BIRTHDAY

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As the disease progressed, she was no longer able to perform even simple tasks such as unloading the dishwasher because it would leave her out of breath.

"It was very hard on our family," said Pratt, speaking of her husband, Carl, and their 10-year-old daughter, Nicole. "I missed out on being a mom because I was so limited on what I could do. And my daughter, she was scared at times because she would see me struggling. But I also think it made her very compassionate."

With her lung capacity at only 25 percent, Pratt was told by doctors at Hershey there was nothing more they could do and referred her to the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania.

She was placed on a lung transplant list on April 9, 2009 and told to be available at all times. Just nine days later, she received the life-changing news that a set of lungs had become available to her.

For the first six weeks following her release from the hospital, Pratt commuted to the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania three times a week for rehabilitation. Her mother, Pat Zikor, of Trucksville, stayed at her daughter's house during that time to help Carl with chores and caring for Nicole.

Pratt began rehabilitation at St. Joseph's Medical Center in Reading, a program she continues to adhere to three times a week.

She can now go for walks with her daughter, do the grocery shopping and unload the dishwasher once again. Aside from a five-day stay in the hospital last August due to a virus, she has had a smooth recovery.

On March 1 of this year, Pratt returned to work part-time as an administrative assistant at Albright College where she worked until the day before her surgery. She hopes to return full-time by June 1.

Last Sunday's party was Zikor's idea as a way to thank everyone, some whom Pratt doesn't even know, who have been praying for her and sending her words of encouragement.

Zikor admitted it was difficult when she learned her daughter was sick, especially because her late husband, Joseph, was also ill at the time. Zikor found support from friends in her 8:15 a.m. exercise class at Misericordia University.

One friend, Mae Flicata, of Dallas, was particularly helpful because her daughter, Mary, who lives in California, received a kidney transplant.

"Mother to mother, it was really good," Zikor said. "There's a lot of positive that came out of this. You realize friends are wonderful."

Friends from St. Therese's Church in Shavertown prayed for Pratt whose name was also on the prayer list at Trucksville United Methodist Church, Zikor said.

Zikor was not an organ donor until after Pratt's transplant.

"Most of my friends (and I), when we renewed our licenses, even though we are not young, we said we would be organ donors," she said. "I guess you don't think about it until it's at your back door and you realize how wonderful it is when someone makes this donation."



Michelle (Zikor) Toennes, right, cuts a cake at the party while her sister, Margie Pratt, looks on.

Pratt has a request for people who are able to donate organs.

"If you could be a donor, seriously think about it because I've seen what it did for me and, as I went through that rehab pro-

gram, I saw a lot of individuals who were getting another shot," she said. "If you're not a donor, if you could think of why you're not and change your mind because it's a wonderful thing to do."

You can be an organ donor

With April marking National Donate Life Month, PennDOT reminds driver's license and identification card holders they can help another person live a fuller and longer life by registering online as an organ donor.

It only takes 90 seconds or less to add the organ donor designation to a driver's license or identification card by visiting www.dmv.state.pa.us and selecting the Online Services link where the option to add the organ donor designation is found under Driver's License/Photo ID Services.

Once the designation is added, individuals will receive a designation card that they carry with them to affirm organ donor status until they renew their driver's license or identification card.

Currently, nearly 45 percent of driver's license and identification card holders are registered organ donors - that's more than 4.2 million Pennsylvanians.

Nearly 3,700 Pennsylvan-

nians have used the online registration service since it began in 2006. More than 7,100 Pennsylvanians currently await organ transplants.

Driver's license and identification card holders, as well as registered vehicle owners, can also support organ donation programs by donating \$1 to the Robert P. Casey Memorial Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Trust Fund at the time of application and/or renewal.

Proceeds from the fund are used to educate and promote awareness of the organ donor program through non-profit organizations like the Center for Organ Recovery and Education (CORE) and the Gift of Life (GOL) Donor Program.

Pennsylvanians have generously donated more than \$8.2 million to the fund since 1995.

For more information about organ and tissue donation in Pennsylvania, visit www.donatelifepa.org.

SIGNAL

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will be replaced on Hickory Road, Colonial Drive, Sterling Avenue and Franklin Street.

Carr said the project will be paid for with Federal Emergency Management Agency and Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency alternate project funding received by the borough from the June 2006 flood.

Paving list approved

The summer paving list was approved to include East Center Hill Road from Route 415 to Lake Street and Spring Street from Machell Avenue to Lehman Avenue, contingent upon approval from PennDOT for utilization of liquid fuels funds.

Cleaning payments authorized

Approval was granted to authorize a monthly cleaning service fee of \$150 to Julie Markle for providing weekly cleaning services to the borough municipal building.

Mayor's announcements

Mayor Tim Carroll reminded residents there is no burning allowed and that yard waste pickup will not begin until May 10.

Spring cleanup

Regulations were passed governing the 2010 spring cleanup to be held Monday, May 3 through Saturday, May 8 at the municipal building. Hours of operation for the cleanup are 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday and 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday.

Roast beef dinner set

The Northmoreland Township Volunteer Fire Department on Lower Demunds Road, Centermoreland, will hold its monthly roast beef dinner from 5 to 7 p.m. on Wednesday, April 28, with eat-in or take-out dinner.

Cost is \$7 for adults and \$4 for children 12 years of age and under. Tickets are available from any fire department member or at the door.

Picnic meeting slated

A meeting to plan the Luzerne High School Picnic will be held at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, April 27, at The Grille in the Luzerne Shopping Center.

GEORGE

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principal, nurse and even janitorial duties at times. In one instance, she witnessed a boy walk into the school with a bone protruding from his arm.

"He was on the playground when he broke his arm and he came into the school very unconcerned," she said.

George placed the boy's arm in a splint and put a book underneath it for support. She called the ambulance and rode to the hospital with the boy.

"When I think to years back, I sat on the nursing bed many times, rubbing arms and legs and

PUZZLE ANSWERS

King Crossword

Answers
Solution time: 21 mins.
ELM AREAS ANT
SEA SAMBA LOY
PAPALBULL ASP
LEI EMBRYO
GASPED ROOM
YEP PLY NOBEL
MOOD YES META
SNOUT NIB LAC
NEW T DROLLY
DEBTOR EAR
URI BEACHBALL
NIL ISLAM PEA
KEL TSARS TOP

Go Figure!

answers

5	+	6	x	1	11
X		+		+	
4	+	8	÷	2	6
+		+		+	
7	+	9	÷	2	8
27		23		5	

Super Crossword

Answers
CZECH QUIZ EDNA BEE
REDEEM UNTO NEARS OPA
ANGOLA TIDE LASTNIGHT
WOLF EXITT MITRA AMORE
SNIT PROUST RATION
ISAWAMOVIEWITHA EGAN
NAPA ALDER LADE
GISH RESSEED FIFTEEN PLAY
ODE NAMED CLED LUPINOR
PACE BRENDA MAJOR
CALL HAPPYENDING LINK
ALGOOP PHOTODS BTHAL
AMATOL TREK BEEFS BED
NAM NICHE ELASTICITY
ADZE GALAS ARNE
BARE EVERYONEWASGLAD
ALGER EDENIC BERT
PIANO ANEW SEMI GOD
TITWASOVER RAFT ORIANA