

The DALLAS POST

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Proposed natural gas compressor station is all the buzz

By SARAH HITE
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UP NEXT

The Dallas School Board will hold a work session at 7 p.m. on Feb. 7 in the administration building next to Wycallis Elementary. The Dallas Township Zoning Hearing Board will make a decision whether to grant special zoning exceptions to Chief Gathering LLC's compressor station project at 7 p.m. on Feb. 9 in the municipal building.

Dallas Township residents and activists are concerned about the effects of a proposed natural gas compressor station to be built approximately 1,345 feet from the Dallas School District campus.

Ted Wurfel, vice president of Environmental, Safety and Regulatory Affairs at Chief Gathering LLC, said the location for the construction on Hildebrandt Road is separated from the district campus by about 1,150 feet, and the actual natural gas processing facility

would be 1,345 feet from the nearest school.

Chief Gathering LLC submitted plans to township officials on Jan. 21 to build the station on roughly five acres within 16 acres the company will purchase from property owner Robert Hayes.

Wurfel said a compressor facility pressurizes gas for trans-

portation through the Transco pipeline. The station will include a metering facility, a building to house compressor engines, several tanks and glycol dehydrators, a 100-foot tall radio tower and a metering station.

Wurfel added that gas is taken from wells that could be anywhere from 10 to 30 miles away

into a gathering line that leads to the compressor station. From there, the gas's pressure is increased from 100 or 200 PSI (pounds per square inch) to up to 2,000 PSI, which is what the gas needs to be to enter into the Transco pipeline.

The company applied for special zoning exceptions to build the facility, and the township zoning hearing board will make a decision on Feb. 9.

Residents and activists are taking to the streets to raise public awareness of the plans. Gas Drilling Awareness Coalition (GDAC) members recently distributed flyers on the Dallas School District campus, and

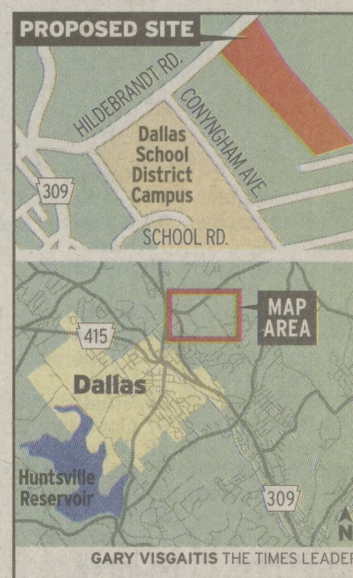
two middle school students created a Facebook page called "SOS" (Save Our School), calling attention to the issue.

Diane Dreier, GDAC member and Dallas Township resident, said people are mostly concerned about possible noise and air emissions that could result from such a structure. She also said there are other potential dangers associated with having combustible materials processed near the school.

Wurfel said the gas that will

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This graphic shows the area where a proposed gas compressor station may be built.



Miss PA Teen visits Dallas HS

By SARAH HITE
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Seventeen-year-old Jocelyn Gruber, of Grove City, said the past year has been the best and worst year of her life.

The Miss Pennsylvania's Outstanding Teen 2011 addressed students at Dallas Middle School on Jan. 28 to talk about two things that have had a large impact on her life — pageantry and bullying.

Gruber quit school last year because her penchant for pageants tended to give cause for her fellow classmates to tease and taunt her crown. She currently attends cyber school and takes courses at Slippery Rock University to complete her senior year.

Her experiences as a frequent pageant contestant were useful to the Dallas students, as a local branch of the Miss America's Outstanding Teen competition will be held at the middle school in April.

The Miss Pennsylvania's Outstanding Teen program is the youth branch of the Miss Pennsylvania America pageant.

The program will be for young women ages 13 through 17 and will be called the Miss Luzerne County Outstanding Teen preliminary competition.

Gina Major Ackerman, a former Miss Pennsylvania and local coordinator for the pageant, said bringing this opportunity to young women in the Back Mountain is an important offering for those who may not receive scholarships for athletics or other endeavors. "It's not about the crown," said Major Ackerman, who won the Miss Pennsylvania title in 1984.

She said her experiences in the pageantry circuit have helped her immensely — from building her character to even leading to a job offer with The Times Leader.

"I got to sing at the (state) capitol, address the senate and the house," she said. "Then there were the typical things, like parades and conferences and conventions. I got to do U.S.O. tours, work with Liza Minelli on Broadway, go to Atlantic City casino tours — I



CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK/ FOR DALLAS POST
Jocelyn Gruber, Miss PA Outstanding Teen, waits to deliver her speech on volunteerism to students at the Dallas Middle School.

MORE INFO

For more information about entering the Miss Luzerne County Outstanding Teen pageant at Dallas Middle School on April 16, contact Gina Major Ackerman at ginamajor@aol.com.

could go on and on and on."

The Miss Luzerne County Outstanding Teen Pageant will be held on April 16 at the middle school and will feature five competitions: private interviews, onstage interviews, evening gown, talent and fitness.

Thomas Duffy, principal of Dallas Middle School, said the opportunity for students to meet Gruber may have quelled preconceived ideas about girls who enter pageants.

"They recognize that getting involved is more than what is stereotypically thought of," he said. "There are platforms and issues that they have to talk about and they have to hold that role."

Gruber's platform is all about service — with two brothers at West Point Academy, she wasn't sure how she could serve her country without participating in the U.S. military.

"The greatest service you

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A WINTER WONDERLAND



CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK/ FOR THE DALLAS POST

Elaine Zuba uses a snowblower to clear her driveway of the four to seven inches of snow that fell on Pinecrest Avenue in Dallas on Wednesday. For more snow photos, log onto www.mydallaspost.com.

MU program caters to women with children

By SARAH HITE
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MORE INFO...

For more information about the Women With Children program at Misericordia University, contact Program Director Vicki Austin at 674-6728 or at vaustin@misericordia.edu.

Now in its 10th year, the Women With Children program at Misericordia University is celebrating the successes of former students and working to create better futures for those currently in the program.

Former Misericordia University student Sarah Martin Ellis, 28, is employed as a learning support teacher in the Susquehanna County school system. She's happily married and currently house-hunting with her 8-year-old daughter Emma and husband Scott in York, Pa.

Seven years ago, her fairytale ending was a completely different story. The single mother and Dallas High School alum was living in the Back Mountain, but didn't have any plans for the future.

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CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK/ FOR THE DALLAS POST

Emily Bittner settles in with her two daughters, Natalie and Madelyn, plus Angelina Vargas, left, after a snow day at the Rasmussen House.



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