

The DALLAS POST

50¢

WILKES-BARRE, PA.

www.mydallaspost.com

AN EDITION OF THE TIMES LEADER

Wet weather doesn't help farmers

This season's weather has wreaked havoc on crops, causing many problems.

By SARAH HITE
shite@mydallaspost.com

Chris Dymond knows what inclement weather can do to a farm.

He's got boxes stacked with hundreds—maybe thousands—of pale, blistered tomatoes in the Dymond's Farm produce stand on Brace Road in Orange.

The wet weather local farms have experienced this growing season, including two hurricanes within a month, have wreaked havoc on crops, causing knocked down corn stalks, mold-ridden cherry trees and questionable pumpkin patches.

"The corn stalks didn't break but now they're hell to pick," said Dymond, a lifelong farmer. "The pumpkins I'm not sure about. I'm not sure they'll hold up with all this water."

"Some storms at the beginning of this year set us back, and the growing season was about two and a half weeks late. Every year it's a 50/50 chance."

Chris Dymond
Back Mountain farmer

But a quick look at pretty pumpkins adorning benches outside the Dymond's stand says otherwise. Dymond said those gourds were picked a bit earlier than usual and seemed to be doing just fine.

It's not all bad news for Dymond—he's got at least one trick up his sleeve. He had more than an acre of crops, including berries, peppers and eggplant, covered in tunnel-shaped greenhouses, protected from the heavy rain.

The measure saved many crops prone to water damage, including tomatoes. Those picked from underneath the plastic tunnel's protection are plump, bright red and ready to eat.

But the farming industry isn't for the weak-hearted or abun-

dantly hopeful. While Dymond said this year was "not good" in terms of weather, every year is a gamble when business is dependent upon the number of perfect days.

"Some storms at the beginning of this year set us back, and the growing season was about two and a half weeks late," he said. "Every year it's a 50/50 chance."

Norman Darling, of Darling & Sons' Farms & Greenhouses, often finds himself sitting in a recliner outside his Hildebrandt Road stand, talking shop with friends and fellow farmers.

Darling has much to reflect on these days, including the devastating loss his farm took during the early September flooding.

About 30 feet of water from the

Susquehanna River swept and covered his farmland in Plains Township, which totals about 16 acres.

"We lost everything," he said. "When the water went down, we had three buildings missing. I estimate we had about \$125,000 worth of damage."

Despite his complete loss in Plains Township, Darling is thankful for land the farm has in Dallas. About 35 acres remain intact, though the wet weather and extreme wind from Hurricane Irene at the end of August also caused some troubles.

"Thank goodness we have this land," he said. "Some farmers were left with nothing."

The flood damage is nothing new to Darling. The land in Plains Township was purchased by his father in 1914, and major

See FARMERS, Page 12

Chris Dymond of Dymond's Farm in Orange shows the difference in tomatoes grown with weather protection, right, and those grown without.



BILL TARUTIS/ FOR THE DALLAS POST



Lori Russell, of Dallas, Director of Adventures in Learning Child Care, unloads toy donations for flood victims in Tunkhannock.

BILL TARUTIS PHOTOS/ FOR THE DALLAS POST

BMT residents offer aid to flood victims

By SARAH HITE
shite@mydallaspost.com

MORE INFORMATION

The Interfaith Friends Flood Relief Distribution Site is located at 189 E. Tioga St., Tunkhannock, next to Brick's Market. The center's hours are from noon to 7 p.m. Monday and Wednesday and from noon to 4 p.m. Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday. For more information, contact 836-2428. For more information about Adventures in Learning Child Care's donation drive or to request items, contact Lori Russell at 675-2128.

Lori Russell lifted two brightly-colored walking toys and carried them to a cleared space across a dark warehouse in downtown Tunkhannock. She was organizing children's playthings—something she finds herself doing on a daily basis.

But on September 24, Russell, director of Adventures in Learning Child Care, was maneuvering kids' knickknacks for a different reason.

She has teamed up with Interfaith Friends and other local organizations to provide clothing, cleaning supplies and other items to flood victims in Wyoming and Bradford counties.

Russell set up a drive at her two Adventures in Learning Child Care locations in Dallas

to collect children's toys at first, but then she moved on to winter clothing, shoes, bedding and food.

She and her husband and two children help by collecting, loading and unloading and organizing materials as often as they can.

"My big thing is any time there's a natural disaster, I



Tunkhannock Mayor Norm Ball, left, assists driver Mike Bates, of Honesdale, with unloading donations for flood victims at the Interfaith Friends Flood Relief Distribution Site at 189 E. Tioga Ave. in Tunkhannock.

BILL TARUTIS/ FOR THE DALLAS POST

HARVEYS LAKE BOROUGH

Council considers gas amendment to zoning ordinance

By SARAH HITE
shite@mydallaspost.com

HAVE YOUR SAY

Harveys Lake Borough Council will consider an amendment to its zoning ordinance related to natural gas activities this month, but not before the public presents input on the document.

A public hearing will be held at 7 p.m. on Monday, Oct. 3 to discuss the proposed amendment, which limits most natural gas activities to an area that encompasses less than one percent of borough land.

The ordinance, prepared by the borough's Environmental Advisory Committee, allows for oil and gas pipelines to be approved as a conditional use in most zoning districts in the borough, but limits most other oil and natural gas activities, such as compressor stations, metering facilities, wells and water treatment plants, to the manufacturing district only.

Larry Radel, a member of both council and the Environmental Advisory Committee, said the goal of the amendment is to allow the natural gas industry to do business in the borough while also protecting the interests of residents and the lake.

"What we are trying to do really is create something that doesn't go directly against the state oil and gas act, but works with it," said Radel.

Earlier this year, council had considered an ordinance drafted by the Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund of Chambersburg that would have essentially banned natural gas drilling in the borough.

The measure was struck down unanimously by council, but work was underway to update the zoning ordinance to further protect citi-

zens and the environment. "After further research with several lawyers and specific consultants, the legality of that ordinance would go against the ethics set forth with the current state oil and gas act," said Radel.

From there, Radel said council listened to residents' concerns and wanted to set up an organization solely dedicated to preparing this document.

"We set up a committee comprised of several council members, some local Gas Drilling Awareness Coalition members, geologists and so forth, so we could go over what we can do to strengthen the current ordinance," he said.

The resulting document is one that sets specific guidelines for natural gas and oil industry activities, including stipulations for parking, access roads, truck routes, noise, fencing, emergency response plans, lighting, water testing and pollution liability.

"I think that the changes are not changes, but more specific supplemental amendments to clarify possible discrepancies," said Radel. "It's to clarify certain industry activities and not make it so broad brushed."



6 09815 20079 9