

The DALLAS POST

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Local volunteers vital to success of annual triathlon

The 31st annual Wilkes-Barre Triathlon starts at 7:30 a.m. today and takes place exclusively in the Back Mountain.

By SARAH HITE
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It may be called the Wilkes-Barre Triathlon, but the race that starts at 7:30 a.m. today takes place exclusively in the Back Mountain, and the race director said the swimming, biking and running event could not be possible without the support of the surrounding community.

As population numbers and vehicular traffic increase in the Back Mountain, safety has become an important issue for race organizers.

Race Director Joanne Gensel, of Dallas, said the triathlon is named so that athletes from across the country could associate the event with a recognizable region in northeastern Pennsylvania.

"When this started 31 years

WILKES-BARRE TRIATHLON

Start time: 7:30 a.m.
Start location: Harveys Lake Beach Club
Swim distance: 1.5 kilometer loop, starts and ends at Harveys Lake Beach Club
Bike distance: 40 kilometer course that winds through Harveys Lake, Noxen, Kunkle, Dallas Township, Dallas and Jackson Township and ends at Penn State Wilkes-Barre campus in Lehman Township
Run distance: 11 kilometer loop, starts and ends at the Penn State Wilkes-Barre campus
End location: Penn State Wilkes-Barre campus in Lehman Township
More information: Contact Joanne Gensel, race director, at 270-5515 or visit www.wilkesbarretriathlon.com.

ago, there really wasn't that much traffic in the Back

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Cyclists ride along Lakeside Drive at Harveys Lake during a previous Wilkes-Barre Triathlon.



BILL TARUTIS FILE PHOTO/ FOR THE DALLAS POST



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Work continues on the natural gas pipeline project along Carverton Road in Kingston Township.

Gas drilling is an ongoing issue

Several natural gas projects continue in BMT

By SARAH HITE
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Work continues on several natural gas projects in the Back Mountain. Here is a brief update on those projects.

Wyoming Pipeline Project

The Wyoming Pipeline Project is nearing completion, said Mark Casaday, executive vice president and chief operating officer of Penn Virginia Resources Partners midstream operations.

The project includes a 30-mile pipeline that runs from Susquehanna County to a tap-in site located off Hildebrandt Road. It will bring natural gas from wells in Susquehanna County to the Transco interstate pipeline in Dallas Township, which will then take the gas to market.

Casaday hopes the pipeline will be fully functioning at the end of August or the beginning of September.

The company is also working on a compressor station, located

in Susquehanna County, and a dehydration facility, located in Monroe Township on the Luzerne-Wyoming County border, in association with the pipeline.

Casaday said after the pipeline becomes operational, cleanup crews will be on the Hildebrandt Road site until fall.

Transco Interstate Pipeline Replacement

The Williams-owned Transco line is receiving a bit of a facelift this summer. Two parts of the line, which runs from New York to Texas, are being replaced as required by the federal Department of Transportation, said Chris Stockton, a Transco spokesperson.

A 2,100-foot section of the pipeline located in Kingston Township and West Wyoming Borough between Carverton Road and Shoemaker Avenue was recently replaced, and crews will begin switching out a 2,044-foot section near Hildebrandt Road on Monday.

Stockton said the pipelines are being replaced due to increases in population – federal requirements require thicker pipe walls when a certain number of houses are located in the vicinity of the pipeline.

The classes range from class 1 to class 4 and Stockton said the Transco line near Dallas and

"The compressor station being proposed by UGI Energy Services in West Wyoming Borough is "nowhere near being built."

Lillian Harris
UGI spokesperson

Kingston townships is being switched from a class 2 to a class 3 pipe. He said the pipe has thicker walls but remains 24 inches wide and made of carbon steel.

Stockton said the replacement is determined by an annual house count conducted by Williams – if the number of houses meets a certain guideline, the pipe must be replaced.

Work on the Hildebrandt Road section of the pipeline should be completed by the end of August.

Perry Meter Site

Installation of flow control components at Williams Field Services' site in Dallas Township is complete; however, site grading and remaining electrical work will continue into fall 2012.

West Wyoming Compressor Station

The compressor station being proposed by UGI Energy Services in West Wyoming Borough is "nowhere near being built," said UGI spokesperson Lillian Harris. "We haven't put a shovel in the

ground yet," said Harris.

She said the line traveling to the proposed compressor station involves extending a pipeline UGI built that begins in Mehopy that would allow gas to travel from the Tennessee Gas Pipeline in Susquehanna County.

The line would come through the proposed compressor station and then travel to a distribution system in Wilkes-Barre.

"It's in a very remote location, on a piece of property in the Transco system," said Harris. "This will help in the warm summer months when there is lower usage the gas can be compressed there."

Harris said the project timeline doesn't plan for construction until spring 2013. The company is scheduled to go before the Luzerne County Zoning Hearing Board at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Aug. 7 in the second floor jury room of the Luzerne County Courthouse.

For more information about UGI's proposed project, visit www.auburnline.com.

Hillside Road will be reopened soon

By SARAH HITE
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"We never want to use the term, 'prevent flooding.'"

Joseph Gibbons
Luzerne County engineer

After four months of construction, Hillside Road in Jackson Township is almost ready to reopen to the public, but officials warn nearby residents that the bridge replacement project does not mean the area is no longer prone to flooding.

Luzerne County Chief Engineer Joseph Gibbons said crews working on the project are currently waiting for the concrete to strengthen before the culvert, which allows water to flow underneath a road, can be finished.

The project has been in the works since 2006 after heavy rains in June of that year washed out and destroyed the waterway.

Township supervisor John Wilkes Jr. said officials have vigilantly watched the area near the Farmers' Inn every time it rains since 2006 when that culvert and another underneath Chase Road were destroyed.

Despite the increased water capacity, Gibbons warns residents that a new culvert and larger drainage pipe will not prevent flooding from occurring along the road.

"We never want to use the term, 'prevent flooding,'" said Gibbons. "There is a larger water opening and it should alleviate flooding from smaller events. In the one-year storm, which is the largest storm that would occur in a given year, the culvert could adequately pass that."

"If we get another record event that's something similar to what happened in September (2011), our goal is to try to make sure the bridge will survive that event, and that the road can be quickly reopened to the public."

Wilkes said emergency and road crews were always on scene near the Hillside Bridge

in every forecasted heavy rain, and he hopes the completion of the project will alleviate some of that urgency.

"If you were to get a water capacity like that in September, you've got huge issues to begin with," said Wilkes. "Hopefully, we will avoid a lot of the flooding we did have in smaller events because we didn't have the capacity."

The project had a few snags in the process of getting realized, from the township needing to relocate sewer lines to qualifying for federal disaster funding.

The project's costs are being reimbursed to the county and Wilkes said the township will be reimbursed for half the cost of relocating the sewer lines.

Gibbons said the project also included redesigning the façade of the culvert in keeping with the historical richness of the area, but the goal of the project is to update centuries' old roadways and drainage systems.

"These roads have been in existence for at least 100 to 200 years and they've never really seen a substantial amount of professional design until recent history," said Gibbons. "The design needs to meet the service of these roads, and as public demand for use increases, there's another step in upgrading those roads to handle today's traffic."

Wilkes said the project has been an inconvenience to those traveling from State Route 309 through the township – a detour is posted cutting from Hillside to Chase and then Huntsville roads – but it will be well worth

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The new Hillside Road Bridge in Jackson Township is nearing completion.



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