

DALLAS TOWNSHIP

# Residents question emergency plans

By CAMILLE FIOTI  
Dallas Post Correspondent

A resident who lives near the dehydration plant in Wyoming County asked the board of supervisors how residents will be notified in the event of a natural gas emergency.

Jack Dodson, chief of the Kunkle Fire Department, told the woman that residents would be alerted by a siren in the event of a true emergency. He also said the township is looking into establishing a reverse 911 system that would be available to all township residents. Dodson added that PVR (the former Chief Gathering) put out an informational flyer about what to do in the event of a gas emergency and that flyer will be made available on the township's website as well as at the municipal office.

Supervisor Liz Martin said State Representative Karen Boback and State Senator Lisa Baker are working with state and federal agencies on a plan to address residents' concerns regarding noise from the plant and other issues. Martin said updates would be made available as quickly as possible on the

township's website and Facebook page.

In another matter, William Perry asked the supervisors why his property off Ransom Road was recently named "Payne Lane." Roadmaster Martin Barry said the road, which contains three homes, was given a name when the county 911 re-addressing was conducted between 2010 and 2011.

"The owners were notified and were given several name options," Barry said, adding that the township paid for and erected the red street signs with white lettering so as to not place a financial hardship on the residents.

Also, Christina Brown, of Valley View Drive, reported that a poor drainage system caused damage to her property. She said a "ditch" across the street from her house would overflow every time it rained, causing excess water to flood her property and collapse a retaining wall. The township has since cleaned out the swale and paved over it, putting an end to the problem but Brown wants the township to pay for repairs

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LEHMAN TOWNSHIP

# Budget includes small tax increase

By CAMILLE FIOTI  
Dallas Post Correspondent

Citing increases in insurance premiums, workman's compensation contributions and other expenses, the board of supervisors said on Dec. 17 that next year's \$1.2 million budget would include a small tax increase of a fifth of a mill. The increase from 1.25 to 1.45 mills would amount to about \$25 extra per household.

A mill is a \$1 tax on every \$1,000 of assessed property value.

Treasurer Al Cragle reported that the township satisfactorily passed a recent state audit of the police and non-uniformed pension funds from 2009 to 2011. "They audited both funds and we are in full compliance," Cragle said, adding that the funds are "overfunded" with a surplus of roughly \$500,000.

Cragle attributed the overage to healthy investment returns over the last two to three years since the township turned the fund over to LeTort Trust of Camp Hill. Due to the overfunding of the pension fund, the board voted on a res-

olution to waive the township's 2012 contribution to the plan.

In other business, Supervisor Doug Ide announced that the Meeker Outlet Bridge is now open. "It's a temporary repair," Ide said of the joint project between the township and Penn DOT to install a new six-foot pipe. Ide said the bridge needs to be replaced and that PennDOT asked him if the township could take it over.

The board voted to decline Penn DOT's invitation to take over the bridge. "We don't want to own any bridges," said Chairman Dave Sutton, adding that it would cost approximately \$1.2 million to replace the bridge properly. "That's about a year's budget for this township."

Sutton pointed out that the only bridge the township owns is a stone arch bridge in the Lake Silkworth area.

The board also:

- Approved a resolution to authorize the Back Mountain Regional Fire and EMS to operate in Lehman Township. The new department, which is a merger of Lehman and Dallas

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Two-year-old Lilly Morse, of Dallas, gets a present from Santa at the Daddow-Isaacs American Legion children's Christmas party.

BILL TARUTIS PHOTOS/ FOR THE DALLAS POST



Five-month-old Juliana Polous, of Dallas, plays with keys with family friend, Tania Gomez, of Harveys Lake, while they wait for Santa to arrive.



Two-year-old Andrew David Harvey, of Beaumont, center, sits on Santa's chair with his great-grandparents, Charles and Wink Fleming, of Dallas at the Daddow-Isaacs American Legion.

# Santa's a big hit at Legion party

Santa found his way to the annual children's Christmas party at Daddow-Isaacs Dallas American Legion on Dec. 16. Children had their pictures taken with Santa and enjoyed food and presents.

# Mountain Grange receives \$1,000 grant from state

Mountain Grange is the recipient of a \$1,000 grant from Pennsylvania State Grange which it received for having the largest increase in membership.

Individual members who

recruited just one new member were eligible to win one of five \$50 cash prizes. Winners were chosen through a random drawing held during the Night of Honors at the 140th Annual PA State

Grange Session in Butler.

PA State Grange will continue this program into 2013. New members reported for the fourth quarter and the first three quarters of 2013 will be used to deter-

mine the winner.

Mountain Grange No. 567 is located at 1632 W. 8th St., Wyoming. Beginning in April 2013, meetings will be held at 7 p.m. on the first Tuesday of each month.

# BMT native living in CT finds comfort in her pastor's words

By DOTTY MARTIN  
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JoAnn Newberry was glued to her television set on Dec. 14 when news broke of a shooting at the Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, CT.

A native of Orange and a 1976 graduate of Dallas High School, Newberry and her husband, Barry Sacks, live in Southbury, CT, just four miles from Newtown. Their son, 13-year-old Jesse, was "locked down" at a middle school in Southbury during the incident.

Newberry and Sacks are both former Times Leader employees, she as business manager and he as a sportswriter. Sacks is now employed as a senior producer at ESPN. Newberry's nephew, DJ Carey, a 2008 graduate of Dallas High School, also lives with them and works at ESPN.

The news was numbing. Twenty 6 and 7-year-old children dead. Six faculty and staff members murdered. Hundreds of children and their families traumatized.



Newberry

Twenty-year-old Adam Lanza, who lived in Newtown with his mother, Nancy, had forced his way into the elementary school shortly after classes began and opened fire before taking his own life. Police later found Nancy Lanza dead in her home.

As children were taken from the school building and led across the street to the Newtown Fire Hall, Newberry's pastor, the Rev. Walter Pitman, of the United Congregational Church in Southbury, was one of four chaplains called upon to

"The girl told her mother she saw the robber. She said he had on a mask and he was there to take their lunch money."

Jo Ann Newberry  
Former BMT resident

comfort families and first responders.

On Sunday, just two days after the shooting, the crowd at United Congregational Church was a standing-room only one. Newberry and her family were there, seeking comfort in Rev. Pitman's words.

And Pitman delivered, leaving not a dry eye in the house.

"He talked about a first responder, whom he said was a 6'3" strapping guy," Newberry remembered. "The guy came out of the school with a child, placed that child in his mother's arms, then turned around and collapsed in the pastor's arms,

sobbing uncontrollably."

Rev. Pitman told his congregation how he and other pastors prayed and cried with the first responders, talking with them as they all worked their way through what could only be conceived as unthinkable.

He talked about how family members were at the fire hall, receiving their children as they came out of the school. But, then he talked about what happened when the last child was reunited with his mother.

"He said the fire hall became very quiet," Newberry said. "Then you heard crying, then sobbing, then yelling. He and

the other pastors waited with the families as long as they needed them to, comforting them."

During his Sunday sermon, Rev. Pitman talked about how God created the world but no one said He made it perfect. He talked about how God also created nature and chaos. He told the congregation he felt God was on the scene at the school and the fire house, helping first responders do their jobs. And he felt God's presence when he returned home to his own family members that night, as they hugged him and expressed their thanks for his safety.

The pastor always invites children to the front of the church on Sunday mornings and talks to them prior to sending them off to their Sunday School classes. Last Sunday's children's sermon was like no other.

He told the children to always

remember that they are loved and that he loves them. He asked if they knew who else loves them and asked the entire congregation to stand.

"He then said, 'All these people love you and they will keep you safe,'" Newberry said. "He choked up. It was very powerful."

At the conclusion of the service, Rev. Pitman told everyone present that no one would leave the church without a hug. With his wife at his side, the pastor hugged each and every parishioner as they exited the church.

Although Newberry does not know anyone involved in the tragedy, the best friend of her exercise partner has a daughter who attends Sandy Hook Elementary School.

"The girl told her mother she saw the robber," Newberry said. "She said he had on a mask and he was there to take their lunch money."