

The Express

50¢ single copy price Vol. 129 No. 25 March 29, 2010

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MONDAY GAS PAINS

Trucks pounding roads, causing hazards, concern

By KEVIN RAUCH
For The Express

RENOVO — Northern Tier roads throughout the state are taking the brunt of the Marcellus shale gas drilling as larger than normal trucks travel mountain roads not meant to handle such heavy operating equipment.

From dump trucks to tractor-trailer trucks hauling water or sand, logging trucks, and flatbed trucks carrying pipe and other supplies and equipment - certain narrow, mountainous asphalt roads are crumbling under the weight.

It's the price municipalities in the region are paying to allow various companies to drill for needed natural gas in the Marcellus Shale.

State Route 144, known as Ridge Road

on top of Halls Run to north of Snow Shoe, is one such road that is deteriorating daily, and quite possibly could be deemed too dangerous to travel if current operations continue, officials in Western Clinton County warn.

The road is part of the Pennsylvania Wilds and connects western Clinton County to the Snow Shoe, Philipsburg and Clearfield areas.

Route 144 at the top of Halls Run Mountain is being used to support Anadarko Petroleum Corp.'s natural gas drilling on state-owned land.

Currently, contractor Glenn O. Hawbaker is running a pilot vehicle over a four mile stretch of road that "is col-

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Route 144, known as Ridge Road, near Snow Shoe, is deteriorating from heavy truck traffic.

ON THE HUNT EASTER EGG HUNT DRAWS BIG CROWDS



JIM RUNKLE/THE EXPRESS

Hundreds of youngsters gathered Saturday at Mill Hall Community Park to participate in the Mill Hall Kiwanis Club annual Easter Egg Hunt. The well-run function divided the young people up into manageable age groups and had a great many organizers on hand to keep the chaos to a minimum. Left, David Young II, 5, Brianna Young, 5, Mariah Young, 6 and Autumn Winters, 5, wait with anticipation for the start of the annual hunt. Below, a youngster shows his enthusiasm as he runs through the field of eggs.



Woolrich area house damaged by Sunday fire

WOOLRICH — Firefighters put a quick stop on a house fire Sunday evening along Big Plumb Run Road in Dunnington Township, saving a senior citizen's residence from destruction.

According to Woolrich Fire Chief Brandon Coleman, the blaze had already extended from the basement and into the partition at the corner of the Cashner house when firefighters arrived shortly after 9:30 p.m.

Coleman said Mrs. Cashner, the sole occupant of the home, discovered the blaze and rushed to a neighbor's house for assistance. The neighbor called the 911 center.

"The house was completely filled by smoke when we arrived," Coleman said, "but the fire appeared to be limited to just one corner of the place ... There were no visible

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After week of wins, Obama turns to Afghanistan

By JENNIFER LOVEN
AP White House Correspondent

KABUL — After weeks dominated by health care, President Barack Obama's secret trip to Afghanistan turned attention back to another issue whose progress this year could help define the success of his presidency.

By deciding in December to order a massive buildup to the war he inherited, Obama placed a big bet. Nearly tripling the U.S. presence with 30,000 more troops, he escalated an unpopular war that has seen few gains in its eight years.

Those new forces are still flowing in, and the first major campaign under Obama's new strategy was launched last month, in the south. Although Afghanistan has been eclipsed recently by the contentious, cliffhanger health care debate, Obama's daunting challenge has not gone away.

Obama must show Americans that the big infusion of U.S. troops, to reach a total of about 100,000 by summer,

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Daughter discovers truth through Army journal

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was unbearable. It was too hot to eat and the only thing to drink was coffee. It is hard to imagine not being able to get a drink of cold water anywhere on board. Two men died of heatstroke. Dad lost 10 pounds just from sweating. Even having dry clothes was impossible because of the heat and humidity. Drills were held during the day and there was nothing to do but sit around on deck. At night, sleeping was uncomfortable because the portholes were shut due to the rain."

Ellen says she can't imagine what it must have been like to just sit around on that ship. "They had nothing to do, the weather was horrible, they were homesick and seasick, and they were just sitting there thinking, you never know what your future's going to be, sitting there thinking about that all the time. Someone committed suicide on board, and another hung himself when they finally reached their destination."

At night, no one was allowed on deck with cigarettes or matches; the ship sailed with all the lights out because six enemy ships had been spotted 500 miles north of Sydney. "On May 20, the alarm sounded when a U.S. destroyer came up on the port side and three Dutch ships were on the lee side; since no one gave a signal, the Mt. Vernon had its guns trained on them ready to fire. Fortunately, nothing happened. After they crossed the Equator, the weather started to cool down. This was the most dangerous part of the voyage. There were reports of 2 enemy subs, 35 miles away."

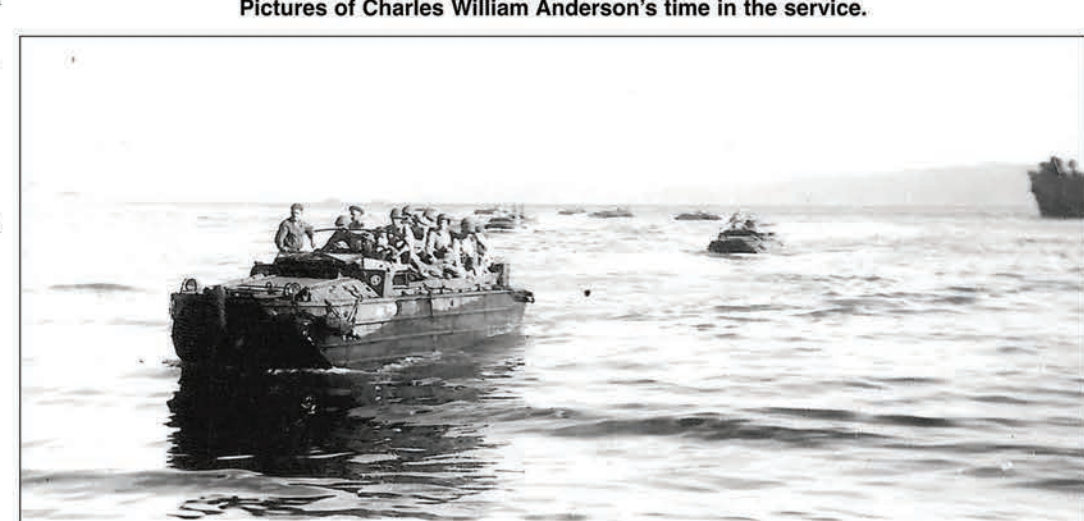
The ship was on its way to Australia, which meant it was heading back into winter; the weather turned miserable and cold. At first, the sea was too rough for the boat to dock. "When they did land, they were sent to Camp Warrick (a race track) where they lived in a mud city for a week. It was now 5 months since Dad left home."

June 4 was the first time Anderson was alone in his tent. He unfortunately discovered that he had been bitten by something and ended up in the hospital for almost a month. By the time he was released, most of his unit had been shipped out. While waiting for orders to go to the front, he was assigned to K-P (slang for "kitchen police," or mess hall duty) with ten other soldiers. "This was the only kitchen in the 15th Br. It was hard working from 6 a.m. until 8 p.m. trying to feed 200 men every day. Drilling was hell because of the rain and mud. It was too cold to even take a shower, and sleeping in a tent was so cold, it was like sleeping directly outside. Everyone was getting sick."

Anderson received new orders to ship out to New Guinea, which was considered the "hellhole of the world" because more men



Pictures of Charles William Anderson's time in the service.



shipped out, he had married Ellen's mother, Eleanor Jane, whom everyone just called Jane. They were two years apart in age and had lived in the same town, but aside from that, Ellen never learned the story of how they met. Their wedding was at seven in the morning in the church rectory and Ellen recalls hearing about how the priest had thought they meant seven at night; he was saying Mass and they had to go find him. After Anderson left, there were no visits.

They were separated for three long years, and had their first child approximately a year after his return; Ellen's older brother, Chris (Charles Christopher). Five years later, Ellen was born.

"I remember he had a tan for almost five years, and he never wanted to travel. He wasn't the type to write - he never even answered the phone, so his journal was amazing. It was surprisingly well-written, and reading it was funny, because it was as though he was talking to me. And even though he only really wrote about the day-to-day routine, he still wrote every day. I just sat and read and took notes as I compiled everything and tried to figure out what a simple soldier's typical day may have been."

In the years following his service, Anderson spent his time working for the Pennsylvania Railroad, which became Penn Central when it merged with the New York Central Railroad. He worked in the Store Department for the PRR and was responsible for ordering supplies and spare parts, while also maintaining inventory of items necessary for the maintenance and repair of railroad equipment. He retired at 62 and passed away in 1997 at the age of 84.

Anderson's granddaughter Michele is a senior at LHU this year studying Communication Media. Her brother Erik and sister Erin are the Andersons' only grandchildren. She adds, "My brother and sister and I called him Pop Pop. I can remember him always sitting in his favorite chair with a can of Genny in his hand. He was pretty quiet, and loved going to camp every day to Round Island, near Sinnamahoning, just outside of Renovo. The name of our camp is actually called "Swede's Shanty"; some people called him Swede. If you wanted to find him, that's where he would be, he loved it there. He was a pretty special guy."

For Ellen, reading her father's journal became a

After week of wins, Obama turns to Afghanistan

Continued from A1

will be worth the additional loss of life. As Obama traveled to Afghanistan on Sunday for his first visit to the war zone as president, his aides made clear they understand the challenge and the importance of this year.

"This is really a strategic moment in the history of our involvement," national security adviser Jim Jones told reporters aboard Air Force One during the covert overnight flight to Afghanistan.

Whether he was talking to Afghan President Hamid Karzai in the presidential palace in Kabul or before 2,500 cheering American troops at Bagram Air Field about 50 miles away, the message during his six hours on the ground was the same: Afghan leaders, particularly Karzai, must step up now and make progress on old demands. Those include reducing corruption, ensuring the delivery of basic services to Afghans, providing true rule of law with an effective judicial system, turning away warlords and unqualified cronies from government positions and creating an

effective national police force and army. None of these exist in Afghanistan in any large measure.

"Our intent is to make sure that the Afghans have the capacity to provide for their own security. That is core to our mission," Obama told the troops crammed into the cavernous tent known as the "clam shell."

For if Afghan leaders can't provide government that citizens can trust or security that can hold back Taliban and al-Qaida extremists, the U.S. can't leave. As Obama said, letting the region backslide to the days before the U.S.-led, 2001 invasion ousted Taliban rulers that gave safe haven to al-Qaida would put more American lives at stake.

"Make no mistake," the president declared, "this fight matters."

Obama said the U.S. would not quit in Afghanistan and would be a long-term partner with its leaders and people. But, in part to pressure Karzai and in part as a nod to sentiments about the war at home, he built a deadline into his December strategy overhaul, saying U.S. troops would start withdrawing in

July 2011, only a year after the new infusion is fully in place. Polls show public opinion divided on the war, though a majority approve of how Obama is handling it.

At least 945 members of the U.S. military have died in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Uzbekistan since the war's start, according to an Associated Press count.

With the fight engaged more intensely now, the number killed in the first three months of this year has roughly doubled over the same period last year.

There have been initial military successes since Obama revamped the war. Last month's Marjah campaign in the southern Helmand province routed most Taliban fighters from a town they once controlled, without a high casualty toll for U.S. troops and the Afghan security forces fighting alongside them. Military officials have lauded the results - cautiously.

Fighting still rages across Afghanistan, any successes are still reversible and a key phase - bringing in an effective government and development so ordinary Afghans turn away from the Taliban - has barely

begun.

The next big military operation for the U.S. and NATO troops is planned for Kandahar, a much larger city and the spiritual home of the Taliban. Jones said the outcome of that offensive will largely determine whether the war can be turned around this year.

Success with Karzai and his governance has been sketchier, one reason the White House insisted his Cabinet participate with Obama in most of Sunday's meetings.

Afterward Obama and his aides emphasized the positive, saying Karzai has taken enough encouraging steps just since their last talks, by secure videoconference on March 15, that the Afghan leader would be coming to Washington on May 12.

On Sunday Karzai told Obama he has begun to establish more credible national institutions on corruption and pledged to make ministerial appointments more representative of the multiple ethnic and geographic regions of the country, according to a senior administration official who spoke on condition of anonymity to describe private talks.

THE LIVES BEHIND THE BANNERS

Daughter discovers truth through Army journal

By DANIELLE TEPPER
For The Express

Sgt. Charles W. Anderson was "just Dad" to his daughter, Ellen, until she came across a box while cleaning out her garage several years ago.

This box, which had come from her mother's house, contained papers and photos from when her father served the U.S. Army in World War II. As she started to go through the box, she decided she would put together a scrapbook for her brother as a Christmas gift, to ensure that these things would never be lost.

She then discovered something else: A journal — a hidden gem amidst all the miscellaneous mementoes.

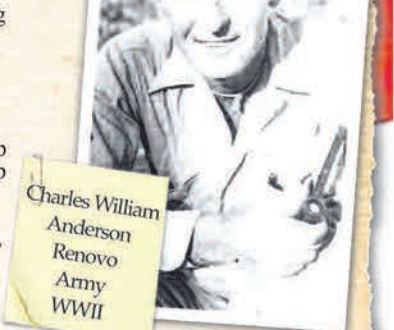
"I was lucky, how much I found. As I started to organize everything, I found that I could follow my dad through his first year overseas," she remembers.

Anderson's journal began on May 4, 1943.

"I thought he was rather old to be drafted; born in 1913, he was 29 at the time. Anyone 30 or older was told they were going to be sent home, but as the war went on, no one was able to leave."

Anderson's journal described everything that happened to him in a single day, and Ellen was able to follow along chronologically.

"In May of 1943, he was shipping out from San Francisco aboard the SS Mt. Vernon, formerly the Washington. The ship had been a luxury liner converted to a troop transport. It was the second fastest ship the U.S. had at the time." With 6000 men on board and a close proximity to the Equator, conditions were clearly difficult. "The heat



Charles William Anderson Renovo Army WWII

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