



The Home News

homenewspa.com



Youngster enjoys a ride at Seiple Farms. – Danielle Tepper photo

Bath Council hears Resistance to sign law

By **BILL HALBFOERSTER**
The Home News

Bath Borough Council at its meeting Monday night heard protests to portions of the amended zoning ordinance on signs. Letters had been sent out putting businesses on notice of the revisions as Council now is determined to enforce the new regulations. Stephen Nikles on receipt of the letter, saying he can't have an illuminated "Open" sign according to the new law, protested that he has had it for 10 years. He cited a U.S. Supreme Court decision that he said means the borough can't enforce it on private property. Solicitor Blake Marles responded that they can under the Municipalities Planning Code, but if he wishes he can litigate it. Nikles also cited the Right to Know Act, to which Marles said there is another chal-

lenge procedure.

The businessman said he will not change his sign, no matter what Council says. He has been in litigation with Upper Nazareth Township for two years over their closing down his drive-through diner. And he threatened to go against Council on this issue, too. Councilwoman Kathryn Roberts said Council represents the people of Bath, and observed that Nikles and his wife didn't attend Council meetings when the sign ordinance was debated. Borough Manager Tom Petrucci said the letter was sent out as a notice that their sign "Open" is classified as a wall sign, and noted that earlier provisions of the ordinance were even more restrictive. Zoning Officer Dennis Huth said when a window sign exceeds 30% it is a wall

sign, noting that in the past people kept putting up signs. An "open" sign is okay, but not one that is neon illuminated. The owner of International TV showed a printed "Open" sign that Council welcomed. Mrs. Roberts said a year ago Council decided to enforce existing ordinances and beautify the borough. Councilman John Kearns said under the old ordinance of 1978 they wouldn't have been allowed a sign, and there are now signs hanging "every which way." He said Council debated a lot before they came up with the new amendments to the ordinance. "I don't think you'd like not having an ordinance and letting people do anything they want to do," Kearns said.

Continued on page 7

Historic Bath farm celebrates the fall season

By **DANIELLE TEPPER**
The Home News

Each autumn, families flock to local pumpkin patches to indulge in some quality time with each other in the time-less tradition that is picking out the biggest, smoothest, roundest (and cleanest!) jack-o'-lanterns to-be. The folks at Seiple Farms in Bath understand that this family time is precious as they themselves are a family business, right down to the very roots of their family tree. The farm was established in 1889 and is currently run by Daniel Seiple and his daughter, Andrea Delong. They've

been hard at work since they opened for pumpkin picking just over a week ago, September 28. Seiple Farms moved to Bath when Stone Quarry bought their property in Whitehall in 1889. "The family was forced out," said Seiple. Seiple is fourth generation and Delong is fifth. Seiple himself is actually unsure of who specifically started it all those years ago. "It's too far back," he said. "I would like to go back sometime and map it out. I have the original deed somewhere." The relocation turned out to be a blessing in disguise

for the family as the business was able to grow and flourish at its new home in Bath. The main farm consists of over 200 acres. "Back then, we had chickens for harvesting eggs and around 65 acres of potatoes," said Seiple. "The last year we had them was 1987." They grew sweet corn in the fields, along with a cornuco-

pia of other crops.

"You name it, we grew it," said Seiple. "Cantaloupe, watermelon, tomatoes, broccoli, cauliflower, eggplant, lima beans, string beans." Seiple's brother David was the one who came up with the idea for a pick-your-own operation. They started doing strawberries in 1981, which used to take up 10 acres and

has dropped off to only two or three now. "Pumpkins took over," said Seiple. "That's why we don't have potatoes anymore, we couldn't do both at the same time." Pumpkins began in 1982. The pumpkin patch started as a quarter of an acre and has

Continued on page 18

INDEX:

Pete G. Ossip	3	Bath	7
Dr. Clearie	4	Northampton	9
Carol Ritter	5	Nazareth	12
Sports	6	Classifieds	15 & 16

72nd Year, Issue No. 41



USPS 248-700

Subscribe to the Home News today.
610-923-0382

2013-10-24, 2013 Your Local News 50 cents

Troop 50 Scout Earns Eagle Rank, Page 5

The Home News

Allen Township Super Debate how to number

BATH AREA

BBGP active in farmers Market and coming duck race

NORTHAMPTON AREA

Nineteen girls compete for Little Miss Community Days

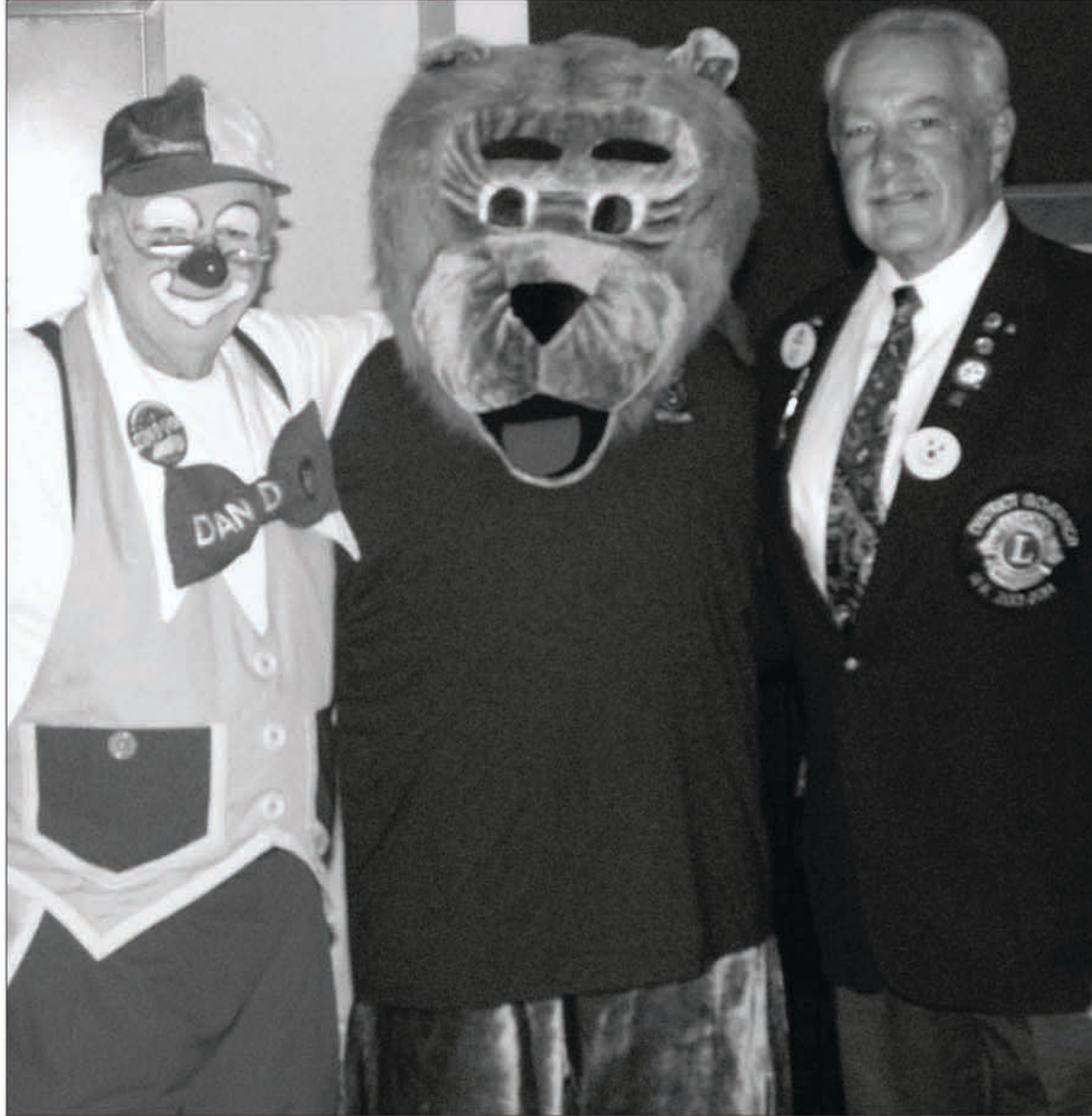
NAZARETH AREA

Moravian Historical Society Announces "Free Summer Sundays" program

Fundraiser for the Blind



MARKING THE 85TH ANNIVERSARY of the former Northampton County Blind Association, that since has become the Center for Vision Loss when merged with the Lehigh County Association for the Blind & Visionally Impaired, a framed certificate that also honored Helen Keller was presented at a CVL needs night & dinner with the Lions and Lionesses of District 14-K on October 1.



PDG GLEN SANTES (Dan-D-Lion) of the 14-K Klowns and an Emmaus Lion dressed for the part greet District Governor Dennis Butz at the CVL dinner-fund raiser. More than \$43,000 in checks and pledges were turned in that night at the Northampton Community Center.

Historic Bath farm Celebrates the fall season

Continued from page 14

now grown to encompass 29 acres of the property. David died in 1985, just a few years after sparking what would become the farm's most lucrative component. "We're living on his legacy," joked Delong.

It took some time to get the pumpkin rolling. Seiple said it really wasn't that popular when it first began. "That's like any business first starting out. It spread by word of mouth." They advertised on billboards one year and in the Clipper another year. They offered school tours. They provided coupons. Attendance finally started to shoot up and it ballooned into the chaos experienced every weekend during the fall today.

Seiple said the pumpkins help keep the farm afloat. "Pick-your-own has paid the bills for the last 20 years."

It takes months for them to ready the farm, especially when it comes to decorating, but it's decked out in all its autumn splendor when they finally open for pumpkin season. People descend on the patch in droves to peruse the rows of orange, find their way out of the corn maze, and escape the haunted barn unscathed.

How many people exactly? "We don't keep track each year, there's no way [we could]," said Seiple. He instead calculates the amount of money collected versus the pounds sold, so he knows what varieties to plant for the following year.

On busy weekends, they base their approximate count on their parking lot, which holds 900 cars at a time.

"We really should count one day," said Delong. "Not me," replied Seiple.

Based on their parking lot's capacity and the assumption that each one brings four people, Seiple estimates that the busy weekends attract approximately 6,000 people. October is the busiest month of the whole year for pick-your-own.

"We are seeing an increase each year, which is nice, but it really depends on the weather because we depend on our weekends for the public to come out," said Delong. "If it's a rainy day, we lose that much money."

"And we never gain it back," added Seiple.

The pumpkin patch isn't the only feature for fall weekends, however, so there's plenty to draw people in for a fun afternoon.

The corn maze is now in its sixth year. The haunted barn began in 1984, along with the concessions and carnival rides, which have been around at least 20 years at their best guess.

"The pumpkin patch is as old as I am, so that's why we can't remember anything,"

laughed Delong.

A hard-working team of approximately 25 people keeps the farm running smoothly on these busy weekends, which includes a few family members and friends, plus seasonal employees. Each separate attraction has its own workers.

It's a hive of activity, but the Seiple family loves seeing the fruits (or rather, gourds) of their labors.

"We're happy when everything's running smoothly," said Delong. "I like the whole family atmosphere, because it's a family-run farm and I now have a family of my own. Just seeing their joy when they're picking a pumpkin and trying to carry it out of the field, it's kind of funny."

"And when the father carries the big one on his shoulder," added Seiple. "I actually like to see people taking pictures of their kids sitting on everything. That's the part I like."

Admission to Seiple's is free and includes a hayride out to the patch where fresh apple cider (hot or cold) from Schantz Orchards awaits. Schantz is locally based in Orefield and their cider is pressed on location.

"I think it's the best cider I've ever tried," said Delong.

In addition to everything else, they also have farm animals in the barn, pony rides, and independent vendors.

"I don't know what else we could add, farm-wise," said Delong. This year they added Fridays to their schedule to hopefully cut down some of the wait time for the hayrides.

In the blink of an eye, the busy season will be over and Seiple Farms will start preparing to harvest their field corn and soy beans during November.

Friday, November 29 marks the start of Christmas tree season. They began planting them in 2005 and this will be the third year selling them. And in June, it starts all over again with pick-your-own strawberries. According to the Seiple Farms website, "Seiple Farms has been a family owned farm since 1889 with hopes to keep the family farming for many generations to come." And they invite generations of families to come enjoy themselves year after year. Visit Seiple Farms at 5761 NorBath Blvd. in Bath Fridays-Sundays (hours vary) throughout the season. For more information, go to www.seiplefarms.com or call their hotline at 610-837-6282.

Note:

Seiple Farms on Nor-Bath Blvd., Bath is part of this weekend's Northampton County Farm Open House.