



TIOGA DOWNS

over the last...
her sisters.
"We've all had cancer," said Noe's sister, Judy Schofield. Between the four of them, they have had eight
Please See **RELAY** Page A5

at the Uwego...
known at Skyview Drags and Shangri-La 2, has been...
two types of cancer. Pictured with Noe are her sisters, who
have each battled two types of cancers as well. According to
Noe, they are fighters.

Constructing an \$8M levee

Monroe Boro Council approves sponsorship agreement for the flood protection project

BY JAMES LOEWENSTEIN
Staff Writer

MONROE BOROUGH — The Monroe Borough Council this week approved a sponsorship agreement for the borough's planned \$8 million levee, which makes the borough responsible for certain expenses and tasks that are related to the construction of the levee.

"The sponsorship agreement doesn't mean the levee will (definitely) happen," Dan Troup, president of the Monroe Borough Council, said at a special meeting on Monday of the Monroe Borough Council. However, by signing the agreement, "we agree to try to get this built," he said.

The Pennsylvania Department of
Please See **LEVEE** Page A6



Review Photo/JAMES LOEWENSTEIN

Monroe Borough officials discuss the borough's planned levee earlier this week. From left: Levee Committee Secretary Judy Kerrick, borough council member Scott Barrett, borough council President Dan Troup, borough council member Joan Grenell, borough council member Bill Shaw, and borough council member Geoffrey L. Harris.

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SUSQUEHANNA RIVER LEVELS

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WEATHER

DEATHS

Mary Ann Bolton, 78, of Warren Center; Richard C. Johnson, 84, of Ulster

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"An efficient bureaucracy is the greatest threat to liberty."

— Sen. Eugene McCarthy

ers to visit at their own com.

Had female applicants passed the test at the same rate

2012, 88 percent of male applicants passed, while 72 percent of female applicants passed, the lawsuit said.

LEVEE

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Environmental Protection (DEP) has said the borough must approve the sponsorship agreement as a condition of the levee being built. The levee, which will be 9,000 feet long, is intended to protect the borough from flooding from the Towanda Creek.

The levee will be mainly funded by the state, the DEP has said.

Currently, the large majority of homes in Monroe Borough are in a so-called Special Flood Hazard Area, which is an area where someone would need to buy flood insurance in order to qualify for a mortgage, Troup said.

One of the main goals of the levee is to give Monroe Borough the flood protection it needs so that people will no longer be required to obtain flood insurance in order to qualify for a mortgage when buying a home in the borough, he said.

However, the borough will need to wait until the levee is built in order to find out whether the requirement for flood insurance has been lifted, he said.

The sponsorship agreement, which is between the borough and the DEP, "tells us what we have to do and what their (the DEP's) responsibility" is, in undertaking the levee project, Troup said.

"At our last meeting with the DEP, they said that until we sign the agreement, they will go no further" in planning and designing the levee, Troup said.

Under the sponsorship agreement, the borough will have to pay to move utilities for the project, including sewer, water and electric lines, and will have to pay for all easements needed for the project, he said.

The borough will also be responsible for all of the

maintenance of the levee, including mowing, Troup said.

The borough will need to have on hand \$45,000 — which could be in the form of a bank check, a letter of credit, or a performance bond — for any repairs that will need to be made in the future to the levee, he said.

The borough will also have to purchase and tear down one home, and will have to move or purchase and tear down a number of smaller structures, such as sheds, he said.

Without the levee in place, people are not going to want to buy homes in the borough, since in most cases they would need to buy expensive flood insurance policies in order to qualify for a mortgage, he said.

For example, if a borough resident wanted to sell his or her home for \$200,000, but the buyer would need to pay \$5,000

or more annually in flood insurance premiums, "not many people are going to want to pay that," Troup said.

There is a list of municipalities in Pennsylvania that are waiting for government funds for levees, Troup said. After being on the list many years, Monroe Borough has risen to the top of the list, and therefore its project is ready to be funded, Monroe Borough officials said.

Troup pointed out that when West Pittston reached the top of the list, it decided not to go forward with the construction of its levee.

Since then, West Pittston has been badly flooded, he said. "They are trying to get back on the list again," Troup said.

Troup said he saw a couple of mansions in West Pittston that are empty, "because no one wants to get them fixed up after they were flooded," he

said.

By contrast, Mansfield had installed a levee at some point during the past 25 years, which "has done well for them," Troup said.

The Monroe Borough Council's vote to approve the sponsorship agreement was unanimous.

The two biggest possible "stumbling blocks" that could affect the construction of the levee are the need to get approval from Shaffer's Feed Service Inc. to remove some rail track behind Shaffer's Feed Mill and the need to obtain approval for the levee from the North Central Pennsylvania Conservancy, which "controls what can happen" on one of the properties where the levee would be constructed, Troup said.

It's not known yet what the borough's costs will total up to be, he said.

The levee, which will be up to 11 feet high, will be

constructed out of dirt and will be planted with a special grass to help hold it in place.

The borough plans to apply for grants to help pay for its share of the project, borough officials said. The borough will be working with Bradford County grants coordinator Robyn D'Anna to find out about the grant funds that the borough could apply for.

The DEP has said it would take two construction seasons to construct the levee.

Troup said it's hoped that the construction will be complete four years from now.


There is a lot of work to do before construction starts, including obtaining easements and doing final design work, officials said.

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