

## Natural gas welcomed in Wyalusing

- [By MATT HICKS Editor-in-Chief](#)
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Pictured, from left, are Greater Wyalusing Chamber of Commerce President Jeff Homer, Wyalusing Borough Mayor Suky Burgess, Leatherstocking Gas Company President Mike German, Jason Krise with state Rep. Tina Pickett's (R-110) office, Wyalusing Area School District Superintendent Jason Bottiglieri,

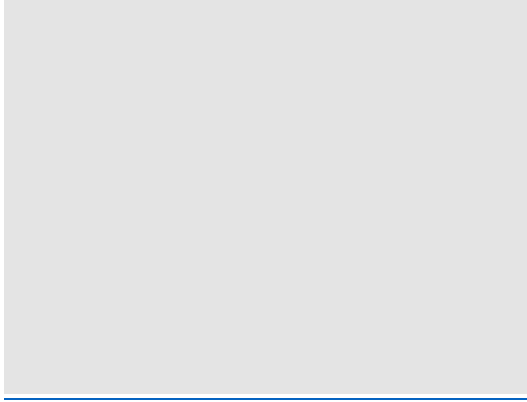
U.S. Rep. Fred Keller (R-Pa.-12), Bradford County Commissioner Chairman Daryl Miller, state Sen. Gene Yaw (R-23), Wyalusing School Board President Matthew Meunch, and Greater Wyalusing Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Kelly White.

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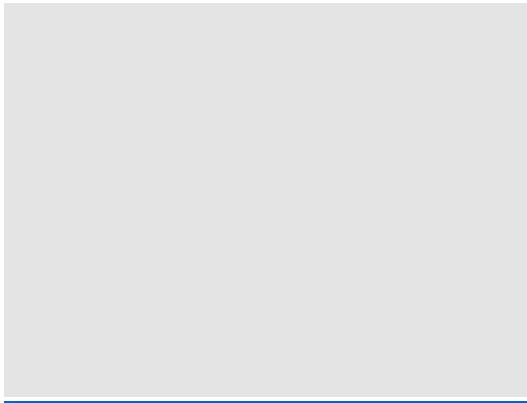
Representatives from Leatherstocking Gas Company, Wyalusing Area School District, and the Greater Wyalusing Chamber of Commerce joined state Sen. Gene Yaw (R-23), U.S. Rep. Fred Keller (R-Pa.-12), and a representative from state Rep. Tina Pickett's (R-110) office for a groundbreaking ceremony Wednesday morning.

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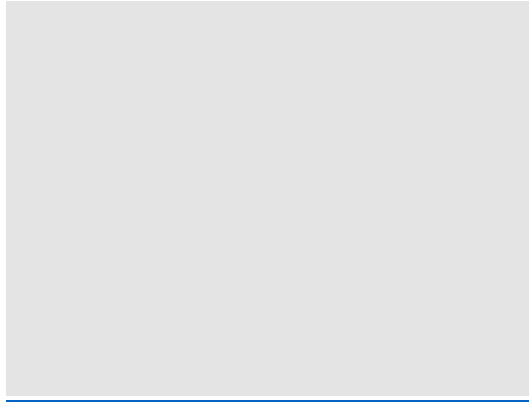
Wyalusing senior Catherine Brown recognized the district's support from the community over the years.

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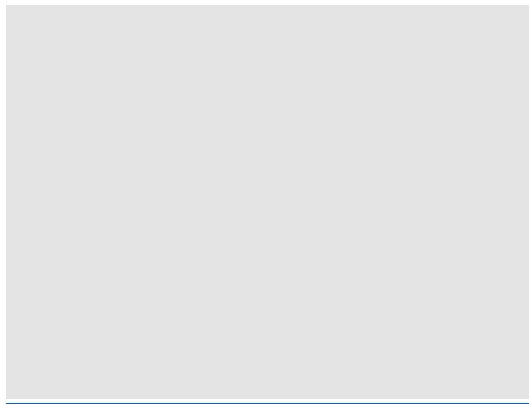
Eighth grader Sophia Alvarez shares her optimism for the upcoming Leatherstocking Gas Company work in Wyalusing.

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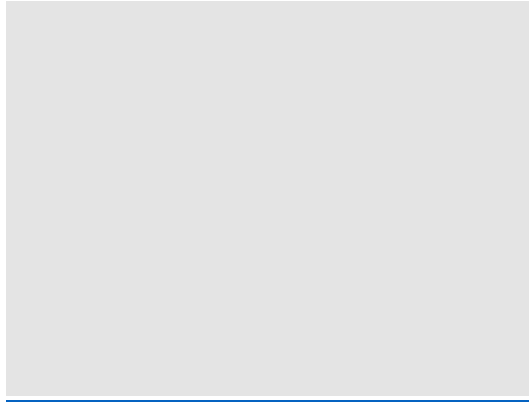
Wyalusing Area School District Superintendent Jason Bottiglieri talks about the partnership between the school district and Leatherstocking Gas Company that will bring natural gas service to the surrounding community.

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Leatherstocking Gas Company President Mike German gives an overview to the natural gas service expansion that will begin this summer on the grounds of the Wyalusing Area School District.

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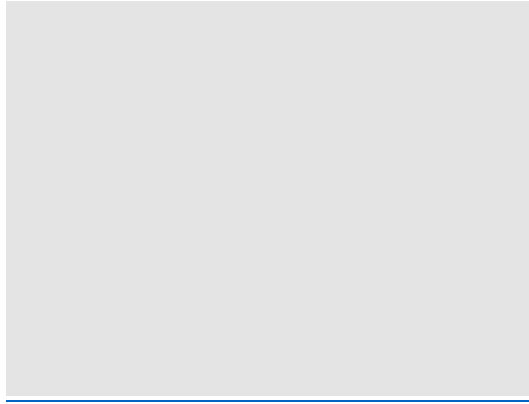
State Sen. Gene Yaw (R-23) discusses Pennsylvania's natural gas production and efforts to make sure the resource is available to residents.

- [Review Photo/Matt Hicks](#)



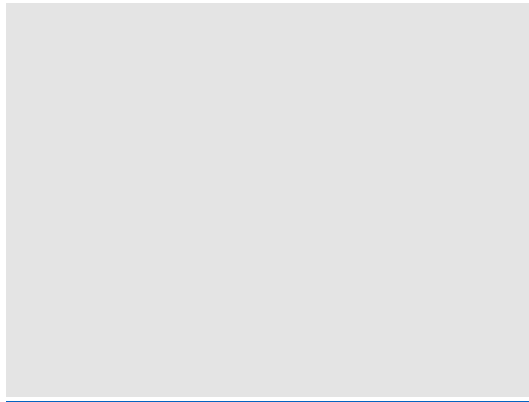
U.S. Rep. Fred Keller (R-Pa.-12) talks about how natural gas has helped America become energy independent.

- [Review Photo/Matt Hicks](#)



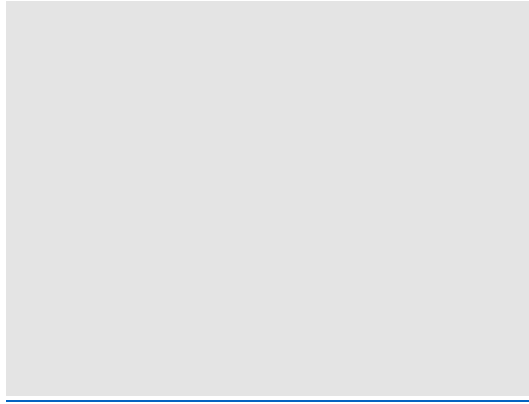
Bradford County Commissioner Chairman Daryl Miller reflects on the energy crisis of the 1970s and the abundance of natural gas in the area now.

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Wyalusing Borough Mayor Suky Burgess talks about the benefits the borough will see with natural gas.

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Wyalusing School Board President Matthew Meunch looks forward to the opportunities that natural gas will bring to the Wyalusing community.

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WYALUSING TOWNSHIP – After many years of discussions and planning, officials gathered on the grounds of the Wyalusing Area School District Wednesday morning as part of a groundbreaking ceremony to celebrate a natural gas expansion project that will bring natural gas service to the district this summer, and then to the surrounding township and Wyalusing Borough through two other phases of construction.

“It will take some time. There will be a lot of money spent in the borough, a lot of work here, but we think this is a good, growing, robust area, and we’re delighted to be here,” said Mike German, the president of Leatherstocking Gas Company, which has partnered with the school district for the service expansion.

“Leatherstocking is providing not just an opportunity for our district, but for the entire community,” said Wyalusing Area School District Superintendent Jason Bottiglieri. “ ... The establishment of a pipeline infrastructure is a significant achievement for our region and is a testament to the dedication and commitment of all parties involved throughout the last few years.”

Bottiglieri noted that the switch to natural gas from the district’s wood chip burning biomass facility will provide cost savings and sustainability for the district, which will be passed on to taxpayers.

Students Catherine Brown, a senior, and Sophia Alvarez, an eighth grader, welcomed the cleaner energy alternative and the opportunities it would provide the surrounding community.

As a school district that is greatly supported by the community, Brown added, "Bringing natural gas to the community can be viewed as a thank-you for everything they do for us."

State Sen. Gene Yaw (R-23) pointed out that Pennsylvania is the second largest producer of natural gas in the United States, while U.S. Rep. Fred Keller (R-Pa.-12) noted that 10% of that natural gas comes from within his congressional district.

"If we stop and think about that, that makes Pennsylvania one of the largest natural gas producers in the world," said Yaw. "My frustration is that we don't act like it. ... The sad part about it is that almost 50% of Pennsylvania households don't have access to natural gas. We're sitting on one of the largest deposits in the world and yet we don't act on anything to really promote the use of natural gas."

To help with accessibility to natural gas, Yaw highlighted the creation of the state's Pipeline Investment Program, which has helped expand natural gas service in Standing Stone and Athens townships in recent years, and is now supporting the service to Wyalusing.

Keller said the average Pennsylvanian who utilizes natural gas could realize a \$1,100 year energy savings while highlighting other benefits such as the support of American jobs as the nation has become energy independent and keeping dollars invested within the country.

"I would rather invest that money in energy that's developed in northeastern or north central Pennsylvania than send it to places where the countries don't share our values," said Keller. "We can develop that energy here and give that money to companies in America that will come down to landowners who own those rights to that gas right here in our community, and we won't be shipping those dollars overseas to people that don't share our interests as Americans."

Yaw, Keller, and state Rep. Tina Pickett (R-110) were recognized for their support during Wednesday's ceremony.

Although Pickett was unable to attend due to the legislative session in Harrisburg, Jason Krise, a representative from her office, conveyed her support for the project as it moves forward.

For Wyalusing Township Supervisor Chairman Marvin Meter, the groundbreaking is a historical moment for the greater Wyalusing valley that will bring many future opportunities.

"The abundance of this resource will do nothing but enhance growth in our community," added Wyalusing Borough Suky Burgess. "We're extremely grateful to Leatherstocking for including our area in their supply chain. We recognize the huge savings it will afford our businesses and residents, not to mention the environmentally friendly energy source."

Bradford County Commissioner Chairman Daryl Miller remembered the 1970s energy crisis that doubled gasoline prices and produced worry that America would be cut off from its energy supply due to an oil embargo from the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries. He compared that time to now as America has become a net exporter of natural gas, with gas wells located all around the county producing "billions of cubic feet of gas per day."

"We've got a power plant (Panda Liberty in Asylum Township) producing around 830 mega-watts of energy," Miller said. "A million or so households are getting electricity because of that power plant. That wouldn't be here without the gas under our feet."



“This moment is not just for our district, but for our entire community,” said Wyalusing School Board President Matthew Meunch, who first envisioned the natural gas expansion during his campaign for school board eight years ago and listened to the first presentation around five years back. “This first step forward opens the door for natural gas projects in our area, to allow our businesses to thrive, and our homeowners to keep more money in their pockets.”

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