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COLD SHOCK April freeze impacts local farms



Farmer Jennifer Hopkins inspects the bean plants grown on land in Exeter Twp. by Hopkins Farm on Tuesday. SEAN MCKEAG/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

PROPOSED DATA CENTER IN KLINE TWP.

Amazon Web Services outlines plans

Representatives seek to clear up 'misinformation' regarding proposed site's environmental footprint; critic calls update a 'very poor presentation'

By Brian Bingaman BBINGAMAN@REPUBLICANHERALD.COM

Representatives from Amazon Web Services (AWS) appeared before the Schuylkill County Commissioners Wednesday to provide an update on their proposed 380-acre tech campus off Lofty Road in Kline Twp.

According to AWS lead of economic development Becky Ford, upcoming sessions open to the public will be 5 to 8 p.m. June 30 and July 1 at McAdoo Elementary School.

Jeff Wilhelm, an attorney representing AWS, announced it will present its formal "major modification" land development plans to the Kline Twp. Planning Commission at that time.

Seeking to clear up what commissioners termed "misinformation," surrounding the site's environmental footprint, Wilhelm broke down the data center's water-use parameters. The company signed a preliminary agreement to pay for access to the local water system, he said, which allows the facility to use up to 15,000 gallons of water a day for everyday needs and up to 100,000

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By Robert Tomkavage RTOMKAVAGE@SCRANTONTIMES.COM

A late April freeze following unseasonably warm days proved problematic for local farms as the Wilkes-Barre City Farmers Market opens Thursday on Public Square.

Some farms used a helicopter and wind machines to minimize crop loss, another suffered significant losses, and a third

delayed planting to avoid the frigid temperatures.

Logan Brace, co-owner of Brace's Orchard in Franklin Twp., Luzerne County, feels fortunate the farm was able to salvage much of its fruit crops as he prepares to sell goods at farmers markets this summer.

"I fared a lot better than most," he said. "We're going to try to do business as usual. Our peaches seem to be fine, my stone fruits are all fine,

and my apples are pretty good. There are not going to be many changes. We're going to try to keep everything the same. As far as other growers in the area, I know they were a lot different."

Brace used a process called "frost flying," where a low-flying helicopter pushes warmer air from an inversion layer down to the trees and ground below to help mitigate losses.

"It was a long night, but it seemed to pretty much save

me," he said.

While the freeze won't impact Brace's prices this summer, several other factors may lead to small increases, Brace said.

"If I raise my prices at all, it will be 50 cents here or a quarter there, but that's just because of the way of the world anymore," he said. "My electric bill for the farm — I just looked

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THE NEPA 30

'The Office' had the nation laughing with us

By Cecilia Baress CBARESS@SCRANTONTIMES.COM

Greg Daniels' "The Office" thrust Scranton onto the national stage under a bright spotlight. Pop culture references to our region have not always been kind. So NBC's announcement of a sitcom set in Scranton and based on a famously acerbic comedian's British hit caused trepidation. But the audience didn't jeer. The network ordered a second season. Ratings picked up. The show started winning awards. And amid it



all, the national perception of Scranton as a city past its prime began to shift. The city was still making people laugh, but it was no longer the butt of the joke.

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the award-winning British sitcom premiered March 24, 2005. Daniels had never set foot in Scranton, but chose it as the show's backdrop in part because of his reverence for John O'Hara, a writer who set

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Rainn Wilson, from "The Office," is surrounded by fans during the parade from the University of Scranton to Courthouse Square, as part of "The Office" Wrap Party on May 4, 2013. FILE

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