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A Hunting-Oriented Community

We would welcome a discussion of what effect the new anti-crime laws concerning the registration of guns will have on the Back Mountain.

This is a hunting-oriented community. Boys are taught to shoot when they are youngsters, go into the woods with their fathers to hunt deer every fall, take great pride in their prowess as hunters, learn how to handle a gun safely, and develop a love for the fields and hills as a fringe benefit.

Long guns are standard equipment in the majority of Back Mountain households.

Schools in this area dismiss classes on the first day of deer season, a procedure which causes great amazement to new residents, fresh from the city, or from other communities where people do not take their hunting seriously.

It is a way of life out here in the Back Mountain. But we can see no reason why there should be such vigorous opposition to licensing or registering lethal weapons.

A car is a far more lethal instrument than a gun, comparatively speaking. The death rate from shotguns and rifles is far less in this country than the toll from highway accidents.

We register our cars, which gives us a license to drive on the highways in peril of our lives and the lives of other drivers.

Not a week passes that there is not some grim accident or some story of a miraculous escape in our area.

But there is this to be said: nobody in his right mind aims a car at another person and pushes the throttle to the floorboard.

It takes a mind intent on killing to point a gun and pull the trigger.

Why shouldn't the gun be registered and licensed? It might not do a particle of good, but it does put the owner of a gun on record as responsible.

Law-abiding citizens would not be hampered by registering their firearms. Criminals will get guns anyhow, just as people during the days of prohibition got their whiskey in speak-easies.

There will always be a traffic in illicit goods, the instant the Government labels the trade as illicit, the demand rises among a certain element.

We are convinced that deer season, and bear season, and turkey season will see just as many hunters in the woods as ever this coming fall. It would be a pity if the hunters did not roam the woods, for the deer herds are expanding out of all proportion, and they must be thinned out.

Seventy-five years ago, deer were a rarity in these hills. Now they are a prime pest to farmers whose property borders on the sheltering woods. A stock-man with a herd of fifty young cattle is apt to find fifty deer feeding side by side with the yearlings.

The hills were denuded of their virgin pine back in the days when lumbering was big business in Pennsylvania. Now that the hills are green again, game has moved back into the picture, and game and hunters go hand in hand.

Accidental shootings are not too common. Two boys will go out to practice shooting at a target, and one boy will shoot the other, never by intention.

A hunter will shoot at something moving in the bushes, on the grounds that it is probably a woodchuck and needs shooting. If he is lucky, it is a woodchuck. Clubs for sportsmen lay a groundwork for safe handling of fire-arms. If boys are to handle weapons, they must know when and where to shoot, and how to do it safely.

Hand guns, we're not so sure about. But we do know that they must be registered for the protection of the owner, along with fingerprints and all other pertinent data.

Mail-order fire-arms surely should be nipped in the bud.

Our children are indoctrinated early in life with the idea that a pistol goes boom, and there you are, all over dead, ready to scramble up the next moment and aim your own toy pistol at your playmate.

Cops and robbers, cowboys and Indians, it's been a game ever since the country became a country. The toy stores cater to it, offering all sorts of armament in the name of wholesome play.

We don't know the answer. But we do know that very seldom does the play-acting go on into adult life. If it does, you have the kind of disturbed man who goes up into a tower, aims his rifle, and mows down everything that moves.

Or shoots a President with a mail-order rifle.

Watch Those Kids On Bikes

Now that school is out, watch those kids on bicycles. They weave all over the road. They have no business on main highways, but sometimes they appear.

At thirty-five miles an hour, permitted to cars travelling Pioneer Avenue, a bicycle sprawling across the road, and a youngster picking himself up, can spell a tragedy.

It is difficult for a bicycle rider to get off onto the shoulder, for in many places the recent highway improvement left the shoulders dangerously low while building up the pave.

We deplore the speed on Pioneer Avenue in any case. We feel that if people are heading for the Lake they do well to stay on the main highway instead of taking what they consider a short cut up and down the hills.

We think that twenty-five miles is enough on that stretch of road. A speed limit of thirty-five becomes a speed of forty in actual practice. It is considered approximate only in the mind of the driver.

Only Yesterday It Happened 30 Years Ago

And now they let the Back Mountain into the secret: It was highly unlikely that the Luzerne By-Pass would be started in July. All obstacles had been overcome, the property owners compensated, but no bids had been let for construction. Luzerne County Commissioners agreed to pay Wilkes-Barre Transit \$40,000 for its right-of-way, destined to be used as the roadbed for the cut-off.

Seventy-fifth anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg recalled the fiftieth, when Daddy Bogert, John Miner and John Neuer, all of Noxen, went to the big GAR reunion in Gettysburg, and came back again without waiting out the celebration. Too hot for the veterans. They fit the battle on Daddy Bogert's front porch.

The last Gettysburg veteran of the War Between the States in this area, Peter Culp of Pikes Creek, had died two years earlier, in 1926. Read up on your ancestors in the issue of July 1, 1938.

Borough school district was in sound condition. The Borough was looking forward with mixed emotions to the first Fourth of July without fireworks. The ordinance was adopted in 1937.

First swimming meet of the season at Harveys Lake.

About the sewage problem, as odoriferous then as now, the State offered to pay 45 percent of the cost outright, if the communities would get together, and lend the balance on easy terms over a long period. No survey had been made, though THE DALLAS POST had recommended it years earlier.

Culm banks in the valley were to be planted with quick growing black locust.

Late potato blight was appearing in adjacent counties, mites were attacking spruce trees.

Leona Koehler was wed to Clarence Oberst.

Vernon was planning an all-day celebration on the Fourth.

It Happened 20 Years Ago

Trucksville Firemen's soap-box derby was about ready to go on the stage. It used to be the high light of the summer for the kids. Nowadays you gotta pilot something fancy with an engine in it. What ever happened to the old soap box derby, anyhow? Or for the matter at that, the Flat Show for mongrels?

Lake Silkworth Firemen dedicated their building. Elwood Ruckel was MC.

George L. Rice bought prize heifers to supplement his Ayreshire herd.

Lehman Horse Show was going into high gear in preparation for the July 4 event. Hayfield's prize Clydesdales were entered. (The Dallas Post did a feature story on those Clydesdales some years ago, mentioning also the little Sardinian donkeys.) Show chairman was Edward Hartman.

Harold G. Payne succeeded R. W. Kintzer as general manager of Commonwealth Telephone Company.

Two more Back Mountain men, killed in action in World War II, were on their way home by transport. The bodies were those of Ted Loveland and Francis Sidorek. Loveland was killed in action in France September 12, 1914; Sidorek in a plane crash in England, June 17, 1945.

William Disque, 31, was electrocuted while directing removal of a pole carrying a 4,600 volt power line near Cooperstown, on a Sordoni Construction Company job.

Married: Claire Stevenson to Glenn Nissley. Dorothy Jean Considine to Robert Griffiths. Arline V. Crispell to Conrad Swinehart.

10 Years Ago

It was the 180th anniversary of the Wyoming Massacre. Many local residents had connections among descendants of the soldiers.

Jackson Institution was taking shape. One of the main cell blocks was nearing completion. Pix of interior. It would be another year before the prison was ready for occupancy.

David Kunkle, critically injured in a car accident, was slowly improving.

Burgess Nortt Berti issued a proclamation calling upon residents to support the Twelfth Library Auction.

Franklin Patton, Noxen school director, came close to losing an arm in a hay-baler.

Gate of Heaven Fiesta attracted banner crowds.

Married: Jean Marie Weir to Richard Harding. Elizabeth Davis to Gerald Schultz. Mary Siglin to David Hopkins, Jr.

Died: Boyd Dodson.

KEEPING POSTED

June 19: POOR PEOPLES CAMPAIGN gets a big boost when demonstrators gather with dignity at Lincoln Memorial. Mrs. Martin Luther King speaks. LBJ SIGNS omnibus crime bill including gun control. Reluctant, but says more good than bad in the measure. FLASH STORM on Lake Erie, hurricanes winds hit sailing craft. HINT OF PROGRESS in Peace talks. Envoys get together for informal drinking of tea. Please pass the sugar. US DEAD in Vietnam now passes 25,000.

June 20: ACTORS THREE DAY STRIKE in New York settled. GREEK CABINET dismissed. CHIEF JUSTICE EARL WARREN resigns from Supreme Court. 77 ARRESTED in disturbance in front of Department of Agriculture, in wake of peaceful meeting of Poor People. VENEZUELAN JET PLANE hijacked, forced to land in Havana, released to fly back to Caracas.

June 21: SUMMER STARTS with snow in Adirondacks, record chill in East. TAX INCREASE goes to Senate, already passed in the House. Coupled with mandatory cut of 6 billion in Government spending. REV. ABERNETHY says Poor People will not leave Washington by Sunday, but remain at Resurrection City. Legal time is running out.

Weekend: PRESIDENT DeGAULLE in landslide victory, record of confidence. RESURRECTION CITY, time running out, people refuse to leave. BUDDHISTS DEMAND de-escalation of war in Vietnam. ROCKEFELLER meets the press. PANIC IN ARGENTINA, after game, 71 killed. JORDAN-ISRAELI BORDER, Guerilla warfare. BRUSHPIRE out of control in National Forest, California. PRISON-RIOT ARSON in Columbus Ohio Penitentiary.

June 24: HURRICANE CANDY strikes Texas Coast, moves northeast. POLICE ORDERED to clear Resurrection City of campers. Remaining, 80 people. March on Capitol, 300 strong, demonstrate. Abernethy says poor people won't leave by deadline.

June 25: ABERNETHY IN JAIL, with some other demonstrators. WASHINGTON QUIET, Resurrection City being demolished, plenty of forces on hand to guarantee no riots. CANADA'S PRIME MINISTER TRUDEAU firmly in saddle, Liberal Party solidly in power. CYRUS VANCE takes over in Paris, Harriman in Washington with LBJ. Peace talks getting nowhere. TWO REGIMENTS OF VIET CONG said to be heading for Saigon. U.S. MOUNTS search and destroy campaign to clear suburbs. FIVE HELICOPTERS LOST, two collide in mid-air.

June 26: WASHINGTON BACK to normal, no curfew, Resurrection City represented by vast mud-puddle, plywood slabs, all residents removed, most back home. ABERNETHY DEPLORES violence from prison cell. Guest of The People for 20 days. Ministers say they will carry on, that poor people have made their point. IWO JIMA back in hands of the Japanese, as per agreement to return some of the islands captured at great loss of life during World War II. Island promontory bears historic figures in sculpture, raising of the United States flag. MULE TRAIN leaves. CONGRESS FLOODED with telegrams, letters, voiced against tight arms control. Right after assassination, everybody wrote in demanding swift action.

Growing Lawlessness In Area Spurs Minister To Suggest Action

The Dallas Post feels that this communication from a local minister rates a place on the editorial page. Rev. Charles Commer Jr., pastor of Trucksville United Methodist Church, has this to say in a letter to supervisors of Back Mountain municipalities, and to pastors of local churches:

Some recent events of the last weeks motivate my contacting you this way.

- 1. The brutal death of Van J. Robinson, gas station attendant in Dallas. 2. The recently passed Federal legislation (Crime Bill) that indicates a real concern on the part of our national leaders for making more effective local law enforcement—even making it possible for funds to be allocated to local communities for that purpose. 3. On Wednesday, June 12th, Mr. Leroy Ziegler, Kingston Township Supervisor, speaking at the regularly scheduled meeting of that board, indicated his concern for a consolidated police force and centralized communications center, which would greatly increase the effectiveness of law enforcement and crime prevention in the Back Mountain community. 4. An editorial in the Dallas Post, June 20, 1968, indicated that such an idea as "A Consolidated Police Force" for the Back Mountain area was not a new idea. In fact it also indicated a need to consider a centralized communications center and combined fire fighting organization. It is time ripe to do something about modernizing and up-grading the police and fire department resources of our back mountain communities? It just seems to me that

Mrs. John Girvan Injured In A Fall

Mrs. John Girvan, long-time resident of Dallas, was painfully injured Sunday night when she fell down a flight of stairs leading to her apartment on Wyoming Avenue, Kingston.

Dr. H. G. Gallagher, her physician of many years standing, was called at 6 a.m. on Monday, when her daughter-in-law, Mrs. Francis Girvan, discovered Mrs. Girvan bleeding profusely from a cut in the back of her head. She had been able to crawl up the stairs and back to her bed some hours earlier.

She was taken by ambulance to Mercy Hospital, where Dr. Gallagher sutured the wound and returned her to her apartment. Mrs. Girvan thinks she had been walking in her sleep, as reaching the stairway involved unlocking two doors.

Safety Valve

HATS OFF TO POLICE

Dear Editor:

I must write this letter to you before I leave town.

On Saturday night my family and I were passing through Dallas when we developed car trouble. As you would know, strange people in a strange town, we were lost for words, and also for a place where we could find help.

Looking in our mirror, we saw a car stopping, and guess who? The Dallas Borough Police; This officer not only helped us to get our car going, but put us on the right route to Wilkes-Barre.

You are a very lucky town to have young and helpful officers. My hat is off to the officer who was on duty last Saturday night about 10:30, June 15th, 1968.

Thank you.

Editorial note: It wasn't signed, but who could turn down a letter like that and refuse to publish it on a technicality? We'd like to know if the family got home safely. —Hix.

P.S. It was Jack Berti who provided aid and directions.

FIRST DAY OF SUMMER

First Day of Summer bulletin: Bill Moss says early morning frost got three acorn squash plants in his garden. Temperature along that little creek in Trucksville runs consistently lower than on higher ground.

How often we allow opportunities for progress and growth to slip by us "by default"—just by doing "nothing about it." I am not sure we can afford such irresponsibility in these fast moving days.

To the Supervisors of the local communities: Could you put this question on your next business meeting agenda? I know how tight an agenda you have to keep in order to get done all you do, but I think this issue important enough to be considered, and hopefully to be acted upon. Could a meeting of officials from our local communities (involving persons from all the concerned levels of the problem) be arranged to investigate, research the problem, and bring in recommendations relative to its feasibility and effectiveness.

To the Churches: Yours is a ministry to the community. Will your "official body" discuss the idea and bring whatever pressure you can to bear on our local communities to consider the problem? Why wait until the Federal Government comes in and tells us how to run our community! This is a time for LOCAL INITIATIVE. Can our Back Mountain churches "unite" to do something about this problem? I hope so.

Change always involves risk—hard work and involvement. I suppose it is easier to let "the other guy do it," or just "forget the whole thing" as involving too much time and effort. That is not the way to progress, however - it is the way to dull, gray mediocrity.

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From—

Pillar To Post...

by HIX

I thought all along that it was MY woodchuck, on the grounds that I have seen him sitting bolt upright at the entrance to his burrow under that steep bank above the terrace, and the further grounds that he has been snoudging catfood all winter from the Purina Chow set out on the kitchen porch for the cats.

Now it appears that he isn't my woodchuck at all, he's Livings-ton Clewell's woodchuck . . . and not only that, he's a she!

Mrs. Clewell, leaning sociably over the dividing fence a couple of days ago, said, "You'd never believe it, but those baby woodchucks are just dashing back and forth on the lawn, and eating everything in sight."

Suspicion dawned, and it grew stronger when she added, "You know, they've got the biggest burrow you ever saw, with all sorts of entrances and escape hatches."

So, all Hix is, is an escape hatch for a family of woodchucks, a very deflating thought when you come right down to it. All that Parina Chow gone for nothing. To be sure, I had not intended to support a woodchuck, but it kept coming up on the back porch, and there was this racket almost every night, and a food dish licked clean every morning, polished practically to the bone.

Now that the cats have found other homes, the screen door is kept locked at night, and there is nothing to attract a woodchuck or an opossum.

It was the small chipmunk which tipped the scales, and cast the deciding ballot in favor of letting the SPCA find a farm home for an intrepid and completely incurable hunter, along with the kittens which she was training to follow in her footsteps. The baby chipmunk did not wear well as a toy.

The SPCA took down a wad of information as to why we were disposing of the mother cat and her two half grown kittens.

Barbie and I did not inquire what the ultimate destination of the trio might be. We felt it would be kinder not to know. And then we came home and sprayed the premises with Black Flag.

Maybe those trick flea collars work with some cats, but apparently Primmy wore her collar in a jaunty manner, permitting easy travelling.

And there is this to be considered: You can always find suitable homes for grey kittens, calico kittens, white kittens with black spots, fuzzy kittens, Manx kittens . . . but don't waste your time trying to find homes for black kittens. The cards are stacked against you from the start.

It's a matter of superstition. Folks equate black kittens with witches cauldrons and Halloween, no matter how cute and playful they are. To the common eye, they look sinister!

As for the woodchucks, they are still romping around the Clewell yard, waiting for the Game Protector to come and protect them, imprison them in a trap which is guaranteed not to harm them, and take them fur far away, liberating them some where in the wilds.

We don't need them on Pioneer Avenue. The way I feel about it, wildlife is just ducky in its natural habitat, but when it begins to fence me, I begin thinking about getting a shotgun.

The same applies to a deer. I think deer are beautiful. They have such trusting gentle eyes, and they float so beautifully over a fence, it is a pleasure to watch them vanish.

And for all of me, they can vanish completely instead of lying in wait for my car and plunging across the road ahead of it.

I've got one small bonus out of the de-cattening of the premises: the small and saucy wren is back again, making the most unconscionable racket, and laying the foundations for another batch of baby wrens, completely undiscouraged by what happened to the last festful of fledglings.

It is amazing what a shrill sound comes out of that one small throat, as she announces that the bird house on the porch porch is hers, and dumb humans can just walk around by the other door. And the flirt of that small tail is nothing less than impudent.

Story Hour Going Strong At Library

by Mrs. Martin Davern

Long awaited sunshine swelled the ranks of the pre-school story-hour group to 33 recently. The children enjoyed traditional games such as "farmer-in-the-dell" and "London Bridge-is-falling-down" on the spacious Back Mountain Memorial Library grounds.

It was a "goodly crowd" to control, but Mrs. William Downs, the story-lady, proved equal to the task. The pre-school story-hour is held every Wednesday all year long at the Back Mountain Memorial Library at 10:15 a.m., and a story-

hour for children from six to eight years of age is held during the summer months at 1:30 p.m. Saturday afternoons starting June 29.

The latter group will be under the supervision of Miss Claudia Zaboski, a staff-member.

All during the summer months, Back Mountain Memorial Library will offer children's books in the Annex, a rich variety of picture books for pre-schoolers, more advanced books for children up to the sixth grade.

At this point, most children transfer their attention to the main library, where they can find more challenging material.

If it is Story Hour or book selection, the Library has what it takes to provide constructive occupations for children during the vacation season. This is the time to install a love of books, when there is plenty of leisure to browse along the shelves, and spread out the elbows on the table for uninterrupted reading.

Ross Band Sponsors

Ross Township area of Lake-Lehman Band Sponsors plans an ice cream social, with home-made ice cream, for July 20, beginning at 5 p.m., at the Ross Elementary School.

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