



FISHING IS RELAXING—Bright sunshine, warm, soft breezes and a long wait for a nibble was enough to relax

this fisherman completely at Harveys Lake, the opening day of trout season last Saturday. (Photo by Charlot M. Denmon) More Sports pp. 9-16



HEAT WAVE—Mary Jane Maximowicz and Rayadene Fitzgerald took advantage of the warm weather Tuesday,

to catch some early sun and a few laughs. (Photo by Cheryl Casner Gula)

# THE DALLAS POST

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DALLAS, PA. TWENTY CENTS

## Ethics for school boards?

### 'When complaining becomes crime, hope becomes despair'

by Hilda Goldberg

A new code of ethics for Northeastern Pennsylvania school boards may be the result of a blanket verbal blast made on national TV by a Scranton-based U.S. attorney.

Only one member of an area school board apparently took public exception to an accusation that corruption exists in "all Northeastern Pennsylvania school districts." Little if any rebuttal was issued from most Lackawanna and Luzerne County school districts, the prime target of the accusations.

Anthony J. Mussari, an American History teacher at King's College and a member of the Wilkes-Barre area school district, subsequently launched a one-man crusade to seek out persons who claim to have paid for positions or who knew of persons who have paid for positions with the area school district.

"We are trying to devise a new set of ethical precepts for the conduct of



HIT THIS ONE—Dallas pitcher Stevi Skammer's tongue might get there before the pitch as he blazes one across the plate for a strike in the game with Hanover, Monday afternoon, at the Dallas field. The Mounts won 5-4 going into extra innings.

school board business," said Mussari. "In the past when these kinds of accusations were made, officials seemed to feel intimidated. It was the common opinion that if nothing was said or done time would erase the problem. Well, that's like ignoring a malignancy and hoping it will disappear."

On January 14, assistant U.S. Attorney Sal Cognetti, Jr., Scranton, told an NBC reporter on a national broadcast, that "it is an accepted practice in Northeastern Pennsylvania for the parents of children applying for teaching positions in school districts to pay for these jobs."

NBC reporter, Brian Ross, asked the going rate. Cognetti replied, "Sixteen hundred to two thousand dollars."

Mussari made a formal complaint to the Justice Department regarding Cognetti's statement.

"Cognetti's response to the question raised by the NBC reporter was phrased in such a way that it could apply to every school district in Northeastern Pennsylvania," said Mussari.

"I felt that comment set back every good thing school districts have been trying to do. Wilkes-Barre was never specifically mentioned."

"But because it was broadcast on national TV, Wilkes-Barre could be interpreted as part of the area accused," said Mussari. "I felt terribly angered because the alternate side of that issue had never been aired. Never did NBC try to get the other side of the story."

Mussari, past president of the school district, said that the only person who has ever really spoken out about this accusation was himself.

Since speaking out against the statement, Mussari said he has received anonymous phone calls and "hate mail." He said that one Dallas resident called him and gave him a "verbal lashing." The caller said he believed that all school board members had taken money for jobs and that the practice had been "going on for all eternity."

"He was adamant in his beliefs," said Mussari. "He said that maybe I was an exception but if so, 'truly an exception.'"

Mussari said he had received an unsigned letter, postmarked Hunlock Creek, in which the writer was highly incensed that "I could say that NBC, the F.B.I. and the Justice Department were wrong."

"I think it is imperative that we (meaning school board officials) stand up and be counted on these issues," said Mussari. "This type of thing has been said for years. No one bothers to deny it. People in general accept it as fact. However, there never has been a conviction for this particular crime - buying of positions."

Mussari said that the Pennsylvania school code says: Nothing of any value shall be given in exchange for a vote for employment.

Since January, the Wilkes-Barre Area School District has filed a protest with the National Broadcasting Company, NBC reviewed the tape of the particular

## Lake bed privately owned

### Who inherited Harveys Lake?

It's been discussed before but Harveys Lake borough council president Guy J. Giordano confirmed at the council meeting Friday night that the lake is privately owned.

Giordano said Borough Solicitor John Thomas confirmed the private ownership of the lake bed while preparing condemnation papers in conjunction with the Worden Place drainage project, presently underway in the borough.

The council president proposed the borough consider obtaining ownership of the lake bed in preference to permitting the lake to revert to state control. He suggested the possibility be discussed a future meeting of the council.

Lake ownership was an issue in September of 1969 when the Pennsylvania Water and Power Resources board sought to tax property-owners for docks constructed on the lakefront. At that time the Harveys Lake Protective Association and other Lake property owners reportedly retained Atty. James Geddes who did a title search on the property.

Geddes apparently discovered proof that the Commonwealth had granted lake bed rights to three individuals, Charles T. Barnum, Hendrick Wright and William Simms, more than 100 years ago.

Wright was a prominent Plymouth resident, reportedly a congressman. Records indicated that the lake bed rights were never returned to the state.

Geddes reportedly used the information to successfully rebuff the

broadcast and advised that their reporter did not make the statement. The statement was made by assistant U.S. Attorney Sal Cognetti.

The district also filed a strong objection with NBC for making such a blanket statement. NBC replied by saying that "it was in our story, but our reporter did not make the statement."

The W-B district also filed a protest with the Federal Communications Commission in Washington. The FCC sent back a long brief plus the guidelines for the FCC Fairness Doctrine. FCC advised that the Wilkes-Barre Area School District

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state tax attempt, which was not enforced. The heirs of the three grantees are presumably owners of the lake bed at the present time.

Solicitor Thomas said his title search indicated that the Commonwealth made a rare grant of lake rights to Barnum and Wright, one half each. They later exchanged rights so

that each many owned half of the entire lake rather than geographically described portions.

Thomas said that Simms name did not appear in his search for the title involving the lake bed near Warden Place. He said that, regardless of ownership, the state has separate laws controlling the water in the lake.

## Low rent housing tabled

Dallas Borough solicitor, Charles Lemmond, will discuss in detail a proposed low rent housing project for the elderly, with Charles Sickler of the Luzerne County Housing Authority before Dallas Borough Council enters into any agreement with the Authority for construction of the housing facilities within the borough.

At the council meeting on Tuesday night councilman Harold Brobst explained that he and several others of the council met with Sickler and explored ways and means to proceed with the housing project. Sickler, as requested, sent literature to Atty. Lemmond but time was not sufficient for study before Tuesday's meeting. Council members indicated they wanted to know more about the units before entering into a legal agreement.

President Jerry Machell told Council that it will be May 16 or 17 before the borough will know whether or not their application for a grant to construct a new municipal building will be approved. The borough's option on the property adjacent to the present borough building expires May

18, so Machell instructed Garris to ask the realtor if his clients will extend the option for an additional week at no further cost.

Chief of Police Ed Lang reported that the new vehicle code which goes into effect July 1 will permit right turns on a red light. He explained that he and Mayor Robert Post were not certain about the advisability of a right hand turn onto Lake Street. He indicated that PennDOT is willing to send in a traffic engineer to survey the situation and if the borough is opposed to the right hand turn, it must so advise PennDOT. Otherwise, all right hand turns will be permitted. The matter was turned over to the road committee for study, who will call in an engineer from PennDOT.

Post stated that a letter had been written to Anthony Bonomo asking him to appear before council within 60 days with a plan for an ingress and egress from the recreation facilities as well as his agreeing to have a special security officer on duty. Bonomo operates a bowling alley and skating rink in the borough.

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Enforcement deadlock ... P. 3

Home & Garden

...See Supplement

Franklin Twp.

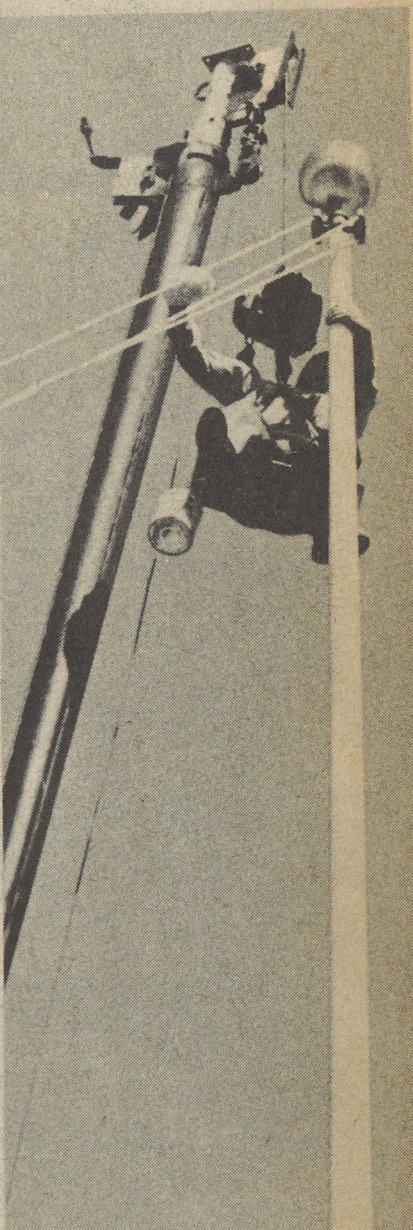
considers fee

change in zoning

Changes in the Zoning Ordinance of Franklin Township are contemplated for adoption at the May meeting of Franklin Township supervisors on Monday May 2, at 8 p.m. in the Orange UM Church social rooms.

Fees to be paid in accordance with applications under the ordinance, after adoption of the changes, will be as follows:

A minimum of \$10 will be necessary for a zoning permit with an additional \$1 per thousand of estimated cost over \$5,000. A certificate of occupancy will cost \$5. An application or appeal to the zoning board of Franklin Township will cost \$50, and an application for a zoning change will cost \$50 also.



AERIAL ARTIST—The man at the top of the pole is more than an aerial artist. He is balancing himself on a small wooden seat atop the 100 foot high flagpole in front of the new Burger King, Shavertown, putting on a second coat of paint while high winds sway both him and the two-ton pole. The flagpole is the highest in Luzerne County. (Photo by Charlot M. Denmon)