

# Chatterbox

## Opinion

### Lefko's absence noted

The question raised by Dallas School Board Director Joseph O'Donnell at the Jan. 10 meeting of the school board was certainly a legitimate one. O'Donnell requested information concerning the status of director Harry Lefko.

O'Donnell expressed his concern at the number of meetings missed by his fellow director during the past year. Several other board members have expressed their concern with Lefko's frequent absence, reported to be nine out of the past 12 regular meetings.

Their primary concern is that on several occasions during the past year, many major issues could have been settled with less delay and argument, if all members had been present.

Despite Board President William Camp's statement that he had discussed the absence with Lefko and that Lefko indicated he was interested in the school district but his

work prohibited his attendance, this did not satisfy some of the directors nor did it satisfy most members in the audience.

Director Ernest Ashbridge's remarks that it was too bad Lefko could not attend more regularly because his long tenure and expertise would be helpful with so many new members on the board did nothing to appease the troubled directors nor taxpayers.

We believe that, when elected to a municipal office such as school board director, councilman or supervisor, it is assumed that the elected officials recognizes he or she has a responsibility to attend all meetings (or at least the majority of meetings) and take an active part in resolving problems, evaluating and deciding major issues.

It should also be the role of an experienced official to assist the newer elected official in the

responsibilities of his position and encourage him to learn all phases of a school district or municipal operation, not discourage him.

Personalities should play no part in fulfilling the office to which a person is elected. An elected official's obligation is to serve the taxpayers of the community—those electors who put him or her in office as their representative.

We realize that a person's work is important to him as is his family. After all, the family is the heart of democracy. We also believe that if a person cannot fulfill his obligation and responsibility to the electors because his work, illness or other personal reasons prohibit him from attending meetings and work sessions, that person should resign his position so that it can be filled by someone who has the time and, perhaps, the interest in serving the electorate in the manner which is expected.

The electorate of a community or district owes no elected official another term of office because of tenure or past interest but elects based on whom is best able to serve the needs of a community or district.

In today's society, electors throughout the country are interested only in what is being done for them now, by whom and how responsibly. Attendance at 25 percent of the meetings is not considered a responsible action by those taxpayers who elected a man to office. An oath of office to serve a trust is taken by an elected official. That oath cannot be fulfilled by continuous absenteeism. The electorate of the Dallas School District wants directors who are able to attend and actively participate. Absentee interest does not fairly represent the concerns of teachers, administration, taxpayers or students.



## A Little Fact;

### A Little Fancy

from Mak

Driving the back streets of the area has been a real treat since last week's snow storm. Without a doubt, living in the Back Mountain is a true test of one's winter driving ability. After the major portion of snow is cleared from the highways it quickly becomes apparent that caution must remain the key word behind the wheel. Icy patches, strips of snowy roadway and exceedingly small clearances are the rule rather than the exception. Just as a word of warning, don't let the fact that it hasn't snowed in several days encourage your foot on the gas pedal. The roads in many areas of the community remain treacherous.

And to our neighbor who recently returned to Burger King to have an order correction made—we understand. It appears the woman had purchased an order of food from McDonald's to take home to her family. Upon arrival at her domain, she noted the order was short one double cheeseburger and an order of fries. In her frustration at the slip up, she jumped back into her car, drove to Burger King and confronted the manager with the problem. He obligingly provided the missing items and offered them at no charge to the disgruntled customer. It was not until she arrived at her home once again that one of her offspring pointed out she had complained to the wrong burger palace.

For those of you who may question the phone caller claiming to be soliciting subscriptions from the Dallas Post, that person is, indeed, legitimate. The Post has callers reminding residents that it is far better to subscribe to the newspaper than to try and remember to buy it on the newsstand every week. Think about it. It is less expensive to subscribe than to pay weekly and a subscription guarantees you will not be disappointed by finding the Post sold out, or in the event, you forget to stop for it.

Oh, the power of the press! If you don't believe it, just ask Jackson Township's Pat Rusiloski. Pat found it very difficult to get the ear of township officials or state lawmakers when she originally attempted to get the State Corrections Institute Citizen Committee underway. However, once the media took an interest in her activities, state and local officials came around very quickly. It is presently at a point where the committee and its recommendations are taken very seriously by everyone.

For example, Sen. Frank O'Connell recently sent information on funding for a township-wide siren system for use during prison escapes. The system was suggested by the committee as a more effective means of notifying citizens when a prisoner breaks out of the Chase Institute. While the prison itself does not have funds for such an investment, and it is costly, the Federal Emergency Management Agency provides 50 percent financing for eligible municipalities. O'Connell recommended Jackson Township contact the Luzerne County Commissioners

and work through the County Emergency Management Office if a decision is made to purchase a three-signal warning siren.

O'Connell is also keeping a close eye on state budget funding to insure sufficient monies are made available for further staff additions at the prison. He does not anticipate budget adoption until July, however.

Bob Bayer, as Dallas Post readers now know, was re-elected president of the Fall Fair Association for 1983. For his second year in office, Bob anticipates even greater growth within the organization and in its benefits to the community. For starters, Fall Fair is reimbursing local ambulance units which purchase antennas for their vehicles. The antenna will allow for direct vehicle-to-vehicle communication between the Back Mountain Mobile Intensive Care ambulance and the local unit. It will also facilitate use of the local ambulances by the paramedics.

Fall Fair will continue its work on improving the Medical Center facility and is in touch with Nesbitt Hospital for that purpose. Nesbitt is still assessing the need for radiology and physical therapy services at the Route 118 location. As Bob explained, Nesbitt makes the determination based on the number of patients living in the general vicinity.

Fall Fair is also talking to other people in the medical profession about locating offices in the Center. Dr. Maria McGrane set up her practice there and Bob said others have expressed interest.

But, on the big question, he refused comment. Who will chair the 1983 Luzerne County Fair? Last year's chairman, Bob Kelley, is not going to do it again. Bob figures decision will be made by the end of the month. As soon as I know, I'll note it in this column.

If you are plagued by boredom, chances are you haven't discovered the excitement awaiting you in the wonderful world of books at the Back Mountain Memorial Library. You can't be bored when you're learning new hobbies, reading about far-away places, or studying to complete your education.

New books at the library: "Fireplaces And Wood Stoves" by the editors of Time-Life books offers homeowners detailed instructions on repairs, construction and improvements they can undertake themselves. From repairing stoves, flues and dampers to building a brick fireplace.

"Life Sentences" by Elizabeth Hailey is a story about a strong woman in aliberted time acknowledging her interdependence. The results are at once poignant and devastating, comforting and provocative, but above all unforgettable. Three women renew their loyalties. "Saigon" by Anthony Grey, is an epic story of an American named Joseph Sherman and his lifelong obsession with the fighting, the women, and the oriental mysteries in Vietnam. The story makes us feel we have fought and loved and lived a dozen lives and finally understood.

## Comment

### Confessions of a 'law-abiding citizen'

Of course I'm a law-abiding citizen and more, I make a living at reporting the law—or incidents of its being broken. Ironically, it is seldom news when we abide by the law. But break it, and the whole world knows.

Exaggeration or not, the abuse of criminal law is a very serious thing. Working for a hometown newspaper, however, I am rarely in a position to report what might be termed heavy crime. Rather I am privy to large doses of minor offenses—primarily traffic type.

Our society is strongly dependent upon its automobiles. In an area such as the Back Mountain, we find our vehicles almost indispensable. We drive to the store, because the nearest one is nearly a mile away. We drive to church for the same reason. We drive to work, to play, to the theatre, and to visit friends. Much of the driving we do is on two lane paved roads, some in very good condition and others, deplorable.

I believe I am like many drivers in the community in my attitudes about traveling through the Back Mountain. I have so often reported

## Only Yesterday

on the hazards of Route 309 that I have become quite attuned to its several speed changes. As a reporter, I championed the lowered speed limits through Dallas and Kingston Township, and after a time became accustomed to obeying them.

While my Chevrolet is quite capable of traveling at 35 mph from Center Street in Shavertown to center of Dallas, it takes on a different personality when it hits Huntsville Road or Pioneer Avenue.

Remember, I am a law-abiding citizen. I believe in courtesy of the road. I know we must do our part to maintain the laws which are there for our protection. To add to my guilt, I have often snickered while typing an accident story in which a driver is cited for driving too fast, or going through a stop sign. My inclination is to think "How silly! Someone could have been killed. What was his hurry?"

Well, my cockiness was brought home to haunt me very sharply last week as I left the Dallas Post building and started home. I had tarried too long at the office (loving my job as I do), and knew I would

have to make tracks to arrive home before the school bus deposited my children. How many of us are familiar with that scene?

I didn't think twice as I slid through the stop sign at the top of Center Hill Road and turned onto Sterling Avenue. But it's only four months since I wrote for the Post, that residents in the area were concerned about speeders there. Dallas police said the problem stemmed from drivers failing to observe that very stop sign.

In my concentration to get home, I also recall giving Pinecrest Avenue an extra shot of fuel. Pinecrest Avenue, where youngsters of all ages can be seen playing or hanging around regularly.

It occurred to me no sooner than the five corners at Huntsville. I was worrying more about making it home quickly than I was about how I was driving. At this rate, I'd be lucky to make it home at all.

Considering I am not the only person who has taken advantage of the familiarity of my surroundings, supposing I should come head on against another harried, hurried driver? As we all know, there are many of us, law-abiding citizens, so

often in a hurry, traveling the back roads with boring regularity.

I would not consider burglary, theft, premeditated murder, assault, embezzlement, vandalism or even littering. The litter bag in my car is usually the size of a shopping bag.

Why can I thoughtlessly and foolishly, and yes, dangerously, drive 3,000 pounds of steel (and plastic—it's a new car) over roadways fraught with sharp curves, eroding shoulders and other rushing autos. Should a stranger to the area travel in such a manner I'd be appalled.

As law-abiding goes, so many other instances which appear insignificant individually cause confusion and hazard when thoughtlessly repeated by us locals, one-way signs, as those directing traffic on Dallas school property; no parking restrictions; handicapped parking zones and fire lanes; and yellow dividing lines in the center of the road, to name a few.

I am not admitting guilt to each of the above offenses. Remember, like you, I am a law-abiding citizen.

## Clarence Morgan - Prisoner of war

50 Years Ago - Feb. 3, 1933

Gene Gabriel, former manager of Hotel Redington, leased the Castle Inn. Gabriel, who had also served as manager of the Hazel Inn at White Haven and Gabriel's Inn, Bear Creek, planned to serve all types of sea food, chicken and steak dinners. A four piece orchestra would play every night for dancing.

Deaths--Rev. Joseph Sullivan, flying priest; Wilhelmina Krause, Dallas; Asa R. Holcomb, Huntsville.

You could get--Eggs 23c carton;

grape nuts 17c pkg.; rice 3 lb. 10c; peaches 10c lb.

40 Years Ago - Feb. 5, 1943

Mr. and Mrs. Gustave Adler, Shavertown received word that their son, Private First Class Melvin Adler of the United States Marine Corps had been wounded in action and was a patient in a Pacific hospital. Corporal Clarence H. Morgan, son of Heddie Morgan, Demunds Road was reported a prisoner of war of the Japanese government in the Philippines.

Married--Elva B. Knecht to Gomer Elston.

Deaths--Catherine Mattern Miller, Trucksville; Harry Rhoades, Dallas.

You could get--Chickens 33c lb.; sausage 35c lb.; liver pudding 25c lb.; halibut steak 35c lb.; Ivory soap, 4 med. bars 25c; rolled oats 20 oz. box 8c.

30 Years Ago - Feb. 6, 1953

Dr. Sherman Schooley Blood Donor Day at Dallas Borough School broke the record for Back Mountain donations with 141 registered.

H.W. Risley was elected president of the Back Mountain Memorial Library Association

succeeding Frances Dorrance.

Engaged--Christa Marie Anderes to Francis Beline; Doris Marion Grey to Richard Schooley; Kathleen Anne Guyette to William Nelson.

Married--Mary Ellen Humphreys to Thomas Franklin; Romaine Latimer to Paul Kunkle.

Anniversaries--Mr. and Mrs. William F. Myers, 56 years.

Deaths--Maude Keller, Shavertown.

You could get--Mince meat pies 39c ea.; cauliflower 25c hd.; 3 cans dog food 29c; oleo 2 lb. 47c.

20 Years Ago - Feb. 7, 1963

Dallas Women's Club, senior and junior divisions, spearheaded a proposal for a community building to serve all organizations in the Back Mountain. Chairman of the community project, Mrs. Francis Ambrose, suggested that all area organizations adopt this common goal. Delegates from Dallas Rotary, Dallas Lions, Dallas Kiwanis, American Legion, PTA Council, Architects Association, YMCA, were among those organizations interested in the idea.

Married--Janice M. Thompson to James L. Wertman; Doris

Casterline to Drew Fitch; Elizabeth Newman Keefer to Bernard Corby.

Deaths--James Steinruck, Sorbertown; Marion S. Weidner, Dallas; Kenneth Cuddy, Noxen; Alvah Wilson, Shavertown.

You could get--Forty Fort Dairy Ice Cream 88c 1/2 gal.; fresh green beans 19c lb.; bananas 10c lb.; Fab detergent 19 oz., pkg. 30c.

10 Years Ago - Feb. 1, 1973

Act 372, providing for state reimbursement to school districts which bus children who live within 1 1/2 miles of the school and who must walk along hazardous roadways, was passed by the state legislature. Dallas business manager Thomas Jenkins, said that the act would have far-reaching effects, since the district had a great number of students who walked to school along roads without sidewalks.

Married--Karen Jane Vaughn to Brent A. Smith.

Deaths--Edgar Hall, Tunkhannock; G. Wayne King, Meeker; Arminda Woolbert, Shavertown; Catherine Coleman, Dallas.

You could get--Smoked hams 59c lb.; chicken leg quarters 39c lb.; Bounty paper towels 3 jumbo rolls \$1; eggs 59c doz.; oranges 69c doz.

## THE DALLAS POST

(USPS 147-720)  
Advertising, Editorial,  
Circulation and Production  
Office  
61 Gerald Ave.,  
Dallas, Pa. 18612  
(in the Jean Shop building)

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SUBSCRIPTION RATES  
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Photographers

An independent newspaper  
published each Wednesday by Pen-  
naprint, Inc., from 61 Gerald Ave.,  
P.O. Box 366, Dallas, Pa. 18612. En-  
tered as second class matter at the  
post office in Dallas, Pa. under the act  
of March 3, 1879.

POSTMASTER: If undeliverable, send  
form 3579 to P.O. Box 366, Dallas, Pa.  
18612.

## Askin' & Tellin'

As temperatures plummeted last week, fewer and fewer people were seen outdoors in the Back Mountain. This week, your neighbors reveal their favorite winter-time activities.



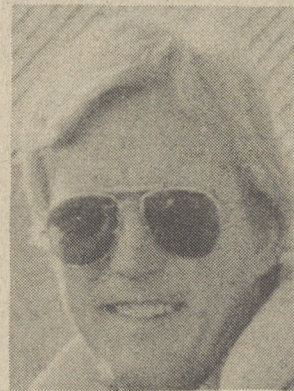
**Karen Washicosky, Trucksville:** "I prefer to sit inside and stay warm."



**Richard Lewis, Mt. Zion:** "Give me hunting."



**Tricia Cooper, Lehman-Jackson third grader:** "I love sleighriding."



**Terry Jones, Harveys Lake:** "My favorite is snowmobiling."



**Myron Mickiewicz, Shavertown:** "I'll take sitting by the fire, watching the flames dance."



**Chris Mazur, Chase:** "I'll stay in the house, until it's time to start training for track. Then I have to be outside whether I like it or not."