

Look-A-Likes Invade the Community

Recent reports of drug use in the Dallas Area junior high and intermediate schools are most alarming.

However, the Dallas Post has uncovered another potentially fatal form of drug abuse indulged in by local youngsters. Below is a report on "look alike" drugs, as told by a parent who has experienced the trauma of both the real thing and "look alikes."

"Look-A-Likes! Probably most Back Mountain parents don't realize what they are, but if they had to deal with drug problems they

would," a Back Mountain parent said recently to a Post reporter.

The mother, who asked that her name be withheld due to personal reasons, recently lost a child through drug addiction. One can imagine her concern when she came across a small plastic bag filled with bright blue capsules in a second child's dresser drawer.

"I was beside myself," said the mother. "How could this happen to me, not once but twice? Hadn't we all learned a lesson through our recent tragedy? At first, I was

going to discard the capsules but on second thought, I decided to wait until my son came home and confront him."

The mother did just that. When her son came in from school she asked him about the capsules. He told her not to worry that they were look-a-likes, not drugs. He explained that they were caffeine capsules he had purchased at a Back Mountain business place for the sum of \$20, approximately \$1.00 per capsule, and that they were for someone else.

"I wanted to believe him," said his mother. "But after my past experience I didn't know whether to or not. I decided to find out for myself so I contacted a detective in the Luzerne County office. I turned over the capsules to him for analyzing."

After turning over the capsules the Back Mountain mother waited for the results of the testing. She was relieved when she was told the capsules were caffeine. She knew that her son was telling her the truth but her concern didn't end there.

The fact is that although the capsules were caffeine, they were potent enough that if four or five of them were taken while a person was drinking beer or other alcohol, the result could be fatal. Furthermore the high users get from these capsules soon wears off and more and more of them are consumed at one time. The next step is the real drug, the beginning of addiction which can result in a wide range of physical and mental problems and, in many cases, death.

"The sad part," said the local mother, "is that the sale of these look-a-likes is legal in Pennsylvania. Any youth or adult can walk in the Back Mountain store and purchase them. They come in different colors-blue, red, green, yellow-any color ordinary medical capsules come in according to the potency and ingredients."

"I only hope that parents in the Back Mountain will read this and pay close attention to what their children are doing," said the mother. "I hope that the fight against these look-a-likes as well as other drugs can become successful in putting an end to these 'hawks' who prey on our children. Those who sell these items can be nothing but the lowest of creatures."



Townhouses Planned, Board Considers

BY JANE C. BOLGER

Plans call for a new housing development consisting of 16 townhouses to be built in Dallas Twp. in the area bounded by Church Street, Center Hill Road and Claude Street.

An option on the two acre triangle site - known as the Samuels property - has been taken by the contracting firm of Sobek and Lindquist, 595 Bennett Street, Luzerne.

Access to the development - to be called "The Park Town Houses at Dallas" - would be from Carden Road, an existing right-of-way that branches off Center Hill Road three or four houses up from Midland Drive. When constructed, the road will be a dead end, with a turn around within the presently undeveloped plot. This is not readily visible, except from the back yards of homes on Center Hill Road, Church and Claude Streets.

The two-story, three-bedroom townhouses will be built of brick and siding and will be priced "in the low forties" according to Sobek and Lindquist, who are also the developers of Sherwood Forest and Sutton Hills. They will be built in three attached units, two composed of five dwellings and the other of six.

The area planned for the development is zoned R-3 which allows for

the construction of multiple dwellings even though the entire surrounding area is zoned only for single homes. It is the only area in Dallas Twp. so zoned, with the exception of the land occupied by College Misericordia. For this reason, an advertised public hearing before the Township Zoning Board is not required.

Full plans for the development were due to be submitted to the township Planning Board last night (after press time) for their approval. The board consists of Daniel Meeker, Jay May, Kathie Lawrence, Robert Bayer and John Tinner. Also expected to be in attendance were zoning board members James Aikman and Carl Goeringer, as well as Mr. May, who serves on both boards and Supervisors Frank Wagner, Phillip Walter and Glenn Howell, and zoning officer Leonard Kozick.

Indications prior to the meeting were that the fact that public water and sewers are available in that area would be a plus for the builders seeking approval, as would be the fact that most neighboring residents who might object were totally unaware of the project. A possible minus could be current drainage problems on Center Hill Road as well as concerns for traffic congestion in the immediate area.



HER PRACTICE IS GROWING-Shown from left are Ray Hillman, president of the Medical Center Board, Dr. Maria McGrane and Robert Bayer, president of the Fall Fair board in the emergency room at the Back Mountain Medical Center building on Route 118 in Lehman. (See story inside)

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Parents Organize Against Drugs

Many Back Mountain parents may not realize it but the organization known as PAK (Parents and Kids) is not unique. The local organization may be new to the Back Mountain but there are many similar groups across the country.

The organization is made up of parents and other concerned citizens, who recognize that the Back Mountain has a serious drug and alcohol problem among juveniles. Their concerns are with all age groups but since the recent incidents involving younger children from the intermediate and junior high school of the Dallas School District, PAK is primarily concerned with the prevention of such drug and alcohol abuse among younger children.

Reports released by various media last week involving students from the ages of 11 through 14 in the alleged use and sale of narcotics and alcohol has convinced members of PAK that it is important to join forces and come up with solutions to prevent such incidents.

The primary purpose of the

organization is to educate both parents and children in the physical and legal dangers of drug and alcohol use.

"We're not exactly sure what to do at this point," said one representative of the group. "We do know that we need to get to the younger children-those in the third and fourth grades. It is important to educate them and make them aware of the danger before they become addicted."

Parents and children are joining forces, helping each other and exchanging ideas. All interested persons from the Back Mountain communities are invited to join the group.

Among the ideas recommended to date are more and different type activities for children and more use of school facilities with permission to allow interested adults to assist in acting as chaperones.

"All parents should become involved. The problem is not going to go away unless the parents, teachers and school administrators faced the fact that a serious drug

and alcohol problem exists in the Back Mountain. Hiding our heads in the sand, maintaining low profiles, allowing elementary age students to congregate in public places until late hours into the night without proper supervision are aiding and abetting the drug pushers," said one parent. "If we can't do anything about the older kids, at least let us begin to do something about preventing our younger ones from becoming users."

"The recent incident may have been blown out of proportion and much of the publicity may have been erroneous-that we don't know-but now is the time to recognize that the problem exists and let everyone cooperate in doing something about it."

"It is frightening to realize that each year the use of drugs and alcohol becomes more widespread in our schools and communities, involving boys and girls who are not much more than babes. It is time to educate parents, children, schools and public officials in the various methods of prevention."

309 Traffic, an Issue After Tragedy

BY JANE C. BOLGER

In the wake of the tragic deaths of the two children killed on Route 309, concerned citizens and law officers are once again questioning the safety of area roads.

Some of the ideas people have suggested are: a traffic light at the intersection of Routes 309 and 415, an overpass or underpass from one Dallas shopping center to the other and building the once proposed Dallas Bypass to connect with the Cross Valley (thereby diverting through traffic from Hillside around to Kunkle).

The major problem with most of the above ideas would seem to be both the prohibitive cost and the difficulty in getting the necessary approval from PennDOT. This was the case recently in Kingston Twp., where an extensive traffic study was made following the tragic death of a young boy on the highway in front of the Shavertown Shopping Center. The township even contracted for a private traffic study at

the cost of over \$10,000. It resulted in proposed traffic improvements that would cost well over a million dollars.

There is apparently no easy solution, but it does seem that maybe there could be some action on one or more of the more practical ideas heard this week. One is Dallas Township Police Chief Carl Miers' suggestion that "People have to learn to drive with the road conditions and drive at a safe speed. In the area where the accident occurred, the speed limit was originally 55 miles per hour; after the township petitioned the state, it was posted at 45 in 1980 at our request. I think it would cause more accidents to lower the speed limit anymore in that area."

District Magistrate Leonard Harvey, whose office windows overlook almost the exact spot where the accident took place stated: "The road is very dark there. I can't believe the state won't put in lighting. It could happen

again if something isn't done." His secretaries agreed and also added complaints about the lack of lighting all along the highway.

Dallas Borough Police Chief Ed Lyons said: "There should only be one ingress and one egress and one entrance and exit from all the shopping centers, instead of 16 different ways in and out. In my personal opinion, if our shopping center traffic was controlled like it is at the Narrows, it would cut down on an awful lot of accidents."

Dallas Twp. zoning officer Leonard Kozick had a similar thought, pointing out that, "The Wyoming Valley Mall has only two places to enter and exit and they handle thousands of cars a day. I don't think left hand turns should be allowed coming out of the shopping centers either and there should probably be a third lane to pull off the highway like they have on Route 22."

Kingston Twp. Police Chief Paul Sabol said: "We have lowered the

speed limit and no longer allow parking on the berm in the shopping center area. We can make more and more rules, but if there is a lack of concern by the operators there will be accidents. In the month of February our department made 86 arrests for traffic offenses."

Apparently many motorists were concerned immediately after the accident; many slowed down, others said they were wiping the mud off their headlights daily and, hopefully, others weren't taking that extra drink or two. For at least one motorist it was more costly; he paid a fine for a speeding ticket he had planned to protest. In a letter to District Magistrate Earl Gregory, the alleged speeder wrote in part:

"Hearing of the recent hit-and-run deaths of two children on the same stretch of road convinced me that if there was any chance that I was in violation of the speed limit, the fine is justified."

It is a lesson none of us who travel these highways should forget.

Meet the Candidates

The Joint Taxpayers' Association of Lake-Lehman School District will sponsor a "Meet the Candidates" night on Thursday, March 17 at 7:30 p.m. at the Lehman-Jackson Elementary School. All aspiring candidates are welcome.

The association has contacted approximately 15 candidates for the six open school director seats, and most have indicated a desire to attend. Candidates will present a brief resume, complete with qualifications for the position and a summary of goals. They will entertain questions on a one-to-one basis during a social hour, which will follow the formal presentations.

Candidates from Lehman, Jackson, Ross, Lake and Noxen Townships and Harveys Lake Borough will be present. The public is urged to attend.



AND AWAY WE GO: On Friday, March 4, the Lake-Noxen Elementary School children had their annual Balloon Day. Each student was given a helium filled balloon to launch. Each balloon had a card attached with a message instructing the finder to return the call through the mail. There will be prizes given for the balloon that travels the farthest, the one that lands the closest and for the one that is returned first. This event is sponsored by the P.T.A. (Dan Walsh Photo)