

THE DALLAS POST

OPINION

We don't see overcrowding

The Dallas Post challenges the handful of parents of children in the Dallas Elementary Schools who have been crying "overcrowding" since the beginning of the school year to come forth and produce some tangible evidence that such a situation really does exist.

After listening to a few parents complain during past school board meetings of too many students in classes, The Dallas Post looked into the situation itself. And, what did it find? Not an overcrowding situation, that's for sure.

After sifting through enrollment figures and classroom statistics, The Dallas Post has seen for itself that there is not one class in the elementary schools with more than 30 students in it. And, with a qualified teacher and teacher aides to help, there is no reason why a student in such a classroom cannot learn just as easily and just as quickly as can a student in a class of less students.

The Pennsylvania Economy League conducted a market survey and has determined that, even with the closing of the Dallas Township Elementary School, there is not and will not be an overcrowding problem in the school district in years to come.

Is it the same handful of parents complaining about overcrowding that complains when board members vote to raise taxes? And, is it that same handful of parents who complains just because their children are not being given extra special treatment, whether they need it or not?

We cannot help but wonder if this same handful of parents would be the ones to complain about the condition of the township school had the board of education chosen to keep that school open.

Sometimes you can't win for trying!

Thanks, Nick!

Hats off to Nick Tsiolos, new owner of the Rollaway Skating Rink on Route 415 in Dallas, for turning that business into a "Family Center."

Since assuming proprietorship of the roller-skating rink, Tsiolos has found ways to make the Rollaway a favorite spot for fun and frolicking of family members, both young and old.

Tsiolos makes sure youngsters stay within the rink from the time they arrive until their parents or older members of the family call for them. He permits no hanky-panky at the rink and allows no alcohol or intoxicating beverages whatsoever.

Tsiolos has instituted a family program which has proven quite successful since roller-skating parties are being sponsored by church groups, Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts, cheerleading organizations, Parent-Teacher associations and the like. And many Back Mountain youngsters have already celebrated their birthdays in style, with a skating party at Rollaway.

It's encouraging to see a businessman like Nick Tsiolos take such a liking to the youngsters of our area that he will go out of his way to provide them with a fun place to spend their time and an atmosphere comfortable to their parents as well.

Take a minute to complete surveys

Residents of both the Dallas and Lake-Lehman School Districts are encouraged to cooperate with the administrations of both those districts in planning for the years ahead.

Both districts have mailed questionnaires to taxpayer and non-taxpayers in their respective districts, requesting they complete the questions. Answers from residents of each district will enable the school administrators to plan for the future by assessing the district's needs and establishing its goals.

The surveys from both school districts are designed to determine what the residents of the districts desire from their schools and their opinions of the degree to which the schools are doing their jobs adequately.

Residents who complete the surveys will be providing valuable information that will show the needs assessment for the Dallas and Lake-Lehman School Districts and will help the Long-Range Plan Committees to establish their goals for the next five years.

Residents responding to the survey need not sign the surveys and can remain anonymous as they wish to in answering the questions. Their answers, however, will provide a very solid base upon which school administrators can plan for the future.

REMEMBERING



Horse trainer

Shown here is a photo of a home that once belonged to the

local horse trainer. The home, located on the road from Beaumont to Harveys Lake, is part of the 5G Ranch today.

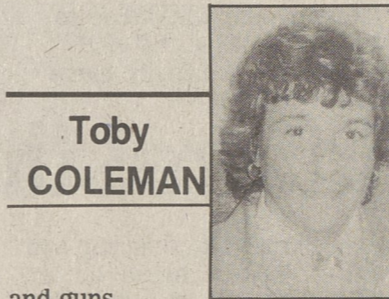
Something to think about

Let us go back before the first Thanksgiving. America was a land of plenty. Wild turkeys and other game flourished. Edibles such as yams, pumpkins, squash and a wide variety of nuts, grains and berries grew in abundance.

The forests were lush and green, the water sweet and clear. The air was filled with the scent of wild flowers. At night the moon and stars shone with brilliant clarity.

The Indians, or native Americans, as they prefer to be called, held the stewardship of this beautiful land. They understood the ways of nature and had a mighty respect for the land and every living thing.

One day a small ship landed at Plymouth Rock. From this ship came strangely dressed people with crates and baskets filled with wondrous things, silk and lace and silver, tools, dishes



Toby COLEMAN

and guns.

The Americans were cautious and quite curious. They did not know of a place "across the big water" called England, and I suppose they didn't very much care. They did know that these people with "pale" faces would need help in surviving the cold winter ahead.

How these two very different peoples made themselves understood to one another I do not know. Perhaps, when people find themselves facing survival together, their instincts take over for the good of all.

The great chief Massasoit instructed his people to be as helpful to the newcomers as possible. There was suspicion on both sides, but the snow was coming, and there was much work to be done. Shelter and warm clothing and food stuffs has to be provided if the Pilgrims were to make it through until Spring.

When the harvest was gathered, the Indians and the Pilgrims prepared a great feast. This was the first Thanksgiving. The Pilgrims did survive to plant in the Spring thanks to the Indians.

As we know, after some hardship and a period of adjustment, the "paleface" did quite well in America.

And how did the Pilgrims and their descendants reward Massasoit and his people? They rewarded them by dispossessing the Indians of their land, herd-

ing them onto reservations, raping the soil, polluting the water, slaughtering the buffalo and other animals used for food and supplies, and fouling the very air itself. This was how they showed their gratitude. Who were the real savages?

Native Americans are among the poorest people in our country. Their suicide rate and incidence of alcoholism is one of the highest especially among the young. They do not have the same rights as other Americans.

The foul treatment of these first Americans is a national disgrace. During our celebration of Thanksgiving let us remember these people and find a way to set things right for them at last.

(Toby Coleman, a Back Mountain resident, is a columnist for The Dallas Post. Her column appears regularly.)

Guest editorials

By NANCY M. NOONAN

A new teacher in Pennsylvania with several years' experience in another state told me recently that she was impressed with the dedication of the teachers with whom she works.

As one example, she pointed out that teachers at her school are scheduled to report to work at 8:45 a.m., but she prefers to arrive about 45 minutes early. She exclaimed to me, "I've been surprised to see teachers' parking lot nearly full with other early-arriving teachers."

I'm not at all surprised. I know how hard the vast majority of the Commonwealth's teachers work.

In fact, a recent study conducted by Penn State University for PSEA proves the point and expels the myth of the teacher's seven-hour day.

The survey, the Pennsylvania Profile of Education Project, demonstrates that, on the average, teachers spend at least 10 hours of their personal time during the school week preparing lesson plans and correcting papers. That's a conservative estimate, because the survey did not ask about time spent on school work during the week-end.

The case in point demonstrates something else - the need for reduced class loads and increased on-the-clock preparation time.

As convinced as I am of teachers' commitment and devotion to their work, you can imagine how upset I was with a recent allegation from a so-called "think tank" that public school teachers are "uninspired, dispirited."

I know better - from daily contact with Pennsylvania's

teachers and from the revelations of the Penn State-PSEA study.

Overall our teachers indicate they are "satisfied" with teaching in general and with the personal fulfillment they get from teaching.

Those who have higher levels of satisfaction cite community support, effective discipline policies, and adequate time to prepare as the reasons.

On the other hand, our teachers are less satisfied with school governance, their salaries and benefits. And, as the Carnegie study indicates, teachers desire and need more autonomy in educational decision making affecting the environment in which they work.

This week as we celebrate American Education Week, the opportunity to improve the status of the profession looks brighter than ever before.

Opportunities for improved public education abound.

The recent action by Congress and the General Assembly, resulting in record-setting appropriations for education, is heartening. The General Assembly also is well on its way toward approving a major teacher-based professional development bill. And preparations are being made to launch major reforms in school funding.

I'm confident that through the dedication of our teachers who are inspired and spirited and with community and legislative support, Pennsylvania will meet the challenges and make our public schools among the best in the country.

As the AEW theme suggests, we are United for Excellence.

(Nancy M. Noonan is president of the Pennsylvania State Education Association.)

By CLYDE DUPIN

Christians have always been a thankful people. It is a part of the Christian spirit to be thankful. The Bible is a book that reminds us to give thanks whatever the circumstances of life may be.

Thanksgiving Day is a national holiday in the United States commemorating the har-

vest of the Plymouth Colony in 1621. This day of thanksgiving and praise to almighty God followed a winter of great hardship.

It was President Abraham Lincoln who officially, in 1863, proclaimed the last Thursday of November as a day set apart for the national giving of thanks to almighty God. This has always been a religious holiday since it is a time to give thanks

to our God.

Today, every American should pause to give thanks for our abundance in this great nation. All we have today in material and spiritual blessings comes from God. We should be thankful that we have peace in our land and hope in our heart. We should give thanks for a courageous President who has a strong faith in God. We should count our blessings.

The secret of happiness is having a grateful and thankful attitude. Today and everyday, we should express our thanks to God and to caring friends and family who bring joy to our lives.

If you pause to think, you will say, "Thanks."

(Clyde Dupin is author of a national column entitled "Religious Viewpoint.")

LETTERS

Increase of war toy sales frightening

DEAR EDITOR:

The Center for Defense Information reports that sales of war toys have risen 600 percent since 1982. Last year adults spent over one billion dollars on war toys, buying 218 million - or about five for every child in the country. War toys are the leading category of toys sold,

making up five out of six of the best-selling toys, all of which are promoted by TV cartoon shows.

Many child-caring professionals believe that war toys teach the value of domination, glorify killing and conquering, and promote racism and sexism.

Hanukkah and Christmas rep-

resent liberation, light in the darkness, justice, and the mercy and love of God toward individuals. Since we cannot give these attributes to one another, we exchange tangible and powerful symbols in the form of gifts. War toys represent death, darkness, violence and lack of freedom. The chil-

dren we love deserve better symbols! The children we love deserve games and toys that tell them they are, and can be, special and unique and creative people.

MARY A. THOM
NORTH BRANCH FRIENDS
MEETING

Swetland tours scheduled

Christmas Candlelight Tours of the Swetland Homestead, 885 Wyoming Avenue, Wyoming, will be conducted on Friday and Saturday, December 5, 6, 12 and 13, 1986, from 7 to 9 p.m. and Sunday, December 7 and 14, from 2 p.m. until 4 p.m. Visitors will

be taken back in time as they catch glimpses of a Christmas celebration from 100 years ago.

For more information or for group reservations, call the Wyoming Historical and Geological Society at 823-6244.

Letters policy

The Dallas Post welcomes and encourages its readers to participate in its Letters to the Editor column.

Letters must be either typed or written legibly and must contain a signature and a telephone number for verification. Names will be withheld upon request.

The editor reserves the right to edit or reject any or all letters submitted for publication.

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