

Editorial/opinion

The DALLAS POST

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DAVID F. CONNER
General Manager

DEBBY HIGGINS
Editor

Off the top

BY DEBBY HIGGINS
Post Editor

This week marked another grand opening of yet another place to eat in the Back Mountain.

We welcome with gusto, Pizza Hut, which joins the other terrific restaurants that abound in many of our local communities. Some eateries are better than others, but one thing's for sure—diners certainly have a choice of the types of food they care to eat.

Believe it, new eating places are a very positive thing and their abundance indicates an area of growing proportions. New restaurants offer jobs with a steady income for many because people will always need a place to eat. And that really is a great asset.

But one problem remains for residents who don't care to risk their lives driving the Cross Valley to shop downtown. The Back Mountain needs some department stores! Please, just a K-Mart or a Pomeroy's or a Sears! What a pleasure it would be to drive two or three miles to reach a store that carries 150,000 or more items under one roof!

If the imagination could run wild, just think how wonderful it would be for the compulsive spender to be able to spend, spend, spend closer to home. Doesn't Mr. Boscov or Mr. Kressege know how short changed Back Mountain shoppers are?

The area is fortunate with many pharmacies, super markets, and specialty shops. These are great to provide the goods and services that are required by many residents. But for those who crave the stimulation fulfilled only through shopping in triple-decker shopping malls, the Back Mountain is seriously short-changed.

It's heartbreaking to thumb through a L.L. Bean catalogue and grieve because the items must be purchased through the mail. Wouldn't it be nice to have that well-known company locate a distributorship nearby in some now-vacant field off Route 309? Just think of the jobs! (not to mention the discounts that might be available to residents through the store outlet!) More importantly, think of the unlimited new merchandise available for died-in-the-wool shoppers!

All kidding aside, it's probably time that someone, somewhere, starts to look at the Back Mountain with the building of a super-sized department in mind. The area is ripe for the development and the need does exist.

There are also some other things the area needs. A few of them include a movie theater, a place for summer stock theater, an art gallery, and maybe a (dream of all dreams) three-story mall with fountains and free cultural events for the public. Oh, what a wonderful place it would be!

Kaul loves the sweeps

BY DONALD KAUL
Special to The Post

I got my annual letter from Ed McMahon the other day. "Dear Donald Kaul," he starts it. (I keep telling him to call me Don, just Don, but he won't do it. Every year it's "Dear Donald Kaul." He's so formal.) He goes on:

"I may have the pleasure of making this exciting announcement on NBC's Tonight Show," he says, "DONALD KAUL HAS JUST WON TEN MILLION DOLLARS!"

That Ed, he sure knows how to get your attention. It is of course, the annual Publishers Clearing House Sweepstakes scam, the chance of making \$10 million simply by opening a letter and sending back your entry.

The Sweeps is a wonderfully constructed hustle. The envelope comes with a little window that exposes four names, one of them yours. "Special Bulletin!" a sign next to the window screams. "Three of the people listed here have already won a million dollar prizes. The fourth may already be the biggest winner of all!" And since you know you haven't won a million dollars lately, is it such a leap of imagination to hope that you're that fourth person, the

biggest winner of all?

At this point I usually cry out: "Yes, yes, I'd rather keep the millions; every dime," which can be embarrassing if I happen to be on a bus at the time. Then I mail in my entry.

It is state-of-the-art mind manipulation. The entry form also asks you to initial a declaration of willingness to appear on television, in the event you win. And while I suppose that showing off winners on television is good promotion, one winner is pretty much like another. I would much rather see the losers on television, the people who were given the lucky numbers worth \$10 million but didn't turn them in. Wouldn't you like to see a couple that had just been told that they'd blown 10 mill?

"As God is my witness, Ed, I had everything in the envelope; it was sealed and ready to go, but I couldn't find a stamp. So I tell Big Shot here, on your way home from work, stop off and buy some stamps. He never did it. My mother always told me he was a loser. She was right."

"That's because they knew we were secretly engaged, Dim-bulb."

That would be great television. The winners are going to be announced in a couple of weeks.



Ian Richardson

Richardson honored by Boy Scouts

Ian Richardson has been chosen to receive the Boy Scouts of America Distinguished Citizenship in Community Award at the annual "Friends of Scouting" dinner, according to an announcement by Richard F. Laux, dinner chairperson. The annual event will be held on Tuesday, Feb. 9 at Gus Genetti's Best Western Motor Inn.

Richardson, Executive Vice President of Offset Paperback Manufacturers, Inc., in Dallas, has been chosen to receive this award because he typifies a professional manner and true concern for the community. His concern is action-oriented and backed by dedicated participation and active involvement in many community activities. His record of community service speaks for itself.

In 1986 Mr. Richardson was the recipient of the 1986 Meridian Award presented by Meridian Bancorp, Inc. and Graphic Arts Association. He was presented the Distinguished-Service Award by the Family Service Association of Wyoming Valley and in 1987 received the Community Service Award from Penn State University, Lehman Campus.

Guest speaker at this year's Scouting dinner will be John Havlicek, former All Star with the Boston Celtics.

According to Laux, "this annual dinner is the major fund raising activity for the Penn Mountains Council. The success of this event will provide important funds necessary for the support of the many activities which are essential for the comprehensive scouting program provided by the Council."

Are we alike?

Public Opinion Magazine, published by the American Enterprise Institute, recently listed traits of the "average" American. Some are:

Reads at least two books a year; Laughs 15 times a day; Has 4.6 cavities; Three in 10 consider themselves overweight; Sixty-three percent feel young for their age; Eats 92 hot dogs a year; Is sick 6.5 days a year; Is exposed to 1,800 commercial messages each day; Average man spends four hours a year tying his tie; Sixty-one percent believe in love at first sight; Sixty-four percent of adults wear eyeglasses; Six in 10 exercise daily.

Lonnie carves his own space

BY ANDY ROONEY
Special to The Post

Lonnie is an institution in the building where I do a lot of my work. He shines shoes but that's only a small part of what he does. The best thing Lonnie does is keep everyone's spirits up.

The other day I had a good talk with Lonnie while fussed over making my shoes look better. As I climbed down off the chair Lonnie had mounted on a platform so he doesn't have to bend over much, I said, as you'd say lightly to a friend, "Thanks, Lonnie, you're a good man."

"Well," Lonnie said philosophically, "we're all supposed to try and make things better, aren't we?"

That's what Lonnie does in the small piece of the world he has carved out for himself. He makes things better. He makes everyone he meets feel better and he makes their shoes look better. If all of us did as much, it would be a better world. He not only does his job but he throws in a little extra.

Lonnie is black, gray-haired and lame. I've been guessing that he's about 70 years old. His left foot is in a shoe with a four-inch lift on it and he doesn't use his left leg much. When he walks, he lifts it off the floor from the hip and swings it forward. It doesn't seem to be able to move by itself. He parks his car, a car with special controls for the handicapped, in front of the building and it's a tough job for him to make his way inside. Still, Lonnie is strong, with muscular arms and shoulders.

He has a good-looking face with prominent bones. He gets to work about 7:30 a.m. and leaves, to avoid the traffic, about 4 p.m. In between, he shines as many as 30 pairs of shoes. Lonnie gives every customer the feeling it's his privilege to be working for him.

Yesterday Lonnie shined my shoes again.

"I'll be packing it in in April," he told me.

"Leaving here?" I asked, shocked at the thought of the place without him. "Why would you do that?" I asked.

"I want to do some things," Lonnie said. "Fix up my house. Do some things."

"Can't you fix up your house and still work here?" I asked.

There seemed to be something he wasn't telling me.

"Oh, I could," Lonnie said, "but I want to go back to school."

"That would be great," I said. "I've always wanted to do that, too." I wondered what courses Lonnie was thinking of taking but I decided not to ask.

"Yeah," Lonnie said, "I been working for 62 years now. Want to go back to school. Never did get enough school. Never really learned how to read. I was the little lame boy, you know. Embarrassed to go to school. All the big kids. What I want to do is learn to read, good enough to satisfy myself."

I've known Lonnie for 30 years and never knew how handicapped he was.

Fiegelman says... "isms" are in for now

BY RICHARD FIEGELMAN
Post Guest Writer

Liberal idealism is slowly making its way back into the American consciousness. After the glitter and gluttonism of the 1980's, people seem to have abandoned their mirrors and started looking out of the window again. The "Saturday Night Fever" of the late 1970's became the religion of the 1980's. The physical transcended intellect and forethought. The immediate solution was bulk 'em up or gun 'em down. The moment was the future.

Liberal is defined as: having political views or policies which favor civil liberties, democratic reforms, and social progress. Idealism is defined as: the action or practice of envisioning things in ideal form. The combination of the two would seem to mean: imagining and working toward a better world. Together! This is the key word. This is also why those who supposedly lead us have been attempting to "modify" our rights guaranteed by the Constitution. Divide and conquer.

Appearances were the opiate of the 1980's. Now that liberal idealism is reappearing, when reflecting on the past 8 years some other "isms" should be remembered.

1. Reaganism - First and foremost, Reagan is the sophisticated version of what many people have learned over the years: to look like you're doing something, when in fact you're not. This package includes: extended vacations to the ranch, extended vacations to the White House, fireside naps, shopping for china, throwing Grenadas, and after intense paranoia, Russian into things. Reaganism has had guest starring roles by many notables, but with so many temperamental actors and changes in the script it is possible to name only a few. Some of these sideshows included: Excess Wattage (the power was ruining the environment), Catching Meeses (burning the 1st amendment), Damning Deavers (once the water got a little rough), Eating Weinbergers (only in self-defense), and of course, finally hiding in the Buses. Reaganism's place in history remains to be seen, but rest easy, its place in Hollywood is secure.

2. Yuppyism - Yuppy is a derivative form of the word guppy. Guppies are nice to look at, but they only thrive when huddled together in a fishtank. Guppies are not known for individual thought or reason and when removed from the water, their survival rate is nil. Hence, the human term Yuppy evolved. Yuppies and guppies have another trait in common. When allowed, they will gobble up everything in their path. Yuppies showed a distinct lack of imagination when they replaced the peace sign with the Mercedes-Benz hood ornament. They bear a strong resemblance to each other. Hopefully, for

many of these consumers, incessant greed will be replaced by the will to help those in need. Kind of getting back to your roots. Oh, and spoon sales will take a nosedive.

3. I tried to resist but could not. Jim and Tammy Bakerism - These Bakers gave new meaning to the term "needing dough". P.T. Barnum said that a "sucker was born every minute". The Bakers put this statement into practical use. They are the epitome of 80's excess. Jim, the sweet-talking, three-piece suited bringer of the Word, and Tammy, the emotional escapee from the "Planet of the Apes". They make a great argument for this era's lack of spirituality, if people had to go that far to find it. Their bank books proved the point. And they still won't leave us alone...

4. Robin Leachism - Robin is the dubious individual with the apropos name, who bestows his gospel of greed every week on his "Lifestyles" program. Leachy, as he is known in some circles, shows us that while many lead lives of quiet desperation, there are thousands out there laughing about it. Leachy's program was a first, a comedy in which the actors laugh at the audience. Leachy ought to do a show on the lifestyles of the homeless in New York City, Washington, D.C., or Wilkes-Barre. It might not be so funny anymore.

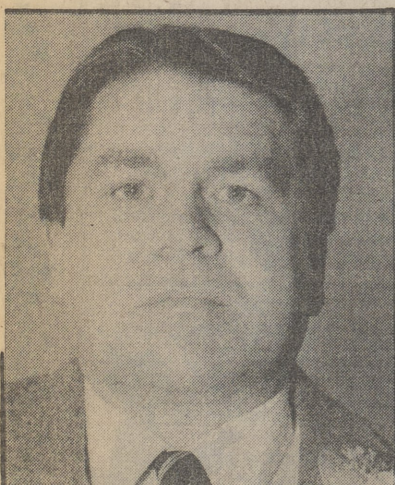
5. Evan Mechanism - Sadly, Evan proved that it is still possible for a bigot to slip by the electorate. Evan is for the moment the governor of Arizona. Evan has orated more racial slurs than you'll hear at a backyard basketball game. Proof positive that consciousness has returned - Evan is on his way out due to the action of the same people who put him there. Better late than never. Hopefully, the Mechans will not inherit the Earth.

6. Madonnaism - The "Material Girl" and a host of others were an interesting reflection of the 80's, if music mirrors the times. These "musicians" had absolutely nothing to say. Almost every song on commercial radio had what I affectionately call the garbage can beat. Timpanic monotony. Every third or fourth beat by the drummer sounded like he or she was banging on a garbage can. Maybe a preview of things to come, most of this noise is starting to beat it.

Every era has its foolishness and excess. The 80's had more than most. There are still a lot of dynamic individuals and admirable causes to be found, and it seems that many who despaired over the last few years have much to look forward to. Humanity has always, and will always have problems. We are a masochistic species. These problems are also what keep us striving to better the world condition. Without them, we would probably be lost. As usual, the times they are a changing.

Read The Post!
Everyone you know
does! They like it!

The Post asks: "Would you like more culture in the B.M.?"



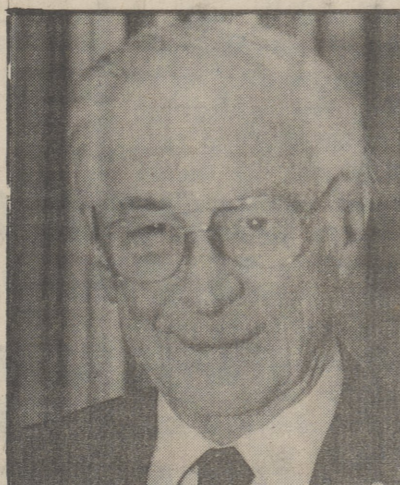
Jack Wega

Jack Wega
Teacher
Dallas
"Yes, I think it's a good idea, we need to publicize it more, to attract a more diversified audience as with college presentations."



Linda Johnson

Linda Johnson, 38
Teacher
Beaumont
"Yes, most definitely, it's something that's lacking for the children. Children should be exposed to more cultural events."



Bill Fulton

Bill Fulton, 72
Retired
Dallas
"Yes, no question about it, every community needs it."



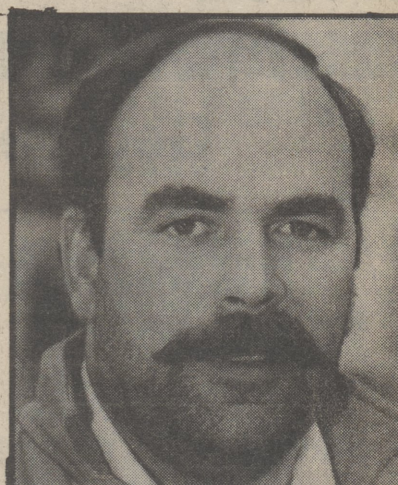
Dawn Moran

Dawn Moran, 26
Businesswoman
Wilkes-Barre
"I think it would be good, people have to go into town now. Especially for the children, even if we had a movie theatre."



Dave Naylor

Dave Naylor, 19
Construction worker
Dallas
"Yes, movie theatres, dance clubs, rock shows."



Paul Gallagher

Paul Gallagher, 31
Businessman
Wilkes-Barre
"Yes, there's certainly room for a movie theatre (with the rapid growth of the area) I'd like to see a dual-purpose theatre for movies, plays and displays."