

# THE DALLAS POST

## EDITORIALS

### Now is the time to make a difference

In recent months many members of the community have spoken out for better, more responsive government in the Back Mountain communities. The time has come for those who take that concern seriously to step forward.

Registration for local elective office in Luzerne County is now open. The present registration period will assure prospective candidates a place on the primary ballot in May. There will be another opportunity to register before the elections in November. Our story this week details the process - sometimes confusing - by which interested persons may get on the ballot.

It is our belief that there should be a choice for each office that is available. Unopposed candidacies, even by highly qualified candidates, do not promote the discussion of issues that is at the core of our democratic system. Voters should have the opportunity to hear and choose from two or more qualified candidates.

It is an exciting time to be involved in the region's development. With the many issues now facing the Back Mountain, there is no shortage of opinion on the direction the area should take in the future. We hope as many options are discussed during the election season as have been in recent months.

Holding public office in a small community is often a thankless job. Too many times we and the public are guilty of seeing only the shortcomings of office holders. But criticism comes with the territory, as anyone contemplating a run for office should know.

At the same time, we can think of few activities more rewarding than responsible stewardship of one's fellow citizens' welfare. And we need responsible stewards now perhaps more than ever before in the Back Mountain's history. The pressures building on the region are enormous and likely to get even bigger. We know there are capable persons in the community - many already serving honorably - to guide its growth. We hope to see your names on the ballot in November.

### Misericordia program proves all can learn

*Editor's note: The companion story to this editorial was not published last week due to space considerations. We reprint the editorial now so that it will go with the story, which appears in this week's Dallas Post.*

The Alternative Learning Project at College Misericordia goes a long way towards supporting the notion that with a little specialized help, almost everyone can become educated.

This first of its kind program gives "learning disabled" students the same chance at a college degree that is available to those without disabilities. In doing so, it offers the special help needed without compromising the standards that the college demands. As a result, many young persons who would otherwise be denied higher education are given the opportunity to develop their abilities to the fullest and to take a most productive role in society.

The success of this program makes us wonder what could be done if a similar approach were taken with young people who are simply poorly motivated. Could a customized program be created for inner city youths, for example, or for the rural poor? Would it work?

We obviously don't know the answers to these questions. But we applaud the Alternative Learning Project and hope its authors bring the same dedication and creativity to the problems of poor education that face so many of our populace.

#### The Dallas Post

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### Spring sneaking out

#### Letters

### Writer says sewer installation may cost more than it's worth

Editor:  
It is reported that blasting for D.A.M.A.'s sewer extension on Machell Avenue, in Dallas, is scheduled for 1989. A sizable number of Borough residents will have to put up with the resulting mess for months while the work goes on. In addition, not only will a dozen or more homeowners be compelled to pay thousands of dollars in fees for installation and hookup to the new sewers, but most Borough residents will have to pay increased quarterly fees necessitated by D.A.M.A.'s plant expansion to handle the ever greater volumes.

A number of homes in the projected work area have private wells. These are subject to damage by blasting and may be destroyed. When the sewer was last installed on part of Machell Avenue, D.A.M.A. paid for such damage. But, of course, it was D.A.M.A.'s customers who got the bill.

Sections of Machell Avenue will have to be rebuilt after the sewer line is installed—an additional burden on the Borough's taxpayers. And because of greatly increased traffic flows, sidewalks are going to have to be built on Machell and Sterling Avenues and Powderhorn Drive for the safety of pedestrians.

All of this activity has been occasioned by Dallas Borough Council's rezoning (from Conservation to Residential) of the site proposed for Deer Meadows Estates. This rezoning permits homes to be constructed on 1/6 acres—

rather than the 2-acre minimum size mandated by Conservation zoning. Had Conservation zoning been maintained, fewer homes could be built, but on-site wells and waste disposal systems would be permitted. No new sewer would be necessary. Dallas Water Company would not have to extend its lines (and some of its water problems might thereby be alleviated.) In short, a lot of taxpayer dollars might be saved and construction headaches could be avoided.

Some pertinent questions for all Borough taxpayers: Why are we turning ourselves inside-out to accommodate one developer? What possible benefit accrues to the average Borough resident? Exactly who does benefit?

The Dallas Borough Preservation Association contends that the rezoning change effected by the Borough's Council was done illegally and has brought suit to rescind that action. If the court action is successful and if, subsequently, enough Borough voters support such rescission, it is believed that the proposed construction of a modernized version of Levittown can be halted.

What kind of home town do you want to have in the foreseeable future? Who should make that decision? Should it be the developers? The local politicians? Or should we have a referendum and let present Dallas residents decide?

Hugh P. King  
Dallas

#### Letters invited

The Dallas Post encourages readers to share their opinions with the community by writing a letter to the editor. All letters for publication must be signed and include a telephone number so that we may verify authenticity. We will not publish anonymous letters. Send letters to: The Dallas Post, P.O. Box 366, Dallas PA 18612. Letters received by Noon on Monday may be included in that week's issue.

### Only yesterday

#### 50 Years Ago - Feb. 24, 1939 7 injured in trolley-truck accident

Seven men were injured when Dallas-bound trolley hits loaded WPA truck.

Flood-danger passes after river crests at 24 feet.

Dr. G.K. Swartz of Dallas will leave for New York City to begin a four and one-half month study of neurology.

Public Utilities Commission reports it will act soon on complaints of 60 consumers of Dallas Water Co.

#### 40 Years Ago - Feb. 25, 1949 Shavertown Fire Co. buys tank truck

Shavertown Fire Company purchases an 1100 gallon booster tank truck for delivery April 1.

Playground committee picks new site for a 3.6 acre playground just inside Dallas Township boundary lines below Goss Manor parallel to Tunkhannock Hwy.

Farmers oppose federal erosion control project in Luzerne County. Engaged - Phyllis Williamnee and Glen Farr.

Shavertown Lutheran and Dallas Methodist A tied for first place as the Church League finished its third season Monday night. The two teams will engage in a playoff Saturday night at Dallas Township.

#### 30 Years Ago - Feb. 19, 1959 Library has \$5,585 shortfall for year

Forty five local women bowlers entered in Wyoming Valley Tournament at Bavitz Recreation Center, Nanticoke.

Library budget shows operating deficit of \$5,585 for the year.

Little League's bond sales are near \$1,500.

James LaBar's hand was painfully injured in a bending press at Royer Foundry and Machine Company and his small finger and a section of the side of his left hand had to be removed.

#### Library news

### Library's mounted Trumpeter Swan on display 25 years

By NANCY KOZEMCHAK

The Back Mountain Memorial Library's Children's Room has a mounted Trumpeter Swan on display which has been a part of the children's activities for more than 25 years. This is a swan which was killed at the Huntsville Dam many years before. After the man who shot the bird paid a fine for killing an endangered bird, he donated the swan to the library where it has received much attention through the years. An interesting article appeared in USA Today this past week written from Island Park, Idaho concerning the drought and cold killing some of the swans. There is a battle on there to save 500 rare trumpeter swans; the main worry being whether they can gain enough strength for spring migration to Canada. A wildlife researcher has already found 20 dead trumpeters. The record breaking cold blew in from Alaska last week, freezing over the tributary to the Snake River, denying the swans their only food supply; and the river is at an all-time low from a two-year drought. This is the first year this situation has happened to near extinction in the last century. Now the nearly 12,000 birds are protected by federal law. Our trumpeter swan is very special to us and the children who visit it.

Westmoreland topples Lake-Lehman 74-51.

Engaged - Myrna Meacham and Lt. Paul S. Nichols; Doris Marcy Brown and Edwin W. Dean, Jr.

#### 20 Years Ago - Feb. 20, 1969 Dallas cheerleaders win County contest

Kingston Township supervisors o.k. the plan of Dallas Township that the three communities police work together as a unit - Dallas Township, Dallas Borough and Kingston Township.

Dallas cheerleaders take the trophy in the first annual cheerleading contest of area schools at Luzerne County Community College.

Breakdowns in two water supply at Lehman-Jackson Elementary School placed the school on an emergency basis until Willis Ide was called in to repair the problem.

W.B. Jeter has been proposed as the candidate for the "Man of the Year" for the institute of Regional Affairs sponsored by Wilkes College.

Dallas Jr. Woman's Club will sponsor a spaghetti supper tonight.

#### 10 Years Ago - Feb. 25, 1979 \$10 million building plan advanced

The Ecumenical Interfaith Association presented Dallas Township supervisors with a plan to construct a \$10 million geriatric development on Old Lake Road.

Two-year-old Dallas Christian School is considering an expansion program that will enable it to increase enrollment to approximately 120 or 130 students, according to Rev. Wayne Brooks.

American Asphalt claims township zoning ordinance is "confiscatory" on \$90 million.

Dallas Junior Women sponsor a sewing contest.

Engaged - Lynn Shippey and Galen E. Miller.

Wed - Kathi Lynn Bonowitz and Carl R. Rogers.

Lake-Lehman cagers edge Titans 80-78.

## State municipal planning code can aid in directing growth

By HOWARD J. GROSSMAN

The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code has been amended to provide new means for municipal governments in Pennsylvania to control and shape development. It will have a significant impact on the development community and deserves the attention of real estate investors and developers alike. Over 20 years, the Planning Code has been amended several times, and while it is not the type of planning legislation found in states such as Florida, Vermont, and others undergoing severe strains due to growth, the code provides a means for shaping and managing the way in which municipalities will grow in coming years, if it is enforced and administered by Pennsylvania's 2600 plus local governments.

The availability of water for development projects is a key factor. The amendments to the planning code now permit planning agencies in Pennsylvania to "prepare and present to the governing

body of the municipality a water survey, which shall be conducted in consultation with any public water supplier in the area to be surveyed."

In the preparation of a comprehensive plan for a municipality, the municipal governing body may include utilities, community facilities, parks and recreation, and the preservation of prime agricultural lands as part of the Land Use Plan.

Other segments of the comprehensive plan preparation which could have dramatic meaning to developers, include the following:

1. Inclusion of a statement of the interrelationships among the various plan components, which may include an estimate of the environmental energy conservation, fiscal economic development and social consequences on the municipality.

2. A discussion of short and long range plans implementation strategies, which may include implications for Capital Improvements Programming, new or updated development regulations,

and identification of public funds potentially available.

3. A statement including the relationship of existing and proposed development of the municipality to the existing and proposed development and plans in contiguous municipalities, to the objectives and plans for redevelopment in the county of which it is a part, and to regional trends.

A change in county planning functions mandates that "if a county does not have a comprehensive plan, then that county shall, within three years of the act, prepare and adopt a comprehensive plan..."

Public hearings are mandated for the adoption of local comprehensive plans on the part of both the local planning agency and the local governing body.

The amendments clarify the role of the official map of the municipality by stating that such a map made of "all or a portion of the municipality which may show appropriate elements or portions of elements of the comprehensive

plan..." The inclusion of elements such as streets, parks, pedestrian ways, rail rights of way, flood ways, and other appropriate facilities are outlined in the Planning Code amendments.

A new section on joint municipal zoning is added to the Planning Code. The governing body of each municipality where municipalities have cooperatively planned for their future, may cooperate with one or more municipalities to enact, amend, and repeal joint municipal zoning ordinances in order to implement joint municipal comprehensive plans and to accomplish any of the purposes of the Act.

In the section on Zoning Hearing Boards, the governing body may appoint by resolution at least one but no more than three residents of the municipality to serve as alternate members of the Board.

In this section of the Act, a mediation option is provided for as a supplement-not replacement-for mandated procedures found in the Act. Mediation is a voluntary pro-

cess.

Finally, amendments are provided to expand the ability of Joint Municipal Planning Commissions to be established and the powers under which such Planning Commissions can prepare comprehensive plans.

### Dr. Redmond to speak on radon at Dart Center

Dr. Brian Redmond, Associate Dean of the School of Engineering and Physical Sciences at Wilkes College, will speak on radon Tuesday, March 2, at 7:30 p.m. in the Dart Center for the Performing Arts on the corner of South and South River Streets. The lecture, which is open to the public free of charge, is part of the college's Faculty Seminar Series.

Dr. Redmond's talk "Latest Developments in Radon Testing and Regulations," will include remarks about radon in water,

radon in soil, and Wilkes radon chamber, one of the largest in the country.

The Shavertown resident was involved in radon research long before it became a national concern in the fall of last year following a federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) warning that radon was much more pervasive than previously believed. Last fall federal officials issued a national health advisory saying that millions of homes have elevated radon levels.