

THE DALLAS POST

EDITORIALS

Pity the children

If the quality of our society is judged to any extent by how we treat our children, the spectacles now taking place in courtrooms in Wilkes-Barre and Monroe County will be enough to damn us.

In case you have been able to avoid the publicity coming out of these two trials, here's a summary. In Wilkes-Barre, Larry and Leona Cottam are charged with third-degree murder in the death of their 14-year-old son, Eric, who died while the family was engaged in a religious fast. Later, it was discovered that the Cottams had more than enough money to buy food, but refused to use it because it was "reserved for God."

One of the key witnesses in the trial is the Cottam's 12-year-old daughter, Laura. As expected, the defense is claiming that neither Eric nor Laura was forced to go without food, but made the decision to do so of their own free will. Laura Cottam testified to just such a scenario last week.

In Monroe County, an even younger child - 10 years old now, and only nine at the time of his crime - is being tried as an adult. The prosecution has thus far successfully argued that this youngster clearly understood the consequences of shooting at a seven-year-old playmate. The girl died as a result of the shooting.

In both cases so-called adults, and we would include the lawyers and prosecutors in that group, want to blame children for the failings of their parents or society in general.

But no matter how convincing the testimony of a 12-year-old, no matter how rational the actions of a nine-year-old might appear, we are gravely wrong to ascribe adult motivation to them. We are the adults, and there are times when our judgement must supercede the wishes of children. When we fail to exercise this fundamental responsibility, we can't simply blame the children, who have learned their ways from us.

It is a topsy-turvy world when pre-teenagers are asked to take the burden of responsibility from adults. We hope these two cases are an aberration, not the beginning of a new and disturbing trend.

Come to the fair

The 27th annual Luzerne County Fair begins today, and it promises to be the best ever. If you have been to the fair before, you know how much fun it is. If you haven't, it's time you found out.

Started as a fundraiser for the Dallas Rotary Club, the fair has grown to include eight service clubs and hundreds of volunteers. The funds it raises are used to improve and expand the fairgrounds on Route 118 in Dallas, and to support charitable organizations.

This year, there will be free entertainment every day, a large selection of exhibits, livestock shows and competitions, and midway rides Friday through Sunday. Exhibitors and food vendors will be present all week, many of them operated by service clubs who use the funds raised for charity.

The fair is one of the most enjoyable, wholesome activities available all year. The grounds are kept clean and neat, the rides are in excellent condition and the spirit of fun is unavoidable. Don't miss it.

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.

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Hazy days of summer

A tractor waits for its orders to hay the field or gather the harvest along Ransom Road in Dallas. (Photo by Charlotte Bartizek)

Library news

Books and cassettes added to collection

By NANCY KOZEMCHAK

The Back Mountain Memorial Library has added some new audio book cassettes with a donation from the "Friends of the Library". These cassettes include: "Red Army" by Ralph Peters; "Journey" by James Michener; "Flight of the Old Dog" by Dale Brown; "Sword Point" by Harold Coyle; "Capital Crimes" by Lawrence Sanders; "The Lords of Discipline" by Ralph Conroy; "Murder at the Kennedy Center" by Margaret Truman. These book tapes are a very popular item in the library and can be borrowed for a two week period.

The summer reading program came to an end on August 11 with a fun-time party for all the children participating in the club. Games were played, a magician entertained, and refreshments were served.

The team of the chimney sweeps won the prize for the most books

read. The object of the program was to try to find out who M.E.L.V.I.L. was. The answer was revealed at the party when the children opened their program folder and inside was a mirror, showing themselves as M.E.L.V.I.L.

Some new Book Club books recently purchased and added to the shelves include: "Calm At Sunset, Calm At Dawn" by Paul Watkins.

This is the story of James Pfeiffer's twentieth year, a year of rebellion, initiation, and change. It captures the maritime life in all its rank immediacy and elemental mystery. Moving, violent, at times ferociously funny, this superb novel is a fresh addition to the venerable tradition of tales of the sea.

"Frigor Mortis" by Ralph McInerney is a journey into mystery when George Arthur is taken on his first ice-fishing expedition and pushed through a hole in the ice and into the freezing water by his wife and her longtime lover. This murder

proves to be only the beginning of the intrigue. These are knotty problems with light-hearted cynicism.

"Eden Close" by Anita Shreve is the story of Andrew, an advertising executive in his mid-30's who returns to his hometown in upstate New York to attend his mother's funeral. He planned to remain a few days, but from the moment he swings his shiny black BMW into the driveway, a flood of memories draws him into lingering on. He becomes involved in a grisly story and a binding attachment to a lost girl of his youth.

"A Question of Guilt" by Frances Fyfield is a complex and compelling story and steps beyond the boundaries of traditional crime fiction to explore the strange compulsions of the human heart. It is detailed in its knowledge of the law and the evocation of London. It is the story of a rich, middle-aged widow, who has a passion for revenge.

Only yesterday

50 Years Ago - Sept. 8, 1939 WATER COMPANY BRINGS IN NEW WELL

Dallas-Shavertown Water Company continued its improvements for consumers by bringing in a new 100-gallons-minute well on the Herman VanCampen property.

Lake Township and State Motor Police scoured the countryside in search of an armed man who attempted to kidnap Florence Rusilowski, age 20, of Lehman.

Dallas Borough Council appointed Joseph McVeigh to fill the vacancy left by council president Warden Kunkle, who resigned due to change of residence.

Engaged - Dorothy Engler and Melvin Lauchner.

Wed - Adelaide Hausch and Harold Kline.

40 Years Ago - Sept. 9, 1949 PHONE COMPANIES MERGE TO FORM COMMONWEALTH

A new industrial building valued at \$125,000 is being constructed for the Bloomsburg Fair. Three telephone companies of the Sordoni organizations are

merging into one system to be known as Commonwealth Telephone Company.

Engaged - Lois May Griesing and Richard G. Phillips.

Wed - Estella Mae Ide and Stephen Sedler.

Jackson will meet Vernon Sunday in the playoffs of the Bi-County League.

30 Years Ago - Sept. 10, 1959 LEGION TO HONOR OUTSTANDING CITIZEN

Dallas American Legion to present distinguished service award to an outstanding citizen at Americanism night Friday.

Judge Ben Jones Oldsmobile Sedan was stolen Friday night or Saturday morning at the Idlewild Airport where he had gone to meet his son.

All Back Mountain Police Association members will be given new insignia plates for their automobiles at the association meeting tonight. The emblems were designed by Kingston Township Assistant Chief Herbert Updyke.

Frank "Pete" Laing was sworn in as a patrolman on Dallas Town-

ship Police Force by Justice of the Peace George Prater.

Lake-Lehman High School football team has been admitted as a member of the West Side Conference.

Wed - Sylvia Treeberry and Gerald Schmitt; Mary Ruth Shupp and Jay Long.

20 Years Ago - Sept. 11, 1969 NEW BUILDING FOR DALLAS TOWNSHIP

Natona Mills is shaken by the 73 members of the United Auto Workers at the meeting held at Dallas High School last Sunday.

After 152 years, Dallas Township has its own municipal building and is moving in its equipment.

Wed - Carol A. Dungey and Michael R. Devlin; Linda Jean Watts and John William Mallin 3rd; Sheila Engelman and William Hamersky.

Our Lady of Victory became a church in its own right on Sept. 3 with the Rev. Patrick Healey as pastor.

Letters

Appreciated story on calf

Editor:
We are all "mooring" at the Meadows at the wonderful calf story in The Dallas Post August 30 issue. Thank you for making an unusual visit to the Meadows so much fun. Great story.

Marilyn Gregorski
Meadows Nursing Center

Report from Harrisburg

HOUSING FORUMS ANNOUNCED - With the prices of homes skyrocketing in Pennsylvania and throughout the nation, millions of state residents are faced with the seemingly insurmountable problem of locating affordable housing. Rep. Joseph Lashinger (R-Montgomery) this week announced that the "Housing Task Force" formed by the House Republican Policy committee will hold two bipartisan forums on the problem in October. Lashinger, task force chairman, said hundreds of individuals, firms and organizations involved in housing issues will take part in the events in Pittsburgh and Philadelphia. "The bottom line is that the Republican members of the state House feel this problem has been studied long enough and now it's time to act," said Lashinger. "Affordable housing remains a major concern of most Pennsylvanians."

STEREIOD ABUSE STUDIED - The abuse of potentially dangerous steroid strength and growth enhancing drugs by Pennsylvania high school and college age youths was the subject for hearings by a subcommittee of the House Health and Welfare Committee this week. The panel is considering legislation which would restrict or ban the sale and distribution of the drugs. Experts testified that the drugs are abused not only by athletes, seeking improved performance, but by high school youths in an effort to improve their physical appearance. The drugs' side effects include liver cancer, infertility and heart disease.

10 Years Ago - Sept. 13, 1979 DAN FLOOD GETS APARTMENTS GRANT

Congressman Daniel J. Flood announced Tuesday that the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development has approved an application to construct 120 apartments for the elderly at a site near College Misericordia.

A bonding agency declines to insure the Sandy Beach deal being considered by the Harveys Lake Council.

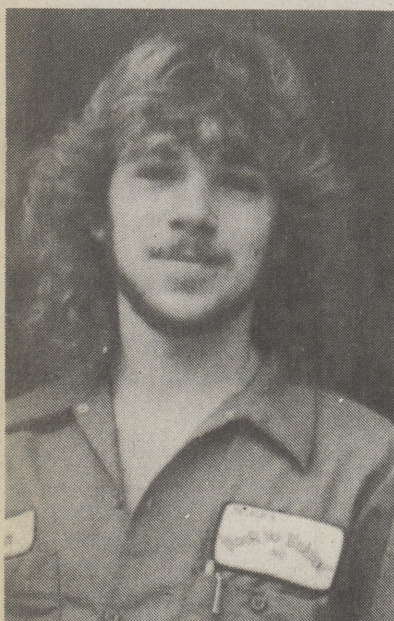
The Back Mountain Protective Association headed by Dr. F. Budd Schooley launched a drive against UGI's application for a rate hike.

Harveys Lake Council approved a two-hour opening of a bike lane every Sunday, weather permitting, from now through November 18, 1 to 3 p.m.

Wed - Cindy Harris and Gary Smith.

Dallas and Lake-Lehman grid-ders prepare to meet for this year's Old Shoe Game, Saturday, at the Dallas High School football field.

The Post asks: "Can either Back Mt. team win the football title this year?"



Dan Dembowski
Heating employee
Noxen

"I think Lehman has the ability if they work at it."



Randy Lloyd
Photo Shop employee
Dallas

"If Lake-Lehman gets by GAR, they should be able to get to the top."



Gus Walters
Self employed
Dallas

"Both schools have great teams but I think Straigs at quarterback gives Dallas the edge."



Andrew Denmon Jr.
SCID employee
Dallas

"That's a tough question. Both have good teams but I believe Dallas' experience gives them a better chance."



Susan Davis
Account Executive
Dallas

"GAR is the team to beat this season but Dallas might be able to win if they get by the Grenadiers."