

THE DALLAS POST

EDITORIALS

Best medical care comes before protocol

It would be unfortunate if this area was to be denied better emergency medical care because of disputes among members of the Back Mountain Communication Center. All parties must work to see that that is not the case.

The board of directors of the center last month approved a change in policy that would allow so-called simultaneous dispatching of ambulance and paramedic units. Now, that seemingly helpful policy has come under fire from ambulance personnel, for reasons that remain unclear but may have as much to do with how the change was made as with the substance of the new policy.

In fact, "simultaneous dispatching" is a misnomer. Under the new plan, which is to take effect after dispatchers have been trained, a paramedic unit will be summoned immediately after an ambulance, if the dispatcher feels the additional support is needed. Presently an ambulance is sent, and its crew decides after reaching the scene whether or not the paramedics are needed.

There hasn't been mentioned, nor can most people imagine, any credible reason not to send paramedics as quickly as possible. Paramedic units offer training and equipment not available to ambulances, including the ability to speak by radio directly to physicians at their home hospital. Under direction from doctors, paramedics can administer care and medicines that emergency medical technicians cannot. In many cases, the attention of a paramedic has meant the difference between life and death.

Combined with installation of the 911 emergency number, "simultaneous dispatching" could add a great deal to the quality of medical care in the Back Mountain.

No one opposes improving medical care, but apparently many ambulance personnel are upset that the change was voted without a full discussion that included their representatives. That's a fair criticism of the comm center's administration, but it shouldn't stand in the way of implementing a potentially life-saving procedure. Of little or no consequence is the unspoken contention that this change represents an incursion by the comm center into local ambulance companies' authority. That would mean ambulance personnel are putting petty turf battles ahead of providing maximum emergency care; an unlikely charge against people who volunteer their time and talents to help others.

"Simultaneous dispatching" makes sense and should be put into effect as soon as practicable. At the same time, the leaders of the comm center need to examine how they conduct discussions of future changes in operation or policy. A little more time spent in advance may avoid conflicts later.

Water company's policy a welcome one

It is welcome news that under new ownership the Dallas-Shavertown Water Company has committed itself to better service and more open communication with its customers. The former owners' tight-lipped stance raised concerns that it had something in its operations to hide.

Most positive is the company's new willingness to take on service to developments and institutions. Already, it has extended some of its lines and taken on new customers. Given the pace of development in recent years, the company will have its hands full in the coming years.

While no one likes the prospect of higher prices, improvements to the long-neglected system are almost certain to result in rate hikes. As long as the product meets higher standards, and the increases are in line with service, resistance probably won't be stiff.

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The stately Northmoreland Baptist Church

(Photo by Charlotte Bartizek)

Library news

Auction nets \$50,000, well over budget

By NANCY KOZEMCHAK

The figures are in! The bills are paid. The 44th annual Back Mountain Memorial Library Auction has proved to be a very successful financial endeavor. General Chairman, Connie Scott and Finance Chairman, Kenneth Breznay have completed the tally and the final figures stand as follows: the gross figure amounts to \$71,406.53 and with all bills paid to date; the net amount of profit for the library budget will be \$50,563.10. Once again, the auction profit has gone over the budgeted figure; which will greatly help with the expenses, which are already over budget in many areas. A warm and sincere thank you to all the committee chairmen and their volunteer workers and to the loyal participants who come to the auction, year after year, and make the five day auction the super summer event it has become.

There are still many books in the basement book rooms and we will be offering these books for sale at bargain prices. You can buy a bag of books for \$1.00 and get another bag free. This includes the two book store rooms in the basement of the library. This special sale will continue until August 31st. There are National Geographic magazines included in the sale.

Our "Friends of the Library" campaign for 1990 has reached an all time high of \$8,466. This is an increase from last year and is now the highest amount the "friends" campaign has ever reached. These dedicated library supporters are what makes this library a great asset to our community.

New books at the library: "Lazarus" by Morris West is a new novel in the author's Vatican trilogy. It stands as a book that speaks of the Church and its leader, in crisis. The story presents a deep,

compassionate sense of character, a sweeping narrative force and an unrivaled knowledge of the behind-the-scenes politics of the Vatican.

"Seventh Heaven" by Alice Hoffman is a compelling story of the familiar terrains of modern American life and reveals the darker, more magical, more inspiring currents beneath in a way no other writer has done. The story takes place in a typical suburban community in the decade of the 1950s and then explores what happens when Nora Silk comes to town.

A new science fiction novel by Isaac Asimov called "Nemesis" brings to life the authors first new world in two decades. A.D. 2236. Earth and its one hundred space colonies are crowded, anarchical, socially degenerate. Some two light-years distant burns a star called Nemesis.

The Dallas Post encourages its readers to share their opinions with the community by writing a letter to the editor. All letters must be signed and include a telephone number so that we may verify their authenticity. We will not publish anonymous letters. Send letters to The Dallas Post, P.O. Box 366, Dallas PA 18612.

Only yesterday

60 Years Ago - Aug. 22, 1930
FIRE CO TO HOLD CLAM BAKE FUNDRAISER

Dr. Henry M. Laing Fire Company plans a big clam bake in an effort to wipe off the debt on the fire apparatus.

Dallas, East Dallas and Beaumont tie for first place in the Rural League. P.O.S. of A. to hold an annual state camp in Gettysburg.

Buddy Rogers stars in the film "Young Eagles" at the Himmler Theatre this weekend.

50 Years Ago - Aug. 23, 1940
WILKIE CAMPAIGN KICKS OFF

Republicans open Wilkie Campaign at District Rally.

Burgess Smith declares day in tribute to Corey Frantz who recently retired.

Glenn Miller swings into Dallas Monday night and leaves early Tuesday morning with another chunk of cash to be added to the \$500,000 he will make this year.

Dallas Arrows will play at Vernon Sunday to play Beaumont to break second place tie.

Wed - Helen Jeter and Ellsworth Wilco; Mildred Dierolf and Joseph Zewatski.

40 Years Ago - Aug. 25, 1950
GOSS BELL TO HANG AT CHURCH TOWER

Library Board votes to buy Parish home on Main Street adjacent to the library.

Daniel Kosick and Bill Henninger join the Air Force.

The old Goss School bell is to hang in the Prince of Peace Church tower.

Betty Cap, 21, is one of the entrants in the Miss Harveys Lake Contest.

Wed - Elsie E. Keller and Leroy Bugbee; Carol Scouten and William Space; Cecilia Catherine Kupstas and John Link; Estelle Mae Evans and Cpl. Donald Chamberlain; Lucille Disque and George Bittenbender.

30 Years Ago - Aug. 25, 1960
DALLAS TEACHERS PLAN FOR NEW YEAR

Westmoreland to scrimmage within week.

Head Coach Edward Edwards of Lake-Lehman reports 41 young men have reported for practice.

Engaged - Peggy Maza and Robert Davis, Jr.

Wed - Charlotte Lois Perkins and Dr. Bruce Schmucker; Theresa Andrea Polacheck and Howard Joseph Shiner; Alice W. Ide and John J. Hudak;

Imperialettes enjoy barbecue before bowling season opens.

Back Mountain Minor All-Stars down Plymouth twice.

20 Years Ago - Aug. 27, 1970
HARVEY ENDORSED FOR MAGISTRATE

Leonard Harvey has been unanimously endorsed as the candidate for magistrate in District 3-8 by Senator T. Newell Wood, County Republican Chairman Patrick Solano and Republican leaders of the district's municipalities.

Opposition mounts on the nuclear power plans for a plant near Meshoppen.

John Kriels plan 25th anniversary.

Mrs. Ronald Ertley wins the women's golf championship at Irem.

Wed - Eleanor Ruth Jones and Richard V. Yanalunas; Rebecca Lovell and Leighton Scott Jr.

Suburban Restaurant will definitely reopen but it is not definite who the operator will be.

'Impact fees' could ease financial burden of development

By HOWARD J. GROSSMAN

Impact fees may be a new term to most people but it is language which will become increasingly important as Pennsylvania develops new legislation which will have a cost impact on development projects. Impact fee legislation has been seriously considered by the Pennsylvania General Assembly for the past several years. Such legislation exists in other states and enables municipalities to charge a specific fee for the review of land subdivision and development proposals, the fee being an added expense item to the developer. Such fees have their legitimacy when it is considered that projects need to be evaluated by a great number of organizations and individuals within a municipality, county, etc. and the project would have substantial impact on infrastructure and other services normally expected to be delivered to citizens who reside in a given project development area. Therefore, the concept of impact fees makes legitimate sense. It is only a question of what is fair and equitable to the

community and developer in providing a review and comment service.

The controversy which swirled over the General Assembly was not so much the type of procedure and process as it was how the cost would be passed on to the developer and eventually the consumer and whether or not impact fees would substantially inhibit development from taking place. This is particularly true in areas such as the Pocono Mountains which have been hit in recent times by issues such as the wetlands program which has stalled projects and added extensively to costs as well as the fact that the real estate market has recently dampened and construction and employment associated with construction have substantially decreased.

In some states such as Florida the acceptability of impact fees has been proven as a result of legislation such as Developments of Regional Impact (DRI) which are legislatively mandated to be reviewed by the regional planning and development organization within the region where the devel-

opment is proposed. How and in what manner the projects are processed and how costs are passed along to the consumer is and continues to be a great question. The opportunity to have some type of impact fee system seems to be at a critical point in Pennsylvania especially in those regions of the state which have undergone intense development pressure.

Impact fee legislation would amend the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code which was updated in a major way 15 months ago. The ability to provide a mechanism for municipalities to receive more funds in order to more adequately review projects is sensible and logical. Municipal and county planning commissions such as those in Northeastern Pennsylvania require this type of financial support. The question is how to create a strong and effective system without providing a basis for crunching the development process and expanding the financial cost to such an extent that development will be stifled.

Some of the basic principles outlined in the legislative propos-

als include the following:

The legislation provides for the governing body or a municipal authority to require an applicant to construct and dedicate to the municipality or municipal authority reasonable and necessary street improvements and water and sewage line extensions located outside the property limits of the subdivision or land development only if such off site improvements are necessitated by and specifically and uniquely attributable to such subdivision or land development.

The applicant and municipality or municipal authority may agree to the payment of fees in lieu of the construction and dedication of off site water and sewage line extensions.

The legislation provides for controls regarding how far a municipality or municipal authority can go to require contributions or methods by which a developer contributes toward improvement.

An impact fee can be any charge or assessment levied upon a builder or a development by a local government as a condition to approval of

a subdivision plan or the issuance of a building permit. The revenues generated by the impact fee are used to fund any portion of the cost of capital improvements to the municipal infrastructure necessitated by the development.

The Executive Director of the Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors has noted that impact fee legislation is critical to the future of local governments. He stated at the April, 1990 convention of the Association that "local government officials believe the solution lies in balance and reasonability. The legislature must enact a statute that recognizes the need for impact fees and provides for their implementation. The statute must also provide the standards that yield a predictable result and, at the same time, reasonably prevent any abuse of their use. But most importantly, the statute must be sufficiently flexible to permit the continued exercise of reasonable local policy and judgement".

Impact fee legislation will probably pass the General Assembly and be signed by the Governor in 1990.

Developers and municipalities alike should carefully review the legislation to determine how the proposals will impact their ability to do constructive business and meet community and county standards at the same time. There should be a mutuality of interest if all parties decide to accept the inevitable and live with new legislation designed to expand impact fees in the state. It should be noted that some municipalities already apply impact fees through local subdivision regulations or through other ordinance procedures. Therefore the proposal for impact fee legislation should help provide guidance in a state whose ability to economically survive in the 1990s and to have quality development at the same time are difficult decisions. For those who would like more information pertaining to the impact fee legislation, contact can be made with the EDCNP, 1151 Oak Street, Pittston, PA 18640.

Howard Grossman is Executive Director of the Economic Development Council of Northeastern Pennsylvania. He lives in Dallas.