

THE DALLAS POST

EDITORIALS

It's time to tax fairly in Luzerne County

The 1991 Luzerne County budget contains no tax increases, but retains the onerous "personal property tax" on out-of-state investments. It also includes \$1.1 million in revenues from the sale of county-owned land in Drums, an item that also appeared in the 1990 budget.

Luzerne County should eliminate these two revenue sources and replace them with a fair real estate tax based on up-to-date assessments of property. Of course, such a move has been regarded as political suicide, probably correctly.

There hasn't been a reassessment of all property in Luzerne County for more than 60 years. But spot reassessment takes place every time a home is sold to someone other than a relative. That means if you've recently bought a home you are paying taxes on its current value while your neighbors pay based on outdated valuations. That's not only unfair, it has led to abuse as properties are improperly transferred among family members simply for the purpose of avoiding tax increases.

The only remedy for this outlandish situation is state law requiring reassessment at regular periods. Many states have adopted ten-year intervals as the most logical amount of time between assessments. That makes sense, since so much can change in even one decade.

Regular reassessment coupled with reasonable tax rates could be one of the key items in our region's progress. When individuals and business leaders know they will be treated fairly, they are more willing to make investments. But when a new home or factory is burdened with taxes in order to preserve the status quo for others, the investment becomes less attractive, and perhaps discouraging enough to drive the investor elsewhere.

Like most municipal governments, Luzerne County will face increasing challenges to its effort to provide needed services to its constituents. Being saddled with an outdated tax base will make the delivery of those services more difficult. But political realism dictates that a change of this magnitude must be initiated at the state or even national level.

America shouldn't be the world's cop

An increasing number of Americans are questioning our nation's role in the crisis in the Mideast, not because they think Saddam Hussein shouldn't be stopped, but because they believe the United States should not play world policeman. There is merit in that argument; if nations that are closer to Iraq and more dependent on that region's oil are unwilling to commit more troops and money to the fight, why should we?

In one sense, President Bush's quick action in meeting the threat posed by Saddam almost seems an extension of the "noblesse oblige" side of Mr. Bush's character. Raised in comfort and affluence, Mr. Bush often espouses the belief that he must repay his good fortune in service to the American people. At the same time, the President gives the impression that he and his operatives should be left alone to work their magic, since they are endowed with wisdom beyond that possessed by the general public.

The danger in all of this is that the United States is quick to take responsibility for saving the world while other nations sit back and enjoy the benefits without paying the cost. Does that mean the U.S. shouldn't pursue its goals in Operation Desert Shield. No, not at this point. But we would be wise to examine future crises with a more pragmatic eye, or we may in fact become traffic cops for the very nations that are eating our economic lunch.

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Anderson afield

Oral rabies vaccine for raccoons may soon be available

By JOHN M. ANDERSON

Although humans don't seem to tolerate other humans very well, there are some critters that seem to benefit from having us around.

Raccoons, for example, back in the days when red men dominated North America, had to live in hollow trees, and scrounge up a meal on frogs, crayfish, berries and such. Getting groceries and a warm bed presented problems in winter. Consequently, they were not found north of our border.

Likewise, Canada geese nested mostly in Canada and had to make do with millet, smartweeds, and wild grasses. Coyotes were really abundant only in the West and Southwest. White-tailed deer could find very little to browse or graze on in the deep shade of the virgin forest. They were confined to the forest edge or to openings created by blow-downs or fire.

Today raccoons have spread into Canada and throughout the

U.S. They find shelter in drainage tiles, outbuildings, and shade trees. They grow fat in the cornfields, vineyards, pecan groves and vegetable gardens.

Canada geese nest in backyard ponds throughout New England and New Jersey plus their original range in Canada. A breeding flock of Canadas can be established almost anywhere in the northern states. They have waste corn, wheat and rice to tide them over in the Midwest. They are common but unloved on golf courses. They even winter on the outskirts of New York City, along the Saw Mill River Parkway, for example.

Because timber wolves were considered an enemy of the cattle and sheepmen, to say nothing of Little Red Riding Hood, they were wiped out over most of their entire range. The clever coyote, also an enemy of the sheepmen, survived an army of government trappers, hunters, and poison bait campaigns. And with the removal of



Winter wonderland

(Photo by Charlotte Bartzek)

Friends of the Library raise record total

By NANCY KOZEMCHAK

The Back Mountain Memorial Library Friends of the Library campaign for 1990 has reached a total of \$8,966, the largest amount ever received for this campaign.

The Friends are loyal members and patrons of the library who receive an informative letter in the beginning of each new year telling them of the on-going needs of the library financial picture. Any monetary contributions is accepted and is added to the Friends total.

The Friends campaign is a major financial endeavor and is a main line item in the library annual budget each year. Our library is always happy to welcome new "Friends".

We have a regular over-due book calling policy in which we try to contact our borrowers when their books are one week overdue. One day last week a young boy was in with his mother returning an overdue book and said he was at home when the 'library police' called. That was his version of our reminder call. We charge 10 cents a day for an adult and 5 cents a day for a childrens book; and we do try to remind our patrons of the overdues before they become too late. The fine money collected during the year is also an important item in our annual financial budget.

Our new system of handing out library cards to each patron is

working out well and each new borrower will receive his number and card within a week after joining the library. We would urge borrowers to come in to the library and pick up your library card so you will have it to carry with you and be ready to present it at the front desk when borrowing books.

At the present moment, we have prepared 11,419 library cards, which is our current account of registered active borrowers.

New books at the library: "In Pursuit of the Green Lion" by Judith Merkle Riley takes place in the year 1356 when Margaret of Ashbury, newly widowed and an heir-

ess, has been kidnapped and forced to wed. Her new husband is the unfrocked monk Brother Gregory, the younger son of the piratical, fortune-hunting de Vilers family. Margaret struggles to make a home for her daughters among the family; but even the ghost is spiteful and unpleasant.

"The Plains of Passage" by Jean M. Auel is the continuation of Ayla's story. They set out on horseback across the windswept grasslands of Ice Age Europe. To the hunter-gatherers of their world, Ayla and Jondalar appear enigmatic and frightening. An astonishing novel of discovery, danger, and love.

Letter

Soldier says thanks for papers

Editor,

This is to say "thank you" for mailing your newspaper free of charge to us Dallas area soldiers serving in "Operation Desert Shield." You can't imagine how wonderful it is to read the news from home. I even enjoy the ads!

I really appreciate it and think it's a nice gesture. We have received so many nice letters and packages from Americans everywhere and it lets us know how

much you care.

God Bless you and please keep us in your thoughts and prayers.
 SPC. Bonnie Futch Adams
 Dallas '78

Editor's note: The Dallas Post makes free six-month subscriptions available to local soldiers stationed with Operation Desert Shield. The subscriptions are made possible by United Penn Bank, which pays for them.

Only yesterday

50 Years Ago - Dec. 30, 1940

STUDENTS RETURN TO CLASSES AFTER BREAK

A candlelight Communion Service was held at Trucksville Methodist Church for Christmas Eve.

Marvin Elston, John Honeywell, Stanley Hoyt, Dana Campbell, Henry Shupp, and John Parsons of Kunkle have returned home from Indiantown Gap.

Dallas Township and Kingston Township students will return to classes January 2 but Dallas Borough and Lehman students will not return to school until January 6.

Mrs. Joseph Wallo was named general chairperson of the Henry Laing Fire Company's Auxiliary card party to be held January 9.

Harter basketball team defeated the Lehman High School cagers 30-21 in a hard fought battle on the Lehman cagers court.

40 Years Ago - Dec. 29, 1950

WOUNDED SOLDIER RETURNS TO AREA

Russell Honeywell who was discharged from the Barton Memorial Building, Jefferson Hospital, after two serious operations has arrived home and wishes everyone a very Happy New Year.

Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Garinger celebrated their 20th anniversary with an open house and buffet supper at their Harveys Lake home.

Modern and Square dancing will be held at Kunkle Fire Hall, New Year's Eve, sponsored by the Kunkle Volunteer Fire Company.

Dallas cagers will play at Plymouth, Lake players will play Lehman; and Dallas Township will meet Kingston in league competition, Jan. 9.

Mr. Eight Eighty starring Burl Lancaster is playing at the Himmler Theatre.

Robert Kemmerer, left for dead on a Korean battlefield, is making progress at Bethesda Hospital and has visited his home town, Shavertown. He was machine-gunned after seeing only 19 days of action.

30 Years Ago - Dec. 29, 1960

MEEKER SELECTED AS GIRL OF THE MONTH

The Back Mountain region experiences arctic temperatures with 18 degrees below at Pikes Creek. Six below was clocked in Dallas and in between were temperatures of minus 14 at Alderson, minus 10 at Laketon and minus 10 at Idetown.

Local skiers report skiing conditions are the best in some years at the Denton Run west of Wellsboro and the renovated Elk Lake near Lenoxville.

Donna Meeker was selected as 'School Girl of the Month' by the Harveys Lake Women's Service Club.

Gerald Wagner, Lehman; James Kozemchak, Jr., Huntsville; and Joe Schneider, Dallas, are spending two weeks in training at the Great Lakes Naval Training Station.

Walt Disney's "Ten Who Dared" is playing at Forty Fort Theatre.

20 Years Ago - Dec. 29, 1970

AREA MEN TAKE SAILBOAT CRUISE

Back Mountain road crew labored long and hard during the past two weeks keeping the roads and highways clear for the motorists.

Wilkes College announces the offering of home and school visitor graduate courses for the 1971 semester.

The IRS announces changed in the tax laws for the 1970 income tax returns.

George Jacobs, Shavertown, and Charles Malkemas, formerly of Shavertown, left for a 16-week cruise of the Caribbean on Malkemas' 26-foot trimaron sailboat.

Mr. and Mrs. Albert Stitzer of Shavertown celebrated their 55th wedding anniversary.

Newly-wed Viola Blizzard Robbins was guest of honor at a bridal shower at the Lutheran Parish Hall.

10 Years Ago - Dec. 31, 1980

COUNTY LOSES NUMBERS IN CENSUS

The Children's Museum, Forty Fort is sponsoring holiday open hours everyday through Jan. 4 except New Year's Day, featuring one different and exciting workshop each day.

The Bureau of Census notifies Luzerne County that the county lost 4,724 in the 1980 census.

Lake-Lehman Title 1 participates in on-site evaluations by the Pennsylvania Department of Education whose team found the project was in compliance with existing federal and state E.S.E.A. regulations, instructions and policies.

Lake-Lehman defeats Nanticoke but loses to Crestwood.

Meyers defeats the Dallas Mountaineers.

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.