

THE DALLAS POST

EDITORIALS

Teachers' union has disengaged itself from the real world

As the controversy over tax rates in the Dallas School District has swirled during the past several weeks, The Dallas Post has been criticized for coverage that has been described as "teacher bashing." Some observers have apparently drawn that conclusion because The Post was the first newspaper to point out that a large percentage of those supporting higher taxes were teachers, their friends or relatives; and this newspaper questioned whether calls for higher taxes were made at least in part so that higher salaries could be bargained for.

The Post makes no apology for describing the makeup of meeting audiences, or for publishing details of the teachers' compensation package, as we did last week. It is not our intention to be a divisive force in an already contentious atmosphere; we publish what we believe to be true primarily to inform the public, who ultimately must decide the fate of local schools. We don't believe that constitutes unfairly picking on teachers, and it certainly is not our desire to do so. If some believe disagreement is the same as bashing, the issue may be in their perspective.

Our biggest puzzle through all the discussions about tax rates and budgets is that we haven't been able to escape the notion that the attitude of the teachers' union has an air of unreality about it. Starting with the state association's bargaining goals, it has seemed that the union's aims have unhinged from the economic and human facts of life in local communities. For example:

■ The union implies that schools and teachers should not have to share the economic hardships that have swept government and private industry. While those sectors of society have endured little wage growth, layoffs and benefit cutbacks, the teachers' union wants large raises and more benefits, all paid by the taxpayers.

■ As government and business have made hard decisions to decrease programs they can no longer afford, the teachers' union says the same can't be done with schools. But even in the best of times, every entity should occasionally re-examine how it operates so that it doesn't simply run on inertia.

■ Report after report notes the decline in American scholastic performance, despite the fact that we spend more money per pupil than any other nation. Teachers can't be blamed for the situation; it's obvious that our nation has failed to value education as highly as it should. But the union would have us believe that the problem is that we don't treat teachers well enough.

■ The union wants teachers to receive compensation comparable with "other professionals," but doesn't seem to understand that many people with similar education and experience lag behind what the teachers already have; and they don't have five-year contracts or protection from economic layoffs. For example, the starting salary in the Dallas district is a bit over \$20,000, plus a completely paid benefit program, summers off and regular, guaranteed increments. If they looked more closely, the union would find that's a much better deal than most bachelor's degree holders receive in this area.

We don't think teachers themselves are the problem, at least not the ones who keep a level view of things. The dissension comes from the union and its unrealistic demands. How, for example, can they justify asking that teachers throughout the state receive the same pay when there is such a wide variation in living costs and tax bases with which to support school budgets?

One of the answers seems to be that union leaders have convinced themselves and some of their members that teaching is a profession apart; somehow so important that its practitioners inhabit a place beyond the bounds of ordinary society. Of course, that siren song is easy-listening to teachers who have felt underappreciated, as it would be to anyone else. And it is a proven approach to perpetuating the organization. But it won't play in the real world, and the result has been conflict.

Unfortunately, it seems that the teachers' union has become a union first and teachers second. The sorry part of that is that when union goals are in the forefront, the job at hand gets pushed behind. And the job is important, but it's far from impossible. If it was, why are so many young people hoping to land a teaching job?

The Post is not bashing teachers when it tries to bring some perspective to discussions about school budgets and education in general. On the contrary, we believe that a proper and adequate education is the most important factor in individual and societal development and satisfaction. And we know that enthusiastic teachers inspire students, which is often a difficult task. But we can't subscribe to the belief that one segment of the community must be given whatever it asks for; their role must fit with that of the society, and that includes asking them to share in the sacrifices that must be made from time to time.

Do you agree? Disagree?

Editorials are the opinion of the management of The Dallas Post. We welcome your opinion on contemporary issues in the form of letters to the editor. If you don't write, the community may never hear a contrasting point of view. Send letters to: The Dallas Post, P.O. Box 366, Dallas, PA 18612. Please include your name, address and daytime phone number so that we may verify authenticity. We reserve the right to edit for length and grammar.



Resting

Al Novackowski, Shavertown, manager at Hillside Nursery took a break one hot Sunday afternoon.

(Photo by Charlotte Bartizek)

Letters

Supports opposition to Commonwealth expansion

Editor:

As an environmentalist I am writing in support of the neighbors of the Commonwealth Telephone Co. who are opposing that company's planned extension into the wetlands.

They are right to fear that the expansion will jeopardize the purity of their wells and all the groundwater in the area. An example of what will happen is the Miami Airport, which was home base for Eastern Airlines.

Over the course of a few years, test borings into the water table

showed high levels of heavy metals and petroleum by products that there is no money to clean up. The scale may be smaller here, but the pollution will occur, and in this case the residents' drinking water comes from wells that are naturally filtered by the wetlands. Survival of those wetlands is imperative.

The township supervisors were shortsighted to grant permission for the expansion. Surely it is not too late for them to become informed as to the contributions of these wetlands to the health and

welfare of their municipality and change their decision. The abundance of good pure water in our area is an asset we tend to take for granted, but the state has promulgated the stiffest wetlands regulations in the country to protect them and our pure groundwater supplies.

Cleaning up polluted groundwater is an enormous expense, if it is even possible. No elected official has the right to jeopardize the fresh water in his municipality. We cannot live without it, and supplies are disappearing elsewhere.

Our pure water is a marketable asset which increases in value every day, and its protection must be our highest priority.

All the residents of Dallas Township should unite with the group of residents opposing this expansion. Next time the destruction of wetlands will affect their wells. And there will be a next time. There always is. Hang tough.

Sally Willoughby
Chairman,
RESCUE Wyoming-
Tunkhannock

Only yesterday

60 Years Ago - July 24, 1931 AREA BARS RAIDED

Good roads are a major factor in helping a small town regain its standing. Minnesota Commissioner of Highways Babcock told area residents.

Federal agents made seven raids in area liquor selling places in nearby lakes over the past week-end.

Dallas Rotary Club hosted Lady Rotarians last week in a garden setting at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Warren J. Yeisley.

Wed - Mildred Downing and Elmer L. Major; Rose Patton and Albert Tonkin Jr.

William Jones of Noxen has invented a novel new type of window screen which lets flies out of the house but will not let them in.

Dallas Nine defeats East Dallas 4-0.

50 Years Ago - July 25, 1941 KUHNER NAMED DALLAS PRINCIPAL

Professor Raymond Kuhnert has been appointed as the new principal at Dallas Township.

Quick action by an Oliver's Garage employee at Sunday's horse show saved a Kingston lad from

the lethal hoofs of a runaway.

Harveys Lake Protective Association begins campaign for new members.

Aluminum drive fills the bin on Lake Street with more articles to be brought in Friday and Saturday.

Engaged - Joan Blackman and Robert Burgess Harvey.
Wed - Helen Lewis and Ralph Warrell; Grace Arline Mahler and Royal Lyne, Jr.

40 Years Ago - July 20, 1951 KIWANIS AND YMCA TO BRING CIRCUS TO AREA

Kiwanis and YMCA will compete plans for the appearance of Mills Bros. Three Ring Circus.

Consumers of Dallas-Shavertown Water Company are requested to water their lawns only between 8-10 p.m. because of the dry spell.

Twelve calves, heifers and cows are entered in the 4-H Dairy Club Show tomorrow.

Descendants of Earl and Elizabeth Sickler hold family reunion at the Parish home, Idetown.

Engaged - Ruth Shellhamer and Edwin Stolarick.

Wed - Audrey Kleiner and Preston Sturdevant.

The first floor of Richardson's Dodge and Plymouth Agency is

being completely remodeled with new offices, parts department and display room.

Orange defeats Beaumont 4-3.

30 Years Ago - July 20, 1961 POSSIBLE CLOSINGS FOR LEHMAN SCHOOLS

Lake-Lehman faces possible school closing if new construction is not authorized.

Richard Demmy is named 1962 Library Auction chairman.

Annabelle Ambrose, Marilyn Eck, Maryalice Knecht and Lynne Jordan will spend next year in foreign countries of Europe as Rotary Exchange students.

Preparations are underway for the Sixth Centermoreland Church Auction.

The new Valley and Tennis and Swim Club on Harris Hill Road was formally open this past week.

Dallas Dairy routs Pringle by a 14-4 score behind pitcher Tom Carter.

Engaged - Geraldine Ann Hobart and Lt. David E. Parsons; Sally Seymour and Donald Laity Jr.; Beverly Ann Noon and Thomas Michael McGlynn.

Wed - Catherine M. Clyde and Elwood H. Meyers.

20 Years Ago - July 15, 1971 PROPERTY DONATED TO EMERGENCY CREWS

Shavertown is the latest area to have a water shortage.

The 25th Annual Back Mountain Library Auction was called a success with receipts at \$28,000. Auction Chairman John Casner announced.

Property at the corner of Machel Avenue and Route 415 was donated outright to the Dr. Henry M. Laing Fire Company and the Dallas Community Ambulance by the late Howard and Myra Risley, former publishers of The Dallas Post.

Wed - Elizabeth Joy Pillarella and William John Faerber; Sharon Lee Serio and Henry Thomas Mastalski.

Westmoreland wins in Teeners League.

Thirty six Fresh Air Fund youngsters arrived in Dallas to spend two-weeks vacation with Friendly Town hosts scattered throughout the Back Mountain.

Library news

Muffy Bears from Julie Eckert now on display

By NANCY KOZEMCHAK

The display case at the Back Mountain Memorial Library is featuring a collection of Muffy Bears loaned to the library by Julie Eckert of Dallas. Julie is 10 years old and will be in fifth grade at Dallas Elementary School in the fall.

Muffy Bears are cute, cuddly, small bears dressed in different types of clothing. There is a Christmas bear at the end of the display, featuring bears as Nutcracker, Gingerbread girl, the Skater, Partridge in a Pear Tree, Herald Angel and Christmas Eve. Also included is Advent bear, Holiday bear, Holiday cruise bear, High Tea and A Day in the Country.

The other sections of the display are showing: Christening bear, baby bear, Easter bear, duck Easter bear, Easter Bunny bear, Safari, Halloween Witch and Halloween cat bear, Valentine and Thanksgiving bear.

Julie started her collection when she was four years old and Christening Bear was her first bear; Safari Bear, she received on her

next birthday. She now has a total of 21 bears; which she keeps at home on a shelf in her bedroom. She receives the bears for birthdays and holidays and will share them with us until August 7.

On behalf of the staff of the library and the members of the Board of Directors, I want to personally thank each and every member of the municipalities of Kingston Township, Dallas Township, Jackson Township and Dallas Borough for the tremendous job they did on our driveway and parking lot at the library.

The equipment and the manpower was supplied by these municipalities and they worked together in the very hot weather for about two weeks to complete the job a week before the library auction began. We will be forever grateful for their on-going efforts on our behalf. No more holes to try to avoid, no more dusty cars and neighbors houses and more room for parking cars.

A very special thank you to Scott Sobocinski who had applied at the library to work as a volunteer

during the summer. He had worked in the junior high library at school and will be in 8th grade in the fall. Our cookbook chairman, Maryann Daily, snagged him on his first day here to help with the cookbook collating and Maryann tells me he did a super job. Volunteers are still needed for this project. Inquire at the library.

The 45th annual library auction is over and many thanks are in

order. A special thank you to Ernie Ashbridge, antiques chairman, and his capable assistant, Bill Gabel, who worked many hours and traveled many miles to obtain the 650 antique items we auctioned off.

A special greeting to Mrs. Florence Crump, our 96-year-old library booster, who is a little bit under the weather at the moment. We love you, Mrs. Crump; Come back to the library soon!

Girl Scouts offer special camps

Penn's Woods Girl Scout Council is offering special sessions at Camp Louise for Brownie Girl Scouts and Junior Girl Scouts that will include remedial reading and reading enhancement.

The "Junior Right to Read" session, the week of July 21 to 26 has room for girls ages 10 to 12. The Brownie "Storytime", an enrichment session, scheduled for July 28 to August 2, also still has openings. Trained Reading Specialists will make the learning fun while

the girls take part in all the traditional camp activities like swimming, hiking, boating, camp fires and games.

Penn's Woods Girl Scout Council is making these sessions available to all girls in the community as a part of the National Girl Scout "Right to Read" initiative to encourage reading at every age level. For more information about these programs, please call the Penn's Woods Council office at 717-829-2631. All girls are welcome at Camp Louise.

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