



Letters

Seeks the boy he rescued in 1949

Editor:
On Labor Day, 1949, my wife, the former Sally Williams, our daughter Ricky, and I were picnicking at Lake Carey. We were on a grassy knoll adjacent to the old Kniffen family cottage, to the left of their boat dock. A young boy, perhaps 12 or 13 years of age, was asked by an old gentleman to untie his row boat, then to climb in if he wished a ride around the lake.
The scene was just a few short yards away, directly in front of me and my family. The bow of the knoll was perhaps 3 feet above the water's edge and the boy grabbed the bow of the boat as it moved out into rapidly deepening water. He did not have a good grip on the bow however, and slipped into and under the lake's surface. I watched transfixed, intently looking for him to surface and begin swimming. When his head popped above the water's edge his arms thrashed wildly about him. "Dear God," I said aloud, "the boy can't swim."
As I spoke the words he disappeared for the second time beneath the water and I looked to the swimming beach area to my left for signs of someone coming to help him. I saw a young girl standing next to older adults, perhaps her parents, all fully clothed, their hands to their mouths in panic at the scene unfolding before them - seemingly unable to move. I looked quickly then to where I had seen

the boy surface - and there he was gasping and coughing for breath and thrashing the water with all his remaining strength, then slipping back into the water for the third time.
I quickly removed one shoe - the other knotted in may haste, removed my trousers, for I had swim trunks on, ran and dove off the knoll into the lake. Swimming underwater to the last spot the boy disappeared I saw his lifeless form in an upright position on the lake's bottom, in perhaps 15 feet of water. There were no bubbles coming from his mouth as I neared him, preparing to turn him, remembering everything George Jones had taught us in the swimming pool at Meyers High School in 1938. This, however, was the real thing and I did turn him, cupped my hand under his chin and brought him to the surface, swimming back to the grassy knoll area.
When I was able to stand up I grasped him firmly about the waist and tossed his lifeless form up on the bank. The force of my grasp caused a large spewing of water from his lungs as spectators rushed to assist. Oh, yes, as I prepared to stand up, two young men dove over my head into the lake. It seems the old gentleman also tried to save the boy and he could not swim either. Those young men saved him and brought me back the shoe I couldn't untie - it had

come off during my rescue attempt.
The boy rapidly recovered, not needing resuscitation after spewing the water out as related above and I rejoined my family. The young girl I saw with her hand to her mouth came and thanked me for saving her brother and, because I was embarrassed by the attention, we moved away from the area.
I did not bother to get names. I wish now I had, not for any glory, but because of that beautiful movie "It's a Wonderful Life," that we watch every year at Christmas time, the characters forever etched in our hearts and minds.
Our Lord and Savior placed me at Iwo Jima during W.W. II in the South Pacific, that I might capture in poetic form the "Flag Raising at Iwo Jima," and other famous land and sea battles of that great war. And He placed me where I could observe your desperate struggle to live in the waters of Lake Carey 42 years ago, that I would be the instrument of His Saving Grace.
Where are you, young man? Because we both survived, events in our lives continued on, as pre-ordained, just as in that wonderful movie. This old warrior-poet would like to find you that I might hear of your wonderful life.
Richard E. Franklin
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J.W.J.

Lessons of the Challenger disaster

By J. W. JOHNSON

It was six years ago late last month that this nation wept. The rest of the world waited until the following day, instinctively understanding that our loss was personal, not political.
And the world will continue to weep for years to come.
Following the 1986 Challenger disaster, there was much wailing and gnashing of teeth about who and what to blame. And until that bright, clear day in January, space travel was the safest form of travel known to humankind: 56 missions in space without a loss of life.
And so in the confidence of history and the arrogance of youth the march into space continued.
Yet, and even if we didn't understand specifically why back then, we knew that so many things could go wrong. We expected it in the early days; in the days when science didn't understand as much; in the early days when we named our efforts after the gods—Mercury, Apollo—striving to touch the

strength of those mythologies; in claiming those names, declaring those efforts to be feeble, our knowledge to be lacking; somehow and perhaps hoping in the symbols to find wisdom.
Still, with all the success, we knew, and knew even on that day, that danger lurked. And yet it couldn't happen on that day. On that particular day...at least that's what we told ourselves...and that's because She was on board.
She was Christa McAuliffe.
A mother.
A teacher.
We denied the possibility because she was hope; as a mother, the hope of life; as a teacher, the hope of enlightenment. And on that day, carrying with her the collective freedom born aspirations of, perhaps, the Walter Mitty in us all:
To learn, to share, to touch, to taste fame, smell danger; indeed, to express that freedom in the scraped knee melding of science and joy, technology and inspiration, steel and soul.
Suddenly, without warning, and

in the blink of millions of eyes, the heartbeat of a nation stopped.
We watched...no, clung to the television, so often giving us mindless mayhem and insipid comedy...now shattering our gods.
We watched as she and her professional colleagues leapt into space, stepped beyond earthly constraints, daring to be truly free; daring to succeed by daring to fail.
We mourned her death then; we mark it again.
But we should also celebrate her life, as we celebrate our own.
Christa McAuliffe was a teacher. With bubbly courage and the enthusiasms which live and find nourishment only in a free person, she taught us.
And the lesson she gave ultimate voice to is that free people, intending to remain so, must joyfully don the robes of risk, or perpetually be that naked child seeking fearful solace in the god-toys of apathy and ignorance.
Seven human beings died on that day. Seven heroes to freedom.



Back Mountain Citizens Council chooses new officers and members

New officers and new board members of the Back Mountain Citizens Council took office in January, and were introduced at this month's meeting.
Standing from left, Charles Wasserott, Al Babetski, Irene Thomas, Phyllis Belk, Edward Schechter, John Reddy, Janet Phillips, Anne Vernon, Rob Lewis, Larry Law. Seated, Murray Miller, Nancy Eckert, Ben Phillips, Will Conyngham and Tom Winter.
Wasserott and Reddy are new members; not shown are new members Mary Reddy, Robert Be-secker, Dean Casaday. The new officers are Conyngham, president; Ray Boyle, vice president; Ben Phillips, secretary and Tom Winter, treasurer.
The next board meeting will be February 14, at 8 a.m. in Hayfield House, Penn State Wilkes-Barre Campus in Lehman.
Back Mountain Citizens Council is concerned with issues pertaining to environment, transportation, municipal cooperation, recreation and planned growth.

Library news

Almost new books available for under \$5

By NANCY KOZEMCHAK

The Back Mountain Memorial Library cookbook would make a very nice Valentine's gift for someone who has not yet received one. The library still has cookbooks to sell and the would be a welcome addition to anyone's cookbook shelf. The cost is \$12.95 and they may be purchased at the circulation desk in the library. They are also available at the following business places: Back Mountain Books, Back Mountain ServiStar, Sue Hand's Imagery, Penn State Campus and College Misericordia.
Our 'almost new' book shelf in the library has many good bargains for sale. These books are donations or duplicate copies from our library shelves and are selling for as low as \$2.50 and no higher than \$5.00. These books also make excellent gifts.
New books at the library: "By-ones" by LaVyrle Spencer is a contemporary family novel that sparkles with the vivid, real-life characters, spirited passion, and involving narrative that endear the author to millions of fans around the world. In the six years since her bitter divorce, Bess Curran has built a successful life as an interior designer in the historic riverside town of Stillwater, Minnesota. Still angry with her ex-husband, Michael, for abandoning their marriage, she's proud of their two children. This novel of a family fighting its way back to unity and happiness and is a glorious triumph.
"Blood Red, Snow White" by Diane Henry and Nicholas Horrock is a fast-paced and gripping novel that plunges the reader into a world of greed, privilege, desire, and betrayal. It builds to a climax of danger and action and culminates in an unexpected, shocking ending that will haunt readers long after they've turned the last page. Alec Anton would seem to have it all. He has built a highly successful corporate-law practice at a prestigious Wall Street firm, he owns a lavish home on the Connecticut shore and a posh Park Avenue Apartment; however, he is enveloped in a cloud of melancholy and loneliness. An exciting mystery.
"1959" is a novel by Thulani

Carson McCullers in its honesty and its deep generosity of spirit. The story brings to life a pivotal moment in American history with all its violence, surprise and glorious hope. The year that Willie Tarrant turned 12, was the year Billie Holiday dies, Mickey and

Sylvia were singing "Love is Strange" on the radio, and Willie had her first date. Her father and other adults were worried about integration, but for Willie, that was just another problem she wouldn't have a choice about facing, like pulling weeds, or dating boys.

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SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
2 12:00pm TROOP BEVERLY HILLS-Shelley Long 2:00pm BLUES BROTHERS (2 1/2)-J. Belushi 4:30pm Basketball: W. VIRGINIA @ RUTGERS FOX NIGHT	3 8:00pm BROTHERHOOD OF JUSTICE - K. Sutherland, L. Loughlin	4 7:00pm Basketball: TEMPLE @ WASHINGTON UNIV. 9:00pm MARRIED/CHILDREN 9:30pm M*A*S*H	5 8:00pm RAW DEAL - Arnold Schwarzenegger	6 FOX NIGHT 8:00pm SIMPSONS 8:30pm DREXELL'S CLASS 9:00pm BEVERLY HILLS 90210	7 FOX NIGHT 8:00pm AMERICA'S MOST WANTED 9:00pm COPS: U. S. MARSHALS 9:30pm HIDDEN VIDEO	8 Clint Eastwood Saturday 12:00pm JOE KIDD 1:30pm TWO MULES FOR SISTER SARA 3:30pm EIGER SANCTION FOX 8:00pm COPS I/II 9:00pm WWF MAIN EVENT
9 12:00pm PARENT TRAP - Haley Mills 2:00pm MURPHY'S ROMANCE - Sally Field 4:00pm FALLING IN LOVE - Robert Deniro, Meryl Streep FOX NIGHT	10 8:00pm ROCKY IV - Sylvester Stallone, Carl Weathers	11 8:00pm DEERHUNTER PT. 1 - Meryl Streep, Robert Deniro	12 8:00pm DEERHUNTER PT. 2 - Robert Deniro, C. Walken	13 FOX NIGHT 8:00pm SIMPSONS 8:30pm DREXELL'S CLASS 9:00pm BEVERLY HILLS 90210	14 FOX NIGHT 8:00pm AMERICA'S MOST WANTED 9:00pm FIREHOUSE 9:30pm HIDDEN VIDEO	15 Stallone Saturday 12:00pm VICTORY 2:00pm PARADISE ALLEY 4:00pm FIRST BLOOD FOX 8:00pm COPS SPECIAL 100th Episode
16 12:00pm MUPPETS TAKE MANHATTAN 2:00pm MICKI & MAUDE - Dudley Moore 4:00pm ANGELS WITH DIRTY FACES - J. Cagney FOX 10:00pm PAUL RODRIGUEZ SPECIAL	17 8:00pm FOX NITE @ MOVIES: WEEKEND AT BERNIE'S - A. McCarthy FOX'S SUMMER GAMES	18 8:00pm RUNNING SCARED - G. Hines, B. Crystal	19 8:00pm THE GREAT OUTDOORS - Jon Candy	20 FOX NIGHT 8:00pm SIMPSONS 8:30pm DREXELL'S CLASS 9:00pm BEVERLY HILLS 90210	21 FOX NIGHT 8:00pm AMERICA'S MOST WANTED 9:00pm BEVERLY HILLS 90210	22 FOX NIGHT 12:00pm CROSS MY HEART - Mary Steingburgen 2:00pm EVERYTIME YOU SAY GOODBYE - Tom Hanks 4:00pm STARTING OVER
23 12:00pm BATTERIES NOT INCLUDED 2:00pm SUSAN SLEPT HERE 4:00pm HURRICANE FOX'S SUMMER GAMES (8:00-11:00)	24 7:30pm ALIEN - Sigourney Weaver	25 7:30pm STARMAN - Jeff Bridges	26 7:30pm INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS - D. Sutherland (OUT OF THIS WORLD WEEK)	27 FOX NIGHT 8:00pm SIMPSONS 8:30pm DREXELL'S CLASS 9:00pm BEVERLY HILLS 90210	28 FOX NIGHT 8:00pm AMERICA'S MOST WANTED 9:00pm SIGHTINGS: GHOSTS	29 12:00pm EYE OF THE TIGER 2:00pm TRADING PLACES 4:00pm THIEF OF HEARTS FOX 8:00pm COPS 9:00pm AMW: COPKILLERS 9:30pm FIREHOUSE