

# THE DALLAS POST

## EDITORIALS

### Withholding taxes is wrong answer to school funding

The Dallas Taxpayers' Forum has a perfect right to state its objection to higher teacher salaries, or anything else. But the organization has overstepped the bounds of good sense in advising homeowners to withhold property tax payments if the school board doesn't kowtow to its wishes.

In a pamphlet sent to its members, the Forum relates how to "legally" hold back payment for up to two years. For doing so, the taxpayer will be fined 10 percent of the taxes due after 120 days, and will be charged 3/4% interest per month. Then, according to the Forum, the property owner can pay the back taxes and fines just prior to a sheriff's sale, "and all will be fine!" (Their exclamation point.)

But obvious errors of omission are committed in this advice:

- Withholding tax payments won't prevent the school district from raising taxes, so property owners will pay fines and fees plus higher taxes.
- If a substantial number of people don't pay their taxes, the district will have to borrow money to pay its bills, thus raising tax rates even further.
- Failure to pay taxes on time could damage an individual's credit rating, causing far more harm than paying the taxes might have.

Aside from the practical failures of the Forum's plan, this call for disobedience of the law is a poor method of expressing the group's position. Taxes and teacher salaries didn't rise overnight to uncomfortable levels, and it will take more than a few months of complaining to rein them in.

The Dallas Taxpayers' Forum can be an important player in the region's future. It is incumbent upon its members to avoid harming its own cause by not giving out this kind of impractical and dangerous advice.

### Harveys Lake can help residents recycle

Harveys Lake officials are unhappy that only about half the households in town are recycling waste material. As a result, the borough is losing money because it isn't collecting enough recyclables — on which it makes a net profit of about \$29.50 per ton — to pay for the crew and truck used in the program.

One critical difference between Harveys Lake's program and the one instituted by the Dallas Area Municipal Authority (DAMA) is that DAMA delivered recycling containers to every household that could participate while Harveys Lake asked residents to come to the borough building to pick them up. A set of instructions came with the DAMA container, and those, along with plenty of publicity got people into the swing of things relatively quickly.

Perhaps Harveys Lake should do something similar. Since the collection crew visits every street in the borough weekly anyway, why can't they distribute containers to households that don't have them, and include a flyer that explains what can be recycled, how to do it and what's in it for the borough and the individual? Even if only a few containers are delivered each week, it wouldn't be long before everyone could participate. And that would accomplish much more than waiting for residents to take the initiative.

### Low interest rates hurt while they help

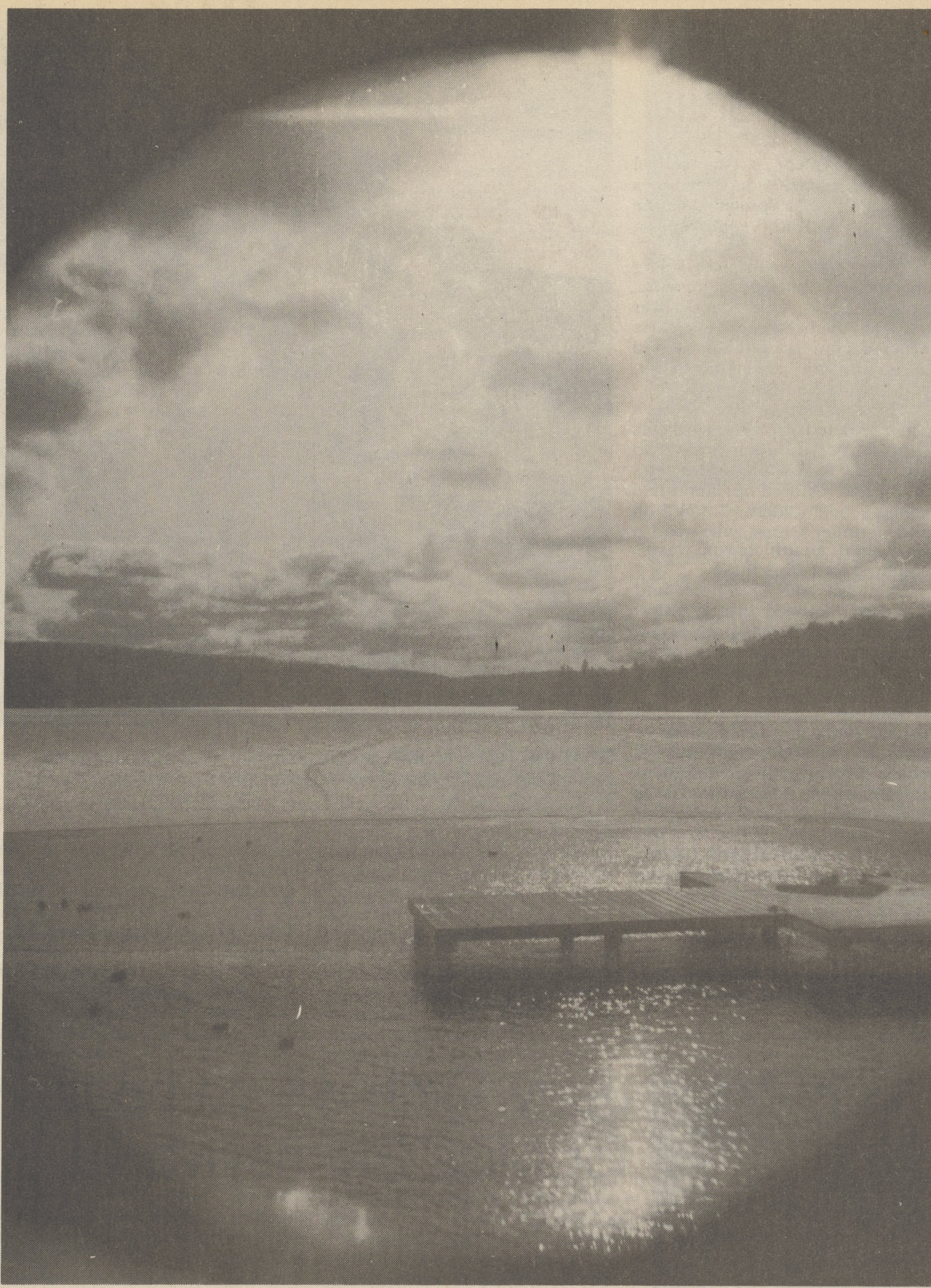
There's a great lesson in economics to be learned from the effect low interest rates have on individuals, businesses and government.

Low interest rates, heralded for their stimulative effect by economists and business leaders, are bad news for school districts that rely on property taxes for support. And for many taxpayers, the impact is doubly negative. That's because school districts make money from interest on receipts that are banked until needed — the Dallas School District made \$338,000 last year — and the loss of income will probably translate into higher taxes.

That news is worst for taxpayers on fixed incomes, such as retired people who rely mainly on Social Security and interest on savings. Not only has their income been cut by the dramatic drop in savings rates, their property taxes are likely to rise in order for the school district to recoup the shortfall. That double whammy will make the difference between living comfortably or not for some of our neighbors.

A partial solution to this problem lies not in higher interest rates, but in shifting the burden of school taxation from property to income. That way, people who benefit from income growth resulting from lower interest rates will pay proportionately more taxes, while those whose income is being cut will pay less.

Such a logical change, which was tried and failed three years ago, makes so much sense that it's hard to understand why it isn't at the top of the legislative agenda.



Northern sparkle, Harveys Lake

Photo by Charlotte Bartizek

## Letters

### Teachers have seen their profession trashed

Editor:

Teachers throughout this region and beyond have witnessed a negativism that has prevailed since 1991. Specifically, teachers in the Dallas School District can never again assume that they have the support of their community.

We have heard blatant insults and scandalous name calling directed toward us by the citizens of this community. We have heard our names bantered on radio, have had copies of our salaries distributed and posted at work places, have seen the names of our friends and neighbors on petitions, have watched our profession trashed and we will never be the same.

We have been depicted as outcasts, people who take arms and legs to cripple the members of this community when in actuality we offer their children wings to fly.

We have heard from a teacher drop out that he could make the Dallas School District a model for all to envy by replacing veteran teachers with newly graduated recruits. I ask, how many of you started in your profession with the same expertise you have today?

Teachers are leaders in a com-

munity and as leaders we have the responsibility to protect the people we lead. Those people are your children and our children.

You have asked why we have remained silent. We thought that silence was the best course of action in order not to dignify the innuendoes and biased statements with a response. We were wrong. In the face of such injurious behavior we must at this point show our integrity and commitment and speak out against the false messiahs of education.

We can no longer accept a passive line of resistance and we will rally in active participation in the defense of the educational process, whether it be a tight line on educational philosophy and program or teacher salaries.

We will begin by challenging the taxpayer of this community to communicate the importance of education by becoming involved; not by the mass exodus shown before a school board meeting begins, not by inflammatory remarks about teachers at the dinner table, not by the pitiful turnout during parent-teacher night. Help a child with homework, ask what

the child did in school, turn off the TV set, set study hours in the home, say no to the job that leaves a child less alert in the classroom, take a "hard line" for education.

Let me add that any work force is only as effective as its supporters. Education does not start, nor will it end, in the classroom. Merit pay for teachers? Merit ratings for parents!

The line has been drawn not between taxes vs. 0% increase but between dignity vs. meaningless hype which can lead only to division and destruction.

I urge the silent among you to come forward even in the face of ignorant jeers and boos. Take a stand and help lift this dark cloud that has descended on this community. We must work together for a healthy society. Our children's futures depend on it. Help us touch the future.

We can never go back to where we were before but we will go forward as leaders must. We ask you to join us. We will not and cannot ever be the same.

Candyce J. Fike  
Teacher  
Dallas Sr. High School

### Commends Dallas teachers professionalism

Editor:

The stated purposes of the Dallas Elementary Parent Teacher Organization are to promote the welfare of our children and to develop a wholesome relationship between parents, teachers and students.

With these purposes in mind, the Dallas Elementary PTO would like to commend the teachers of the district for their dedication, professionalism and support in continuing to provide a quality education for our children.

We hope that this professional-

ism will be exhibited by both the Dallas Education Association and the school board members in the continuation of the bargaining process.

The Dallas Elementary PTO Executive Board  
Andrea Mittrick, President

### Casey's budget is no bonanza for business

Editor:

Small business owners like myself expected Governor Casey to admit in his budget address that we need and deserve tax relief if we're going to survive a prolonged recession.

Last year's tax increase may very well force me to lay off employees and jeopardize any plans for expansion, realities that the governor seems to ignore.

As far as I can see, the governor's address fell far short of providing any real economic solutions. While he wants us to believe that he's cutting back, the truth is that

getting a 12-percent spending increase last year.

Tough times call for tough decisions, and that's why we expect the Governor to be talking about such things as a tax amnesty program, which could produce \$70 million. Why can't we manage the state budget like a business owner does his and use competitive bidding for such things as highway construction? And though the subject is getting stale, why in the

world can't Pennsylvania join the rest of the nation and privatize state-run liquor stores?

It seems that here are just so many common sense things that we could be doing to balance the state budget and still provide needed relief. Unfortunately, politics keeps getting in the way of practicality.

Jay P. Niskey  
Dallas  
Bowman Petroleum

### 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 a daytime phone number so that we may verify authenticity. The Post does not publish anonymous letters. We reserve the right to edit for length and grammar, but will call if we think editing might change the meaning.

## Only yesterday

### 60 Years Ago - Mar. 4, 1932 HUNTSVILLE CIVIL WAR VETERAN CELEBRATES 90TH BIRTHDAY

The Dallas Post installed a high speed Kelly automatic press. Of latest design Kelly Press prints colors at a high rate of speed and is capable of doing the highest grade color printing.

Pete Culp, Civil War veteran and resident of Huntsville will celebrate his 90th birthday Sunday, March 6.

Two new scoring records were made in Rural League Tuesday night when Shavertown defeated Dallas 72-18, breaking the record held by Trucksville for points scored in a game. "Ad" Woolbert pivot man on Shavertown, broke the individual scoring record of 28 points made by Mitchell on Saturday night, when he scored 14 field goals and three fouls for a total of 31 points.

"Deadline" starring Buck Jones now playing at Himmeler Theater.

### 50 Years Ago - Mar. 5, 1942 LOCAL MEN DRAFTED

Eight Lehman High School students will have the honor of playing with the Northeast District Band at its annual concert, the last of this month, it was announced this week by Joseph Clouser, director of Lehman High School Band.

George Edward Golden, David Lewis Williams, Edward Altwood Long, Harry Shaver Smith, and George Heimbach, local boys will be among a group of 41 which will leave Draft Board #1 at Wyoming early Thursday morning for induction into Federal service.

Verna Jule Morgan will wed Edward Davis, Saturday night.

### 40 Years Ago - Mar. 7, 1952 NEW FIREHALL PLANNED FOR CHASE

Plans for construction of a \$30,000 Fire House at Chase on grounds donated by Harold Bertram were approved by Jackson Township Vol. Fire Department at a meeting Monday night.

Shavertown Methodist and Huntsville Christian will clash to decide the Back Mountain Church League championship.

Arthur Garinger and his brother-in-law, John Beagle of Bloomsburg are erecting a new Tastee Freeze soft ice cream store on Garinger's property along Memorial Drive at Fernbrook.

### 30 Years Ago - Mar. 8, 1962 PETER CLARK RUNS FOR STATE SENATOR

Peter D. Clark, Dallas, former Country Treasurer, 6th District and County Republic Chairman will oppose Harold Flack, Goss Manor for State Senator. Also circulating petitions as a candidate for same office is Theodore Poach, Shavertown, Kingston Township leader and former Kingston Township tax collector.

A heavy weekend at Back Mountain Library with the public barred, board members, librarians and Key Club boys rearranged books with the newly remodelled 2nd floor fully utilized and pressure reduced on the first floor.

Surrounded by nurses of Geisinger Medical Center and members of his family, Fred Hennebaul celebrated his 17th birthday Monday. In addition to the two cakes, he received stacks of cards and letters from friends and well-wishers at home.

### 20 Years Ago - Mar. 9, 1972 AREA SCOUTS GAIN THE EAGLE RANK

In a surprise move last Thursday night, Harveys Lake Borough Council voted unanimously to abolish the community's planning commission and establish in its place a planning committee comprised of three councilmen, and a five member citizen advisory board. The planning commission consisted of seven Harveys Lake residents, chaired by Joe Schappert.

An additional \$102,000 has been approved by Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for the proposed construction of a swimming pool at Frances Slocum State Park, Kingston Township. This brings total construction cost to \$370,000.

Highlanders of College Misericordia lost to Kutztown 32-31 and LCCC Minute Maids 42-40.

David Casselberry, Jack B. Cobleigh, Bill Dierolf, Dave Dierolf, Glen Kozemchak, Jeff McDonald, Earl W. Phillips, David Shelby III and Brett S. Slocum will receive the Eagle Award, highest award in scouting at Dallas Troop 281 Eagle Court of Honor and Awards Dinner to be held at the Dallas Senior High School, March 9.

Back Mountain wrestling fans saw their hopes for a District 2 championship fade as Lake-Lehman and Dallas lost out in semi-finals and finals last week at King's Gym in Wilkes-Barre.

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