

LUMBER BROKER - John Cleary in his office at the Back Mountain Professional Building where his business, Cleary Forest Products is headquartered. (Post Photo/Eric Foster)

John Cleary moves mountains of lumber from his desk here

By ERIC FOSTER
Post Staff

In each of the last two years, 20 million board feet of lumber have been sold over John Cleary's desk in the Back Mountain Professional Building off Route 309, Dallas.

And Cleary says those sales have all been done on a person's word. "You have to be absolutely honest. Most of the orders are shipped by the manufacturer and received by the customer before any paperwork is received," said Cleary, who describes himself as a lumber broker. "It's totally on a person's word."

So what is a lumber broker doing in the Back Mountain, hardly the logging capital of the world? And how does someone get into this business anyway?

For Cleary, it started after serving in the Army during the Vietnam War and graduating with a degree in economics. Cleary was looking for a job when he saw a recruiting brochure which promised \$35,000 a year — big money at the end of the 60s — and went to work for Lawrence R. McCoy, a small speculating firm in Maine.

Cleary, who grew up in Massachusetts and went to high school in upstate New York, lived in 14 different places before settling in the Back Mountain with his wife Marianne in 1971.

In those days, Cleary remembers the Back Mountain as being sparsely populated. He recalled going into a diner twice and the waiter saying he must be new in the area. For the next 10 years he commuted to work, sometimes on the West Coast as a lumber broker for various firms, including Merrill Lynch and another firm with its own mills, transportation, and warehouse facilities.

In 1981 he was offered the position of vice president with a differ-

ent company, but the job required a move to Boston.

The Clearys were attached to the Back Mountain, and so Cleary Forest Products was born.

Though he often puts in more than 40 hours a week, the business gives Cleary flexibility with his schedule to let him serve on the Dallas School Board and be active in community organizations, as well as to watch his daughter's field hockey games.

Today, with a branch office in Carrollton, Georgia, Cleary Forest Products works with about 150 different suppliers, and has about as many customers, selling to small chains, to some wholesalers, and to manufacturers.

"What we really trade on is a willingness to find out information and serve our customer," said Cleary.

While Cleary, and his most senior trader Frank Peterson with 35 years experience, trade in construction lumber like many other companies, unusual jobs are their specialty.

Finding a type of wood which can be used in making molds for aircraft windshields was one challenge. The difficulty: the mold is destroyed as the windshield is made, but the wood has to have a very high burning point.

Or finding the right kind of wood to use for a company which sheaths above-ground swimming pools in wood to make them look like barrels.

His customers also include Amish craftsmen who demand better quality wood.

"That fellow relies on me for continuity of supply, continuity of quality and continuity of price," said Cleary.

While the Pacific Northwest is most the familiar lumber producing area, Pennsylvania also has a lumber industry.

"We do have magnificent hardwood forests, oak and cherry being harvested which were planted between the turn of the century and World War II. This area has some of the finest hemlock I've seen," said Cleary, who also sells hemlock from Oregon, Maine and Canada. Though not as strong as Douglas Fir, Hemlock is much stronger than spruce and doesn't shrink or twist. Many old barns are sheathed in Hemlock.

Working in the lumber industry also gives Cleary an intimate view of current environmental controversies — like the spotted owl in the Pacific Northwest, or clear-cutting.

For every pair of mating spotted owls, the government has set aside 200 hundred acres of forest that can't be touched, said Cleary. With 40% of timber from the West Coast coming from federal lands, the cost of some wood has recently increased about 150%.

Western logging towns are affected more directly.

"You're talking about places where there's 30% to 40% unemployment. There's no work, there's no money. All of the requirements for mills to reduce emissions, I'm willing to pay for that," said Cleary, who wonders where to draw the line on environmental protection.

"There's a big controversy about clear cutting," said Cleary, but "Douglas Fir has to grow from a clear cut. Were there abuses? Certainly there were. All you have to do is look at those photographs at the turn of the century."

Today, Cleary says the standard story is that lumber companies plant two trees for every one cut. In reality they do more than that, often planting three or four, he said. "Would you expect a farmer who cut down his corn not to replant it?" Cleary asked.

mation on the district's proposed 1992-93 maintenance budget.

A maintenance budget is a way of letting the taxpayers know how much it will cost the district to operate the schools while maintaining all present programs. The board will not answer questions from the public at this time.

The taxpayers group plans to discuss any proposed millage increases and their effect on homeowners, particularly those living

on fixed incomes, within the district.



Speed lowered on Weavertown Rd. Jackson Township soil cleanup completed

By GRACE R. DOVE
Post Staff

The Jackson Township supervisors unanimously passed an ordinance lowering the speed limit on Weavertown Road to 25 mph and the gross vehicle weight to 10 tons between Mountain Road and the Plymouth Township line at their regular meeting Monday, April 6.

Supervisor Walter Glogowski explained that the ordinance was enacted because of numerous complaints of speeding and road deterioration from property owners along the winding road.

Supervisor Joe Stager reported that he expects all contaminated soil to be removed from the new municipal building site by Wednesday, April 8. Secretary Zbiek was authorized to pay the contractor when the work is completed and the township receives itemized bills for it.

The supervisors instructed solicitor Blythe Evans to contact DER to find out if a fuel tank on an adjoining property contributed to the contamination by leaking onto township property, so that the owner can be contacted and asked to remove it.

Approximately 12-18 feet of the

tank lie across the property line, on township property.

Stager said that the neighboring property may be owned by LaSalle Oil Company of Dunmore.

Evans will also find out if the tank's owner might be liable for part of the cleanup cost.

In other business, township secretary Henry Zbiek was authorized to obtain price quotations for workmen's compensation insurance from insurance carriers. The township's present contract with Erie Insurance for workmen's compensation expires May 9 and the township's independent insurance agent does not wish to renew it because he does not deal with Erie any longer.

H. R. Thompson Insurance had offered to provide this insurance to the township through State Workmen's Insurance Fund for \$15,683, which the supervisors felt is too expensive.

The supervisors also reported on the status of the construction of the pumphouse and ten-inch water line to Chase Prison. Work has stopped on the pumphouse because the zoning officer found that it did not have the required 32-foot setback from the road.

Attorney Evans added that the state can continue construction on the pumphouse if it obtains an exemption from local zoning ordinances from the Public Utilities Commission (PUC). If an application for this exemption is made, the public will be able to offer comments to the PUC before it is acted on.

At the recommendation of Chief of Police Don Jones, Patrolman Kasper was placed on salary, at \$5,750 per year for an unspecified number of on-call hours.

The following dates and events were announced:

• Monday, April 27: The supervisors will hold a work session at 7:30 p.m. at the fire hall.

• Monday, May 4, at 7:30 p.m.: Supervisors will meet in the fire hall.

• Saturday, May 9, at 11 a.m.: The prison will test its sirens.

• Monday, June 1 at 7 p.m.: Hearings soliciting comments from committees and the public about renewing the agricultural security area program for another seven years will be held before the supervisors' regular meeting. To date 50 landowners are interested in renewing it.

DAMA lawsuit nears first hurdle

By ERIC FOSTER
Post Staff

The lawsuit filed against the Dallas Area Municipal Authority (DAMA) and three municipalities for entering into an exclusive garbage hauling pact will face its first hurdle April 30.

The suit was filed in September of 1991 by Searles Sanitation and C&K Sanitation and Dave's Sanitation, names Dallas Borough, Dallas Township, and Kingston Township as defendants. Dave's Sanitation withdrew in December of 1991.

Judge Gifford Cappellini is scheduled to hear oral arguments from Attorney Benjamin Jones III, representing DAMA, and Attorney Phil Medico, representing the haulers.

The oral arguments will be based on a preliminary objection that Jones filed in response to the suit, and Medico's response to those

objections.

At the hearing, Judge Cappellini may decide that the lawsuit does not merit further consideration, and drop it. If Cappellini decides that the suit should continue, it will go before a jury to decide.

Even though Judge Cappellini's son, Attorney Gifford Cappellini Jr. was involved in protesting DAMA's garbage hauling plan during the summer of 1991, to the point of discussing filing a class action lawsuit against DAMA, Jones feels that Judge Cappellini will give a fair hearing.

"I don't feel there is a conflict of interest," said Jones. "Although in the minds of some people there is an appearance of impropriety, I think he's too big a man to be influenced by what his son did over the summer."

The haulers allege that the contract the three municipalities and DAMA made with one hauler,

Danella Environmental Technologies, is unconstitutional because it interferes with their right to make and keep contracts, effectively taking property from them, in the form of business, without the due process of law.

Jones argues that the state Legislature has given municipalities the power to make exclusive contracts.

The lawsuit has five counts, each asking for compensatory damages in excess of \$20,000. Suits which ask for less than \$20,000 are not eligible to go to trial, but go through arbitration instead. If the suit makes it to a jury, the jury will decide any actual damages.

The hearing is scheduled for 2 p.m. on April 30 in Courtroom 4. Both Jones and Judge Cappellini's secretary said the court would be open to the public during the oral arguments.

Lake study held up by lack of signatures

The long-planned study of Harveys Lake coordinated by the borough's Environmental Advisory Council is expected to start in the next several months.

Among the issues that prompted the Environmental Advisory Council to seek a study of the lake, are the blooms of blue-green algae, or cyanobacteria, that have grown on the surface of the lake in some summers. The cyanobacteria prevents people from using the lake for swimming and other recreational activities.

Councilman David Abod, chairman of the environmental council, said that the study was delayed about eight weeks because the state's Department of Environmental Resources originally wanted only the environmental council's signatures on the contracts for the study, but later changed its position and wanted borough council to sign the contracts.

The contract with DER now has

been signed and sent back to the agency. The borough now waits for DER's response, said Abod.

"I don't think they're familiar with environmental councils," said Abod. "I think we're fairly unique."

Abod said the study may now start in July or August.

Harveys Lake will receive a \$49,000 grant from the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to conduct a study of the lake. The total cost of the 18-month study will be \$70,000. The federal funding is part of a 70/30 matching grant from the EPA. The bor-

ough will meet its contribution towards the grant with donated labor from volunteers of the borough's Environmental Advisory Council valued at \$8,000, and

Wilkes University will donate laboratory work valued at \$5,000. The final portion of the costs will be provided by an \$8,000 grant from the state's Department of Environmental Resources.

Among the things that it will examine are the amount of nutrients, sediment, and pollution which are finding their way into the lake.

Lake-Lehman taxpayers to meet April 9 in the high school

By GRACE R. DOVE
Post Staff

The Lake-Lehman Taxpayers Association will meet Thursday, April 9, at 7:30 p.m. in room 86 of the high school.

According to a spokesperson for the group, the planned agenda will include election of officers and a

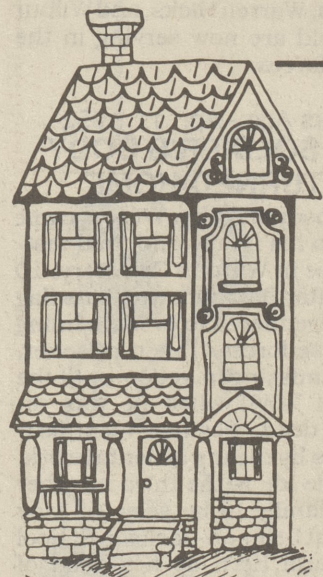
discussion of the school board's special purposes meeting slated

for Tuesday, April 7, which is expected to include general infor-

mation on the district's proposed 1992-93 maintenance budget.

A maintenance budget is a way of letting the taxpayers know how much it will cost the district to operate the schools while maintaining all present programs. The board will not answer questions from the public at this time.

The taxpayers group plans to discuss any proposed millage increases and their effect on homeowners, particularly those living



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