

THE DALLAS POST

EDITORIALS

Pay attention to school budgets

By the time you read this, it's likely that the Dallas and Lake-Lehman school districts may have released the first drafts of their budgets for the 1992-93 school year. If past practice holds true, the figures will be a stalking horse from which expenses will be whittled away until the final plan emerges.

Coming on the heels of long and difficult contract negotiations in Dallas, this year's budgets are likely to come under greater scrutiny than past ones. There's nothing wrong with that, as long as extremists on either end of budget arguments don't gain the upper hand. Indiscriminate cuts are no more sensible than promiscuous spending.

School boards face difficult challenges this year, as state subsidies shrink and expectations rise. It is incumbent on those who will pay the bills to follow the process with enough interest to understand the compromises that must inevitably be made. And, in the end, school board members have far less flexibility than we might hope, since three-quarters or more of the budget is for salaries and benefits subject to contract.

School boards have until the end of May to put together a budget proposal. Then it must be available for inspection for 30 days before final adoption at the end of June. In the meantime, budget meetings are open to the public, many of whom we hope will attend.

Good growth for the Back Mountain

Shopping center expansion. More restaurants. Big-time musical acts at Harveys Lake. The Back Mountain is coming alive this spring, and the signs are all around.

Along Route 309, the Dallas Shopping Center is celebrating a "grand re-opening," as new and expanded stores have nearly filled a completely spruced-up shopping area. Across the street, the opening of a Japanese restaurant is just weeks away, while down on old Main Street a former bar is being renovated into a sprightly pizza restaurant. Why, the Back Mountain is becoming a veritable gourmet paradise! Elsewhere businesses of many types are opening and expanding.

These are good indicators for the economic future of the region, and they're also pretty attractive. That's a good sign; esthetics haven't been a high priority for some businesses and homeowners and the result in some areas has been visual chaos and ugliness.

Of course, there's little assurance that concern for appearance will be a permanent condition; we can just hope that customers reward businesses that have invested time and money to raise their standards.

Government must learn to work better

Today's America may be remembered as the society that screamed the loudest in protest of the lowest taxes in the industrialized world. Does that mean that we're unrealistic in our expectations or that we simply don't care much about the general good as long as we get to keep our pile? Perhaps neither.

It is true that we pay a lower percentage of our income to taxes than do citizens of other nations. It's also true that a much greater percentage of our taxes pays for the military, leaving less for social needs. Even so, it may not be how much we pay that galls as much as how little we seem to get for it. The litany of our shortfalls is long and discouraging; inadequate education, crumbling roads, decrepit public buildings, shrinking social services and more.

Surely some of these deficiencies are the result of too little funding, but it's become more and more obvious that much is because our public (and many private) institutions just don't work very well. Too much time, effort and money is being spent in nonproductive activities to justify salaries while too little is devoted to actually accomplishing something.

Would Americans support the current level of taxation — or even more — if it meant clean streets, high educational achievement and affordable health care for everyone? No one knows the answer, but if government doesn't start delivering more bang for the buck, we will probably continue the downward spiral we're presently in.

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.

Waiting patiently for spring

Photo by Ron Bartizek

Letters

Cable TV manager says that rates aren't too high

Editor:

In response to the recent articles printed in your newspaper, I would like to express exception to the statement of Tele-Media taking advantage of its status as an unregulated monopoly.

A Bill now in Congress, SR-12, which received overwhelming support in the Senate warrants a closer look. Some of the repercussions of such a bill would be: limits on programming choices and quality of its programs and higher cable bills, due largely to the end of free broadcast signals.

Prior to the Cable Act of 1984, which deregulated the cable industry, rates were kept artificially low never capable of following the inflationary rate. Tele-Media Company since acquiring the cable system in the Back Mountain Area in 1986, has invested 2.5 million dollars into upgrading, rebuilding, and expansion of its cable plant. Additionally we have spent an average of 1.3 million dollars each year in general operating expenses just to maintain the cable plant

and provide the quality customer service that our subscribers are presently receiving. Additionally the cable industry as a whole has invested 16.6 billion dollars into creating and improving its programming. Passage of SR 12 would remove the incentive for the cable industry to continue to make such investments.

The Senate Bill also includes room for elimination of free retransmission of Network programming. Presently cable companies are required to pay copyright fees for these signals in excess of 25 percent of total programming fees. In addition to the present fee, cable companies would be forced to pay the Broadcast Networks up to 3 billion dollars each year. This would ultimately raise cable fees to subscribers without anything new in return.

To emphasize the quality and variety of programming our subscribers presently receive as compared to the limited selection and substandard service prior to our acquisition in 1986, a reference

should be made to cost per channel per month. In 1986 basic service was \$7.50 for 12 channels or \$.63 per channel and basic plus package cost \$12.45 for 17 channels or \$.74 per channel. In 1992 basic provides 31 channels for \$18.50 or \$.60 per channel.

If one compares the entertainment and education value that is now being provided for the \$18.50 rate to that of the services necessary to sustain life such as trash removal and water rates in the area, cable television is truly a bargain for our subscribers. Being a Back Mountain resident myself I am befuddled that Kingston Township would even mention a 12% increase in our basic package. In the past year they have passed a resolution that resulted in my personal trash removal service to have over a 60% increase. In addition some of the latest blunders include but are not limited to easing local zoning ordinance and allowing a liquor license to create treacherous driving conditions to what was already the busiest in-

tersection in the township. Allowing water rate increases even though the quality is so poor that it is unacceptable to consume and discolors clothing. Allowing the local water and gas companies to destroy my Kingston Township road with such poor restoration that driving has become unsafe. For these reasons amongst others, I as local resident would not like to see this governing body have any more burden placed upon them in the regulatory capacity.

Cable Television has changed the entire course of events in the entertainment industry. The fantastic development in technology and innovative programming are proof of a promising future. Local politicians and Congress should allow the competitive marketplace created in this democracy, time to change the problems that still remain in the cable industry. This is the only to continue its growth.

Donald E. Zagorski
District Manager
Tele-Media Co.
Kingston Township Resident

Only yesterday

60 Years Ago - Apr. 8, 1932
KINGSTON TWP. PLANS
NEW HIGH SCHOOL

In accordance with plans and specifications of Mack & Sahn, architects, and the Kashenbach plot accepted, the Kingston Township School Board passed a resolution to advertise for bids on the proposed new high school building.

George A. Aughterton, Fernbrook, former vice president of Dime Bank Title & Trust Co. of Wilkes Barre, has been notified of his appointment to a position with the Reconstruction Finance Corp. in Washington as examiner to act upon applications from banks and other business enterprises seeking aid from the reconstruction bureau.

Engaged - Barbara Hofmeister to Kenneth Oliver.

"Hell Divers" starring Wallace Beery now playing at the Himmler Theatre.

50 Years Ago - Apr. 10, 1942
FIVE FORMER DALLAS
POST EMPLOYEES
SERVE IN THE MILITARY

In appreciation for the interest and cooperation of their most outstanding patron, members of the Dallas Borough High School Band will initiate Joseph H. MacVeigh as an honorary member, preceding their annual con-

cert on Friday at the school auditorium.

The patriotic motif is behind a sanction match of Luzerne County Kennel Club to be held April 19 at Kingston Armory. Proceeds will be used to purchase athletic equipment for the 109th Field Artillery, Luzerne County's own regiment now in active service.

Local air wardens prepared this week for a house-to-house canvas throughout the Back Mountain to promote the sale of war bonds and stamps for the "Pledge for Victory" campaign.

Five former Dallas Post employees, Norman Rosnick, Alan Kistler, Al Davis, Warren Hicks, and Wilbur Helmbold are now serving in the armed forces.

40 Years Ago - Apr. 11, 1952
WWII SOLDIER'S BODY
IS RETURNED HOME

The body of Walter Wilson, came home to his family and final resting place in Warden Cemetery, 10 years after Bataan lowered its flag and surrendered to overwhelming Japanese forces. Taken prisoner, he was missing in action until the close of WWII when he was reported dead. Positive identification was by means of dental work.

Goldie Ide is the third member of her family to be selected May Queen at Lehman-Jackson School with Carol Kern as her Maid of Honor.

One hundred twenty five members of the band and athletic teams will enjoy their annual dinner in the dining room of Dallas Township school with women of the PTA serving. A program in the auditorium will follow with a movie and dancing.

Bloodmobile Day at Dallas Borough School netted the Red Cross Blood Bank, 75 pints of blood.

30 Years Ago - Apr. 12, 1962
'LOVER COME BACK'
PLAYS AT THE DRIVE-IN

Key Club of Dallas Senior High School escaped a tunnel tragedy returning home from a Pittsburgh Key Club Convention, heard a violent explosion, one minute after they had safely passed through the tunnel of Tuscarora Mountain and were parking at the Howard Johnson Restaurant on the Pennsylvania Turnpike.

Residents of Dallas are urged to participate April 19 in a nationwide demonstration of patriotism and natural unity to be proclaimed by the ringing of bells, by Commander Ed Buckley of American Legion Post 672.

Library Auction Kick-Off Dinner, May 3 at the Country Club will have a 40 inch Hot Point electric range, courtesy of UGI shortly on display at Back Mountain Lumber as a door prize.

Traditional Easter Sunrise services will take place Easter morning

at 6 a.m. at the Dallas Outdoor Theatre staged for the seventh year by members of Dallas United Methodist Church with cooperation of the new management.

"Lover Come Back," starring Rock Hudson and Doris Day starts Friday at the Dallas Drive-In Theatre.

20 Years Ago - Apr. 13, 1972
SEWERS BLAMED FOR
BASEMENT FLOODING

Officers of the Dr. Henry M. Laing Fire Co. met in executive session recently to discuss enforcement of Dallas Borough and Township ordinances pertaining to out-of-door fires. Community firefighters realized that virtually all of the recent blazes to which they have been called have resulted from careless burning by area residents.

Flooded basements at the homes of Mrs. Jack Barbose and Mrs. Carl Brobst, who had no problem previously, were blamed on a trench dug for sewer construction.

Engaged - Sharon Martz to David F. Lacy; Katherine Ann Faerber to Joseph R. Congleski.

Wed - Ellen Jane Harris to Wayne Hughes.

All boys 9-12, interested in trying out for Dallas Little League teams should report to the Little League field Saturday. A second sign up for Teener baseball for boys of the Dallas Area will be Saturday at the Dallas Intermediate School.

Sweet Valley Ambulance begins membership drive

Sweet Valley Ambulance Association will launch its 1992 Annual Membership Drive later this week.

Sweet Valley Ambulance Association provides emergency medical services to the residents to the greater Sweet Valley area.

As in prior years, the membership drive is being conducted by mail. Members of the ambulance are preparing over 1600 information packets which will be sent to every household and business.

In an effort to keep costs of

memberships to a minimum, Sweet Valley Ambulance Association will implement a third party billing program. The third party billing program provides reimbursement to the ambulance association for services rendered to patients. In some cases, insurance companies and Medicare may reimburse some portion of the services provided by the ambulance.

"Sweet Valley Ambulance Association urges everyone to become a member even if you presently have Medicare or another health insur-

ance plan. Since all services are not reimbursable, if no one subscribed to the annual membership drive, very shortly there would be no funding to cover operating expenses and updating of equipment," said Alice Walsh, Membership Drive Chairperson.

"Secondly, there are certain services your health insurance company your insurance company may not cover. As a member, you will not be billed any additional charges. Non-members will be

billed accordingly for services rendered, averaging about \$150 per call," noted Mrs. Walsh.

"Sweet Valley Ambulance Association stands ready to serve the people of the greater Sweet Valley area with quality pre-hospital care. In 1991, they responded over 300 times," she said. "We don't ask for much...just your financial support, so we can continue to provide you with the service you've grown accustomed to."

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