

THE DALLAS POST

EDITORIALS

Peer helpers show what today's young people are made of

This week's story about the peer helpers at Dallas High School refutes the notion that today's young people are helplessly irresponsible and ill-prepared for the life that awaits them upon graduation. The young people involved in this program and a similar one at Lake-Lehman are reaching out to aid classmates who need help with school or personal problems. But first, they are being trained to know what to look for and how to respond.

This is considerably different behavior than we've been led to expect from the stereotypical teen-ager who is supposed to be more concerned with the cost of sneakers than the emotional health of his or her friends. And these young people are not confronting minor problems; in some cases they counsel peers who live with abusive parents or who have become dependent on drugs or alcohol. That's strong stuff, and no place for someone whose commitment is tenuous.

In their work, peer helpers are themselves gaining confidence and skills that will prove useful later. The experience they gain now will make them better friends, partners and parents for the rest of their lives. They are to be commended and encouraged in their efforts.

It's time to make sense of school year

Students and parents are making plans for the end of another school year, as our annual ritual of the long summer vacation approaches. But some people are questioning the practice of closing schools down for three or more months at a stretch, both from an economic and educational standpoint. The summer vacation is a vestige of America's agricultural past, when all hands were needed during planting and harvest time. There are sections of the country where school schedules still revolve around outside work. In the potato-growing areas of Maine, for instance, schools shut down for three weeks in October so that everyone can pick the potatoes before they rot in the ground. But, by and large, extended vacations are now more disruptive than helpful both for students and their families.

There has been some experimentation with more rational schedules, but so far little serious commitment to widespread reform. That's a shame, because year-round school with rationally placed vacations offers real benefits. It could:

- Improve learning, because students wouldn't have to spend several weeks going over material that has been forgotten during a long layoff.
- Increase economic efficiency because school buildings could be used more when heating costs are low or nonexistent. Creative scheduling could also accommodate more children in smaller buildings.
- Take a burden off parents who must arrange and often pay for child care during the summer months. The present schedule is especially hard on families in which both parents work.

There has been a lot of talk about reforming education lately, at precious little action. Maybe it's time to take a truly fresh approach to everything our schools do and not just tinker around the edges. Rearranging and lengthening the time students spend in class would be a good first step.

Talk show host's pride, not rights, are harmed

Talk show host Fred Williams is outraged that William Wagner, the head of the Dallas teachers' union, wants sponsors to pull their ads from his program. Williams says the great is tantamount to censorship and infringes on his free speech rights. But like beauty, the offense in this case is in the eye of the beholder.

For his part, Wagner says he and his union are just exercising their legitimate right to trade with whomever they choose, and to use economic leverage to make their point.

Despite the radio personality's hyperbole, he is incorrect in his assertion that the teachers' threat somehow diminishes his rights. He has the right to say what he likes on his show and listeners have the right to agree or not, and to patronize or avoid the show's advertisers. In his overdrawn defense, Williams has confused his self-interest with Constitutional rights, which have no bearing in this case. If he wants to devote most of two hours to this minor offense against his pride, that is his prerogative; listeners and advertisers will decide independently whether or not that's a good use of air 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 your 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, but will consider withholding names when appropriate. We reserve the right to edit for length and grammar, but will call the author if we think editing may change meaning.



Sign of spring...finally

Photo by Charlotte Bartizek

Letters

Proposed zoning code could open Dallas Borough to development

Editor: In the April 15 issue of The Dallas Post, an obscure Legal Notice announced that on April 21, the Dallas Borough Council would hold its "first reading" of a newly proposed zoning ordinance.

Apparently, most residents missed the item, because almost no one showed up except a few members of the Dallas Borough Preservation Association. Predictably, the proposed zoning ordinance was passed without comment and only one Council member voting no. The Council President announced that a second reading would be held at the next meeting and presumably the proposed ordinance will then be passed.

I find it hard to believe that the members of the Council can be very familiar with the obscure, contradictory and obtuse provisions of this 116-page ordinance proposal. It is as complex and shrewd a document as any ever contrived by a "Philadelphia lawyer". (I'll guess that no one on Council actually read it!)

Those familiar with Inland Marine insurance policies know that those policies begin by stating that they insure the policyholder against all hazards and conditions. Then a long list of exceptions are attached which, in fact, reveal that only very limited coverages are provided. (The big print gives it to you, the little print takes it away!)

The proposed zoning ordinance is similar in some respects. It purports to be a comprehensive ordinance covering many different contingencies and possibilities which, in fact, it does. But, it seems apparent that, hidden in all the "gobbledygook", is a sneaky little program for massive and intensive development of a sizable chunk of the Borough's existing "Conservation District".

Dallas Borough presently contains some large undeveloped wooded tracts presently zoned "Conservation". Under this classification housing may not be built on less than a 2-acre plot. According to the proposed ordinance: "The purpose of this District is to protect hilly areas, steep watershed areas along the reservoir and streams, and areas of rugged terrain from intensive development which would significantly change the natural character of the land so as to help prevent public access and expensive public services and maintenance."

Presently, utilization of Conser-

vation District land is controlled by requiring "special exceptions" for development—a lengthy, cumbersome process which gives many different interests an opportunity to voice objections.

Under the newly proposed ordinance an easier and simpler method called: "Conditional Use" would bypass the interests of adjacent landowners and streamline the approval process for would-be developers: Article 7—Conditional Uses states: "The purpose of conditional use regulations is to permit certain uses in particular zones or districts when the conditions described for each use have been fulfilled as determined by the Council upon recommendation of the Dallas Borough Planning Commission."

There is a lot of "boilerplate" in Article Seven which piously proclaims a lot of noble objectives. But tucked away in Section 704 is a neat little plan for something called "Planned Residential Development in Conservation Districts". This development scheme apparently embraces an existing 50-acre (possibly more) tract having a mean width of 500 ft.

The proposed uses to be allowed in this particular piece of former Conservation District land "shall be single-family dwellings, two-family dwellings, and multiple family dwellings, as well as customary accessory uses public and semi-public uses, and recreational facilities for the use of residents of the Planned Residential Development."

"Parking areas: No more than 15 parking spaces shall be permitted in a continuous row without being interrupted by approved landscaping. Access aisles shall be at least 20 ft. wide. Parking shall be arranged so as to prevent through-traffic to other parking areas. All off-street parking shall be adequately lighted and all such lighting shall be arranged so as to direct light away from adjoining residences."

The density "shall not exceed the number of housing units permitted in the Conservation District." (supposedly 2 acres per house.)

But (note this) with reference to "Pedestrian Walks"—"Residential clusters having a density of five homes per net acre shall have paved pedestrian walks on one or both sides of the street".

And (note further) with reference to "Staging of Development" "At least 15% of development must occur in the first phase," and "At no time may the density of any phase be greater than 5 dwelling units per net acre in the area covered by that phase."

In conclusion, I may have read this proposed ordinance all wrong. But it looks to me like some developer has very big plans for Dallas Borough and is trying to sneak in the back door under the pretext of updating our antiquated zoning ordinance. Neat! What do you think?

Hugh P. King
Dallas

Game Commission has wild plant seeds and seedlings for sale

A Planting for Wildlife Program will be offered by the Pennsylvania Game Commission to benefit all types of wildlife. Wildlife Conservation Officers and numerous sportsmen's organizations have joined together and will offer to the public a specially selected packet of seedlings and a wildlife food plot seed packet.

The packet of seedlings will contain three each of the following species: Washington Hawthorne, American Bittersweet, White Spruce, Callery Pear and Eastern White Pine. Each packet will sell for \$2. An information leaflet will be included describing the seedlings, instructions for planting and care of seedlings.

Game Commission officials will

be offering for sale, wildlife food plot seed packets. This packet consists of a 10 pound mixture of assorted seeds which are recommended for wildlife food. The mixture includes Dwarf Grain Sorghum, Proso Millet, Buckwheat and Dwarf Sunflower. Each packet will plant one third to one half acre of wildlife food plot. Brochures will be available explaining planting instructions. Each packet will sell for \$3.

This program is being offered to benefit wildlife and good soil conservation.

The packets are available at the Game Commission, Northeast Region Office, Rt. 415 at 118, Dallas on May 8, 100 packets starting at 8 a.m.

Only yesterday

60 Years Ago - Apr. 29, 1932 DALLAS DOCTOR SUPERVISES CAMPAIGN AGAINST DIPHTHERIA

A campaign against diphtheria under the supervision of Dr. G.K. Swartz of Dallas will be held May 3 when toxin-antitoxin will be administered to all children 6 months and 10 years whose parents wish it. All children who apply must bring consent slips from their parents.

"Broken Lullaby" starring Nancy Carroll now playing at the Himmler Theatre."

50 Years Ago - May 1, 1942 LUNDY PURCHASES BUILDING FOR SHOPS AND APARTMENTS

Herbert Lundy, Dallas Township Tax Collector and partner in the Lundy Electric Co. of Wilkes-Barre, purchased the Main Street building owned by John L. Sullivan. The two-story stucco building will be completely renovated to house three stores, a tavern and three second floor apartments, of 4, 5 and 6 rooms each.

A four day sugar registration will begin Monday. Local schools will run on 1/2 day schedules and over 100 teachers and volunteer clerks will work long hours to register this region's 2,500 families.

Mr. and Mrs. John Mericals will celebrate their 65th wedding anniversary on May 6, with open house from 2-5 and 7-9.

Rev. Austin L. Prynn, pastor of First Methodist Church of Pittston will replace Rev. Francis Freeman, pastor of Dallas Methodist Church, who will assume the pulpit of First Methodist Church, Carey Avenue, Wilkes-Barre, it was announced by Bishop Adna W. Leonard as the Wyoming Methodist Conclave at Wilkes-Barre came to an end.

40 Years Ago - May 2, 1952 COMPANIES SCOUT FOR OIL IN THE BACK MOUNTAIN

Petty Officer 3rd Class, George Edward Swan Jr., son of Mr. and Mrs. George E. Swan, Ridge Street, Shavertown, was lost at sea Saturday night when the USS Destroyer Hobson was rammed and sunk by USS Aircraft Carrier WASP.

Representatives of two prospecting companies have been interviewing land owners of Lehman, Jackson, Lake, Ross, Hunlock, Union, Franklin, Exeter and Dallas Townships and Dallas Borough for gas and oil leases. So far representatives of both groups have been loathe to say what leads them to believe gas or oil lies beneath the surface between Benton and the other side of the Susquehanna at Ransom.

Wed - Shirley Anthony to David Sutton; Sally Marie Roberts to Samuel T. Brown.

30 Years Ago - May 3, 1962 SHAVERTOWN POST OFFICE IS DEDICATED

Formal dedication of Shavertown Post Office is scheduled for Saturday, at 11:30 a.m. when Leroy Ziegler, Kingston Township supervisor will receive the building on behalf of the area. The Hon. Daniel Flood is the announced speaker, of the day sharing the occasion with Arthur A. Mattern, Delivery Services Officer, Philadelphia, Regional P.O. Department.

Lake-Lehman joint schools will offer kindergarten courses in September one unit at each of the two main schools in the jointure, Lehman Elementary and Lake Elementary. Transportation will fall upon parents who will be asked to make their own arrangements perhaps by car-pool. Bus service cannot be furnished by the school system.

Stephen R. Pavlick, Dallas veteran of World War II and Korean Conflict has been appointed Red Cross Field Director for Athens going to Greece from Augsburg, Germany. He has been with the Red Cross 5 years.

20 Years Ago - May 4, 1972 LAKE-LEHMAN BAND TRIP CANCELLED DUE TO RACIAL PROBLEMS

Principal Tony Marchakitus announced that plans for the Knights to attend the annual Maryland State Band Festival Parade of Champions had been scotched following receipt of a letter from Edward Proudfoot Jr. festival chairman that the parade had been cancelled "due to racial problems and lack of adult support and financial aspects."

"Pollack Night" held last week by American Legion Home Association Post 672, Dallas was a tremendous success. Members were pleased with the crowd that attended the dinner and festivities. The committee thanks the community for their interest and the Dallas Post for their coverage of the affair.

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