

THE DALLAS POST

EDITORIALS

For July 4th, words of wisdom from the Founding Fathers

"I must study politics and war that my sons may have liberty to study mathematics and philosophy. My sons ought to study mathematics and philosophy, geography, natural history, naval architecture, navigation, commerce, and agriculture, in order to give their children the right to study painting, poetry, music, architecture, statuary, tapestry and porcelain."

John Adams, in a letter to Abigail Adams, May 12, 1780

In this 206th year of the Republic, it may be useful to look back at our beginnings and to the hope that the founders held for the people of the new United States of America. We can ask ourselves how well we've done, and what we are now doing to advance our society toward the goals they set for us.

In 10 generations, we seem to have come about half the way John Adams hoped we would advance in three. He surely was being overly optimistic while ignoring the fact that not everyone shared his opinion of progress.

In an earlier writing, in 1776, he had offered a more universal thought:

"The happiness of society is the end of government."

But happiness in 1992 is harder to define and achieve than it was in the 18th century. We have become a far more diverse — and in many ways divided — society than we were then.

On Adams' scale, we've far exceeded expectations in war and commerce, becoming the leader in both areas. The modern world has never before witnessed a nation with such overwhelming military superiority, made even more so by the collapse of the former Soviet Union. In principle, that is a frightening proposition, except that the United States also has been the least adventuresome major power in history. Even in our most ill-conceived forays, such as Vietnam and Panama, our ultimate aim has not been conquest but removing the threat of tyranny.

The nation's commercial success also is well documented, though lately it has shown signs of strain. Perhaps if our consumption more closely matched production, we would do even better. But building a nation on commerce is risky, as Thomas Jefferson wrote in 1814:

"Merchants have no country. The mere spot they stand on does not constitute so strong an attachment as that from which they draw their gains."

So what is left? Adams said it was the arts and higher culture, areas in which we still lag behind the great empires of the past. That may be more the result of our democratic government than of character flaws. Monarchs can direct a nation's treasury at their pleasure; for all its shortcomings, our system has prevented the wholesale use of public funds for private purposes.

Few subjects have more occupied America's citizens of late than education. Whether the topic is quality or cost, schools have been the subject of heated discussion from the White House to Main Street. Like all great men, Jefferson knew the importance of education. In 1816, he wrote:

"If a nation expects to be ignorant and free, in a state of civilization, it expects what never was and never will be."

If they could see us today, the founders surely would be amazed at much of our progress and dismayed by our failings. Perhaps most troubling would be the widening gulf between the governing and the governed, and the attendant lack of interest in politics as the route to a happy society. As the 1992 presidential race rushes along, it's not at all clear whether citizens, if they vote at all, will make an informed choice after thoroughly investigating each candidate's qualifications, or will cast a ballot depending on how they happen to feel on arising November 3.

Of equal concern might be the inequality with which the nation's material achievements have been distributed, as a political monarchy has been replaced by a commercial one while too many of our fellow citizens are locked in economic and spiritual despair. Listen to Jefferson again, writing in 1787.

"Experience declares that man is the only animal which devours his own kind; for I can apply no milder term to the governments of Europe, and to the general prey of the rich on the poor."

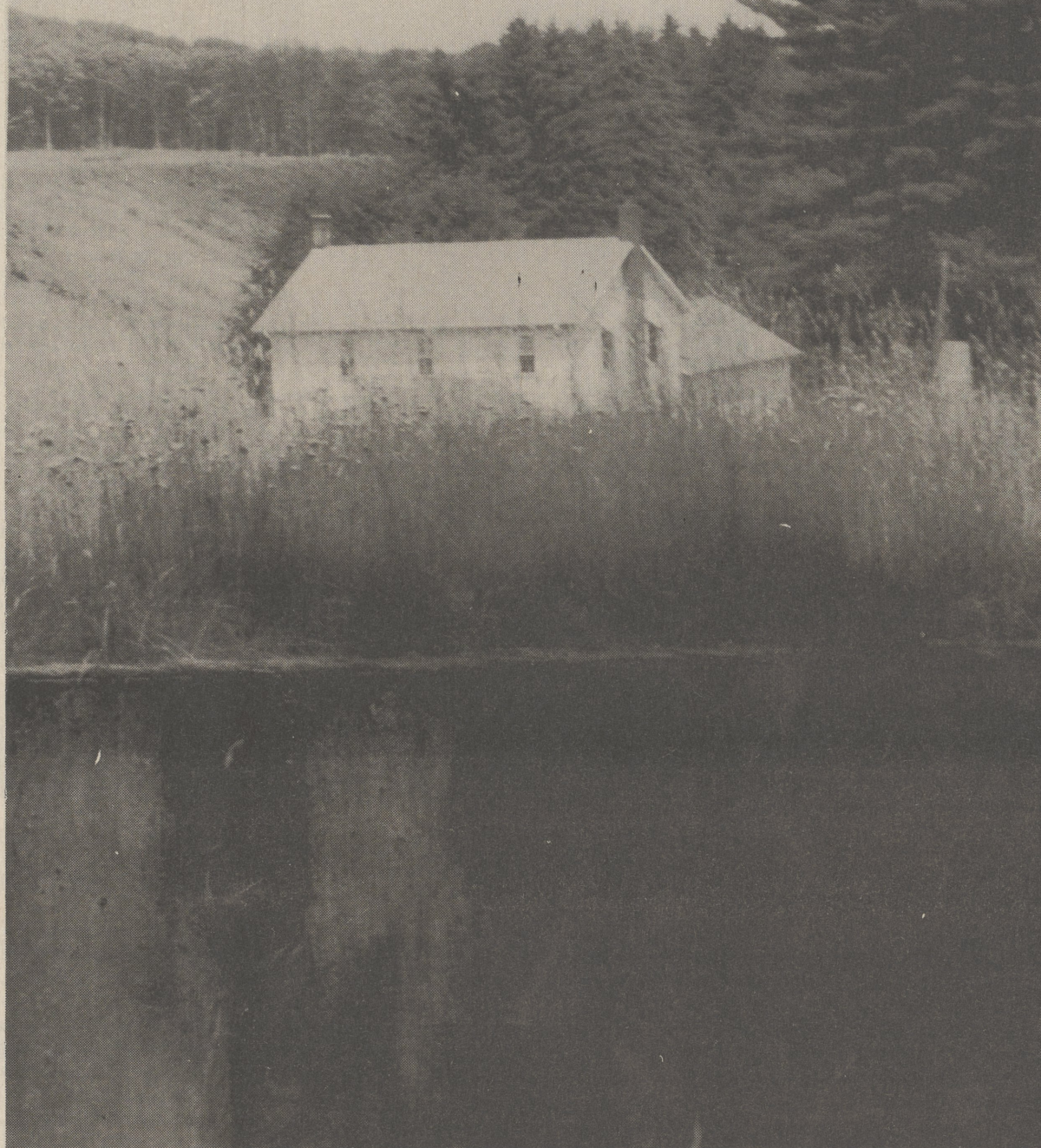
But it's likely the founders would be proud that for more than 200 years we have maintained a free society that still has the ability to change course.

"The basis of our political system is the right of the people to make and to alter their constitutions of government."

So spoke George Washington in his farewell address in 1796.

In this presidential election year, when the world's political landscape has been transformed, we the people still have the ability to choose governors to our liking. There is no better way for us to honor those who gave us our freedom than to accept the responsibility that came with that gift. Those who are in government can do so by exercising their power or doing their job diligently and with fairness. All of us can strive to stay informed of the issues of the day and to vote after carefully studying the candidates. Spouting off to a talk-show just won't do it.

Have a happy and safe Independence Day.



Overlooking the Ceasetown Reservoir

Photo by Charlotte Bartizek

Letters

Technically 'literate' isn't good enough

Editor:

In the June 24 issue of The Dallas Post, William Wagner questions the accuracy of those who decry the high level of illiteracy in Pennsylvania. He observes that, technically, "illiteracy" means an "inability to read and write." Surveys have shown that more than 85% of the adult population are, according to this definition, "literate".

However, because one can read and write, doesn't adequately measure one's ability to cope in today's world. One needs to be able

to acquire knowledge by reading—that is, one must comprehend, retain, reason, organize, and be able to draw conclusions as well. In this, our modern public educational system seems to be woefully weak. How weak?

On the editorial page, the June 9 issue of the Wall St. Journal published some questions taken from an 1885 entrance examination for admission to Jersey City High School. Ten questions in each of five fields included algebra, arithmetic, geography, grammar, and

U.S. history.

Bear in mind that this was an entrance examination to be given to grammar school students aspiring to high school. I wonder how many of today's local high school faculty members could pass a comparable test. As for our local grammar school graduates—forget it! They wouldn't even understand the questions...

We have come down a long way from June, 1885 haven't we?
Hugh P. King
Dallas

Library news

Amnesty Day for overdue books July 1

By NANCY KOZEMCHAK

The Back Mountain Memorial Library will hold an Amnesty Day on Wednesday, July 1 from 9:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. All overdue books will be welcomed back to the library with no overdue charge.

We would hope that many of our books that have been overdue for a long period of time will be returned on that day. We are most anxious to have these books returned so other patrons may borrow them. Books may be dropped into the outside bookdrops or brought into the library.

The Children's Auction will be held in conjunction with the 46th annual library auction on Saturday, July 11 from 10 till 1 p.m. The Boys Scouts of Troop 281, sponsored by Dallas Methodist church will conduct the auction for the children under the guidance of Scoutmaster, Tom O'Neill.

Connie Scott, general chairman, announced that an additional feature of the children's auction will

be the appearance of two special clowns.

"The Flood That Came to Grandma's House" by Linda Stalzone has been for sale at the library with a share of the proceeds to go to the library. Linda will be at the auction during the children's auction from 10 to 1 on Saturday, July 11 to sell copies of her book and sign them as well. She will also sign copies of books already purchased at another time during this time. A portion of each sale will go towards the library budget.

The Summer Reading Program began at the library on June 18. Children up to and including the 6th grade are eligible to join. The program is sponsored by the American Library Association and Sports Illustrated for Kids.

The Olympics are the theme for the program with a slogan of "Reach for it. READ!" There are different phases including Map to the Gold, Laurels and Legends, Hero Hurdles, Signs and symbols. Children are encouraged to come and

join the Olympic Reading Team. "Let the Games Begin!"

The Book Club of the library met on June 15 and announced that 214 members belong to the 1992 club, with \$1,950 in dues, which is used to purchase books for the Book Club shelf. The Book club will not meet again until the third Monday in September.

New books at the library: "Judgment Call" by Suzy Wellauffer is passionate, seductive, and desperately ambitious. These words describe beautiful, high-society reporter Sherry Estabrook and Manuel Velo, the mysterious teenage hit man for a powerful cocaine ring.

"City of Gold" by Len Deighton is a novel written in a heady atmosphere of social gaiety, explosive politics, black marketeering, and sudden violence. From the formal headquarters of British Intelligence through the streets of Cairo to bohemian soirées at the Hotel Magnifico, the story weaves into a tangle web of intrigue and reckless adventures.

Even small fireworks can be dangerous

Everyone looks forward to the most popular holiday of the summer—the Fourth of July. Carnivals, parades, family picnics, and yes, the holiday would not be complete without fireworks.

For many, this summer holiday will end in tragedy. The illegal misuse of fireworks can cause serious injury, including blindness and sometimes death. Tragic accidents like the one in which an 11-year old boy was blinded when a

homemade firecracker exploded in his face, leaving him with a charred face, no hair and eyelids are, unfortunately, common. It must be realized that fireworks, when used illegally, can become very dangerous weapons.

Sparklers, although legal and harmless looking burn at 1,800 degrees, leaving a steel core hot enough to sear flesh and set clothing on fire. Sparklers are responsible for numerous eye injuries

each year, especially when they are thrown in the air.

The Pennsylvania Fireworks Law prohibits the use of fireworks by individuals and the sale of fireworks containing any explosives of flammable compounds or any tablets or other devices containing any explosive substance. The sale and/or use of fireworks by unauthorized persons can result in punishment by fine, imprisonment, or both.

Only Yesterday

60 Years Ago - July 1, 1932 PERMIT ISSUED FOR LAKE TWP. BEACH

Long and Price, proprietors of Dallas Economy Store, Parrish Heights have announced that on and after July 1, they will inaugurate a strictly cash policy at their store. The store, will however, maintain its regular delivery service.

Dr. Theodore B. Appel, Secretary of Health issued a permit today to Margaret C. Turrell for operation of an existing Bathing Beach at Lake Township known as Blue Triangle Camp.

"The Crowd Roars" with James Cagney now playing at Himmler Theatre.

50 Years Ago - July 3, 1942 DALLAS TWP. MULLS PLAN TO COLLECT UNPAID TAXES

Richard Schultz, the only applicant for the position was elected Tuesday night by Dallas Borough School Board to teach health, physical education, civics and geography, and to coach girls basketball and boys baseball. The appointment is a temporary one to fill the vacancy left by Clarence LaBar who was granted a leave of absence when he was inducted into the U.S. Army.

Wed - Mabel A Rogers to Nile Hess.

Dallas Township auditors, school board and tax collector Herbert Lundy will meet to consider means of forcing the collection of unpaid occupational taxes.

40 Years Ago - July 4, 1952 LIBRARY SEEKS CANDY FOR AUCTION BOOTH

Kingston Township Veterans Association will hold a spaghetti supper July 26, at the Shavertown Fire Hall, with receipts going toward a fund to ease the shock of a recent fire which gutted the interior of the Burton Roberts home and destroyed most of the clothing.

Mrs. Frank Kovaletz, candy chairman announces the Library Auction needs homemade candy for its booth.

Dallas Woman's Club morale, celebrated the conclusion of its 1952 Spring season at a picnic supper and made plans for the fall season. Their first appearance will be October 14 at the Back Mountain Community Concert in Irem Temple.

Wed - Ruth Alice Bennett to Thomas Cook; Kathryn Sutton to William J. Geary; Ruth Dolores Shrey to Ed Williams.

Over 400 pounds of meat was promised to the hard working meat committee for the annual Back Mountain Library Auction by all Back Mountain Stores.

30 Years Ago - July 5, 1962 REV. PRATER ACCEPTS RECTORSHIP OF PRINCE OF PEACE

Rev. John S. Prater, vicar of Holy Apostles Church, St. Clair; St. Stephen's Church, Forrestville and St. Paul's, Minersville for the past four years accepted the rectorship of Prince of Peace Episcopal Church beginning September 1.

Surplus food will be distributed for the Back Mountain July 12, at Trucksville Fire Hall. Bring containers and proof of eligibility.

Apparently in excellent health, Mrs. Anne Elizabeth Young, 41, mother of 12 and wife of Dr. Jay Young, chairman of the Chemistry Department of King's College was stricken with a massive cerebral hemorrhage at her home. She was taken by ambulance immediately to the hospital where she passed away Friday afternoon.

20 Years Ago - July 6, 1972 AGNES FLOOD CLEAN-UP BEGINS

A massive Clean-Up begins in the valley with disaster relief agencies set up at Dallas Senior High School. Food stamps were distributed to flood victims, 26 mobile homes of an expected 350-400 began arriving at Frances Slocum State Park to help alleviate housing problems and residents were requested to curtail use of water in every possible way.

Nesbitt Hospital is continuing operations at Alumnae Hall, girls' dormitory at College Misericordia with an average of 95 bed patients under treatment.

Volunteers at Gate of Heaven, Dallas, Senior High and Lake-Lehman schools are doing a tremendous job of feeding and clothing hundreds of flood evacuees. Each day they prepare and serve three meals and sort clothing as it comes in.

Restoration of electric service to more than 19,000 UGI customers in Wyoming Valley is being handled on a priority basis for hospitals, telephone and water companies and other vital organizations as clean-up from the great flood continues.

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