

The Dallas Post

EDITORIALS

Eddie Turchin and the Christmas spirit

As Christmas approaches, hearts become lighter and we look forward to relaxing days spent with friends and family members, exchanging gifts and pleasantries.

But it won't be that way for all of us. There are too many Americans for whom the holiday season is a harsh reminder of their status outside the brightly decorated shops and homes, decent people who fell through the cracks of our society or perhaps sunk to their plight by abusing alcohol or drugs.

And then there will be families like the Turchins of Jackson Township. At this point, it appears that Bonnie and Ed Turchin will spend their holiday in a hotel room near the University of Pennsylvania Hospital. That's because their 18-year-old son, Eddie, is lying in one of the hospital's beds in critical condition, as he has been since October. Eddie has been in these battles before; he was diagnosed with a malignant tumor on his pituitary gland when he was eight, but recovered from a four hour operation and 30 heavy doses of radiation to become an Eagle Scout and graduate last year with his class at Lake-Lehman High School, overcoming a decade of related health problems.

Eddie's most recent troubles began just after graduation when doctors found an aneurism in a blood vessel leading to his brain. An operation on October 1 was followed in rapid succession by major complications that put Eddie in a coma for several weeks and took him to the brink of death more than once. Throughout, his family has been at his side, with both his parents taking time out from their jobs and his sister Pam interrupting her studies at Penn State to be with her brother.

Meanwhile, the folks back home have chipped in their time and money to raise funds to help the family meet the expense of living in a city 100 miles from home. Groups from churches to square dancers have pulled together to gather more than \$10,000 in donations. The money will be helpful. Far more comforting must be the knowledge that so many people care about a young man and his family.

Perhaps the most striking feature of Eddie Turchin's life is summed up in this entry in his high school yearbook. "I would like to help someone less fortunate than myself," he wrote. Would that more of us had that attitude this holiday season and always.

Gas tax should top Clinton's agenda

Rumor has it that President-elect Bill Clinton will recommend an increase in the tax on gasoline as part of his economic package. It's about time, if it's not too late.

Twenty years ago, oil producing countries dared us to become less dependent on them by taking away unlimited access to their product. We didn't learn, and six years later they did it again. We still didn't pay attention, with the result that today the United States depends on imports for a higher percentage of our petroleum than ever before. And gasoline is less expensive than it was 20 years ago.

Now, even the chairmen of Ford and Chrysler and a sprinkling of oil industry executives agree that gasoline is too cheap and leaving it so is harmful to our long-term economic health.

A higher gasoline tax has several benefits. It will raise large amounts of money that can be used to repair and expand mass transit, even as higher pump prices encourage greater use of buses and trains. Pricier gasoline will make high mileage cars more attractive and that will spur manufacturers to boost efficiency; without added regulations. And more efficient use of fossil fuels will make supplies last longer, while lowering pollution.

To be sure, people of modest means who must drive a lot will be harmed by higher prices, and there must be a tax credit or something similar to help them. That should be easily done.

But, how many of us know or remember that the federal tax on gasoline was raised 5¢ per gallon in 1990? Not many, and that's an indication of how much flexibility there is to raise it more as long as the money is put to good use.

About the opinion pages

The Dallas Post attempts to publish opinions on a variety of topics in many forms. Editorials, which are the opinion of the management of *The Post*, appear on the editorial page. Cartoons are the opinion of the cartoonist and columns are the opinion of the author. Neither necessarily reflects the viewpoint of *The Post*.

Letters to the editor are welcome and will be published subject to the following guidelines. Letters must not exceed 500 words. Except in unusual circumstances, no writer may have more than one letter published during a 30 day period. Letters must be signed and include the writer's home town and a telephone number for verification. Names will be withheld only if there exists a clear threat to the writer. *The Post* retains the right to accept or reject any letter and to edit letters as necessary without distorting their meaning.

In addition to letters to the editor, we welcome longer pieces that may be run as columns. The author or the subject's relevance to the Back Mountain will be our prime consideration when selecting material for publication.

To submit an item for publication, send it to: *The Dallas Post*, P.O. Box 366, Dallas, PA 18612, or bring it to our office.



Leslie Wetzel hits a high note during *Gate of Heaven* play. Photo by Charlotte Bartizek.

J.W.J.

Give thanks during this holiday season

By J.W. JOHNSON

It's Christmas. And recently overheard remarks have been distressing.

The first came from two young would-be hippies who, upon leaving a convenience store said, one looking to the other:

"So this is Thanksgiving...what do we have to be thankful for?"

"Not a (expletive deleted) thing," replied his companion.

And then there was the obviously well-fed—and that's because he was grossly obese—man whose first remark concerned deficit spending and something about World War II debt.

But he continued. And continued. And this king of negativity continued to spout negative rhetoric, covering a broad range of topics, but generally saying what a lousy country ours was in which to live.

The trouble with some of us (myself included) is that as we deal with the day-to-day frustrations, disappointments and bewilderments which besiege us in our modern world, we sometimes fail to find anything about this country for which to be grateful.

Perhaps it's because we sometimes stop looking.

What about the American economic system? Has not its alternatives, that tower of nonsense called Communism, been shown to be the intellectual and moral fraud it always was?

Our system has given those who've taken advantage of its myriad of opportunities the highest standard of living in the world; it has brought millions out of starvation and, if our system is so bad, why did foreign investors plunk down more than 30 billion in American enterprises several years ago?

We also have our Constitution for which to be thankful. It provides many freedoms that we have enjoyed for so long that we hardly know they exist because we assume they have always been.

One of those freedoms is to read, discuss, criticize, and otherwise live the words you are now reading. And you do so without fear of reprisal, or someone looking over your shoulder to monitor you.

In more countries than not around the world, these freedoms are either hamstrung by political pressure, or non-existent because of party line.

We have the freedom to be wrong in this country; indeed the freedom to fail, as Americans are, for the most part, a forgiving, loving people.

We also enjoy a freedom of movement and action which many around the world cannot even

conceive much less enjoy.

We partake of our communities as if they were families, whereas in many parts of the globe, families do not have the time or facilities to enjoy one another, much less their communities; they are too busy simply surviving.

Ability and talent are so much the norm in this country that we take them for granted, never pausing to be grateful for the many argumentative, but ultimately compatible systems of thought, education, theology, philosophy, and creed which permit those abilities to flower and those talents to be recognized.

And we are, basically, a cheerful people.

Notwithstanding our right, indeed, obligation, to be vocal about how we govern ourselves, nevertheless it's time to be thankful for an idea: the idea of America, the idea of its strength through diversity, the idea of creative tension which the web of democracy holds so beautifully in place.

And despite all the negative rhetoric I recently heard, and some of that which you've read right here, those ideas will survive because they are the very essence of a freedom loving people, intending to remain so.

Library news

Back Mountain recipes to be included in *The Best of Pennsylvania* cookbook

By NANCY KOZEMCHAK

The Back Mountain Memorial Library staff and board members wish everyone a very Merry Christmas with peace, love, joy and friendship during the entire Christmas season!

Early in the spring of 1992, our Friends of the Library chairman, Shirley Forney noticed a small clipping in a Lancaster newspaper telling about a "Best of the Best" Cookbook project and the plans to produce a cookbook from Pennsylvania. She immediately referred the article to our cookbook chairman Maryan Daily, who in turn started the wheels rolling and inquired as to what was necessary to be included in our edition and what we had to do to send out, "Chefs and Artists" cookbook to them for their perusal.

Then, on December 2, Maryan received a letter from Quail Ridge Press, QRP Books of Brandon, Mississippi telling us that the Best

of the Best from Missouri was recently published as the 13th volume in the series. They are now in the process of developing Best of the Best from Pennsylvania and we have been invited to have our cookbook, "Chefs and Artists" be a part of our state's edition.

They have selected several recipes from the cookbook and will include our cookbook title under each recipe they use. The cookbooks' cover along with descriptions and ordering information in the 'Catalog of Contributing Cookbooks' selection will be included. They have printed books for Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas, Florida, Tennessee and Missouri, as well as Kentucky, Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia and Arkansas. They offer extensive exposure and promotion for the cookbooks and each copy they sell will be the equivalent of a brochure or catalog being distributed to a potential customer for our book. In addition, the book will likely be mentioned in newspaper and magazine reviews when they are in our area to do TV and radio promotion.

The new book is expected to be completed by late summer 1993. They hope to use up to 10 recipes from our cookbook. This is an exciting endeavor and we are ever grateful to our "Friends" and the wonderful projects they do for our library. We are anxiously awaiting the completion of this "Best of the Best from Pennsylvania" cookbook and are proud to be included in it.

New books at the library: "The Way Things Ought To Be" by Rush Limbaugh is a book in which the author reveals the major influences on his life and views, and blasts off on all the leading issues of our day. Nothing escapes his acerbic wit and huggable charm as he proves why he is on the cutting edge of societal evolution and the epitome of morality and virtue, holding forth on many diversified subjects. He is called a consummate entertainer.

Only Yesterday

60 Years Ago - Dec. 23, 1932
ICE STORM SNARLS AREA TRAFFIC

A thin coating of ice which covered local roads on Wednesday night and yesterday caused motorists considerable nervousness and sent scores of cars slipping and sliding into ditches.

The women's auxiliary of Henry M. Laing Fire Co. were busy all week collecting contributions of money and food for needy families of this section. Many baskets will be distributed in time for Christmas.

About 50 pupils of Noxen primary schools are reported at their homes suffering from measles. They are being treated by Dr. George H. Rauch and Dr. C. L. Boston.

50 Years Ago - Dec. 25, 1942
FIRE COMPANY MAKES SKATING RINK

Religious observance of the holiday season will see its climax in the traditional Christmas services Thursday night and Christmas Day in churches of this area. To youngsters with visions of holiday goodies and shining new toys it will be the greatest day of the year, but to older folks it will have a deeper significance than any Christmas in many years.

Dr. Henry M. Laing Fire Co. has flooded an acre of ground near the triangle outside of Dallas for a community skating rink. With the completion of several floodings, the rink will be an ideal and safe place for all youngsters of the community to skate.

You could get - Pioneer Brand turkeys 45¢ lb.; cranberry sauce, 12-oz. can 13¢; Supreme Bread, 2 lg. loaves 17¢; #1 cooking onions, 3 lbs. 14¢.

40 Years Ago - Dec. 26, 1952
DALLAS TWP. OPENS TWO NEW ROADS

Postponed by rain Sunday afternoon the Community Christmas Carol program is underway Monday with a good crowd attending.

Of the many lighted homes and Christmas displays in the Back Mountain region, none surpasses the miniature outdoor Nativity at the home of Ed and Betty Biezup just below Prince of Peace Church on lower Main Street.

Dallas Township supervisors are prepared to enact an ordinance opening portions of Garbutt and Gerald Avenues as public roads, according to a report submitted to the court in compliance with the Second Class Township Code.

Dr. Sherman R. Schooley Memorial Fund of \$2,534.20 will be distributed to the obstetrics department at Wilkes-Barre General Hospital where he served as chief at the time of his death and to the Back Mountain Memorial Library where the funds will be used to establish a perpetual endowment for the Dr. Sherman P. Schooley Memorial niche of books.

30 Years Ago - Dec. 27, 1962
EDITOR OF THE DALLAS POST DIES SUDDENLY

A crushing blow struck the Back Mountain when Howard Risley, editor of *The Dallas Post* died early Wednesday morning at Nesbitt Hospital where he had been rushed shortly before midnight in the Factoryville ambulance. He had been enjoying Christmas dinner with his family at the home of his sister, Mrs. Clarence Boston, Nicholson when he had a sudden attack.

The Clarence Shaver family, the victims are out of the hospital for Christmas with the exception of their father, is looking forward to building a new life in the coming year. Clarence Shaver Sr., father of the children remains in a coma at the Nesbitt.

Charles Williams, recent winner of Wyoming Valley All-Star Championships, again took honors when he bowled a 708 series in league competition at Crown Imperial Lanes.

20 Years Ago - Dec. 28, 1972
NO TAX INCREASE FOR DALLAS BOROUGH

Dallas Borough Council presented residents with a "no tax increase for 1973" Christmas present at the regular monthly council meeting.

The familiar figure of Postmaster Ed Buckley supervising the work force at the Dallas Post Office will no longer be seen after December 31. Ed has accumulated 31 years of service and will retire to enjoy his "golden years".

King's College will send 71 glee club singers to join and swell the sounds of the International Choral Festival taking place in Rome between Christmas and New Year's Day.

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