

The Dallas Post

EDITORIALS

Library auction brings the Back Mountain together

The Back Mountain Memorial Library is perhaps the single most unifying institution in the region. The annual auction, which produces about 25 percent of the library's operating budget, is surely the most significant community-wide event of the year.

Here are some facts and figures about the library. It: Circulates over 90,000 items a year. Has 12,000 active borrowers. Serves a population of more than 30,000 people. Carries an inventory of 57,775 items, including books, records and tapes. And the number grows weekly. Receives only \$18,000—a mere 10 percent of its total budget—from state funds.

That last point is the one that really hits home. The library today is much like it was in its first year, a community institution dependent for its existence on the support of volunteer staff and generous donors of items and money. When the library began 48 years ago (See story in the auction tabloid included in this issue), \$13,000 was adequate to purchase a building, refurbish it, equip it, begin a collection and hire a librarian. But it also took volunteer work from carpenters, painters and seamstresses to prepare the library for its debut in October, 1945.

Today, \$180,000 is needed to operate the facility for a year, and it also requires the equivalent of 55 hours a week in volunteer time, and the important donations of books and other materials that enrich the library's collection and increase its value to the public it serves.

If the escalation in operating costs troubles you, calm your fears. The library today serves nearly 14 times as many borrowers as it did at the end of that first year; it holds six times as many books, and lends six times more. Given the rate of inflation since 1946, it's a wonder the library's budget isn't much higher. In truth, the library could use more funding, so that it could add useful spaces and better serve the needs of its large and varied constituency.

How can you help this most important institution? Many of you already have, by generously donating items to sell or by volunteering to help on the auction block or at one of the booths. Now, all that's left is to visit the auction and join in the spirit of fun and service that it so clearly demonstrates. You may find something you need, or something you've always wanted. Or, you may go home wondering why in the world you paid good money for that relic in the back seat. But don't worry; it's all for a very good cause. And besides, you can always donate it to next year's auction!

CCC, a government program that worked

Andrew Gorto of Dallas is one of the beneficiaries of a program that met the needs of men and women 60 years ago, but the results of which continue to enhance our lives in 1993. Gorto was a "CCC Boy," one of thousands of young men who were put to work by the Government at a time when jobs in private industry were scarce. Begun at the behest of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, the Civilian Conservation Corps worked developing and maintaining parks, building roads and reservoirs and performing many other tasks.

Along with the Works Projects Administration (WPA), the CCC was conceived as an attempt to provide meaningful work for the millions of Americans left out of work by the Great Depression that began in 1929. By the early 1930's, conditions had become so precarious that publicly-financed "make-work" lost some of its stigma. The CCC hired mostly young men, who gained a measure of self-respect, a bit of training and desperately needed money. Gorto recalls being paid \$30 a month, of which \$25 was sent directly to his family, and being given a set of clothes.

Today, we hike in parks, get water from reservoirs and travel on roads that were first developed by the CCC Boys of the 1930's. Those physical items, and the tradition of honest labor preserved by the program, are an important legacy of how a government and its citizens can respond to the worst of times by making things better.

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. We do not publish anonymous letters, but will consider withholding the name in exceptional circumstances. We reserve the right to edit for length and grammar.

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Garden angels

Photo by Charlotte Bartzek

J.W.J.

True liberty isn't necessarily equality for all

By J.W. JOHNSON

The question comes up often, most recently on a trip to Washington where I was asked, the following:

"As a columnist, are you a liberal or a conservative?"

Following this question, I always wonder why it is that humans seem to have this obsessive need to classify other humans?

Is it a comparative process to quantify/qualify what other people think by comparing what you or someone else with a different label thinks...which, of course, begs the question of labeling in the first place?

Or is it that we need to find out what, in fact, we think ourselves?

Or do we need this knowledge of label to, perhaps subconsciously, reinforce stereotypes we have about certain individuals or groups already labeled?

In any event, and for those who've posed the question, following is the thumbnail sketch of the philosophical basis for much of what appears in this column.

In short, I'm a neo-conservative.

And my two favorite quotes, the first more generally political than the second, are as follows:

"You cannot bring about prosperity by discouraging thrift. You cannot strengthen the weak by weakening the strong. You cannot help the wage earner by pulling down the wage payer. You cannot further the brotherhood of man by encouraging class hatred.

You cannot help the poor by destroying the rich. You cannot keep out of trouble by spending more than you earn. And you cannot build character and courage by taking away men's initiative and independence"...attributed to Abraham Lincoln.

"It is not the critic who counts, nor the man who points out how the strong man stumbled or where the doer of deeds could have done better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena; whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs and comes up short again and again; who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions and spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the worst...if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly; so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat"...Theodore Roosevelt.

Since those quotes speak so eloquently for themselves, enough said...but what is neo-conservative?

A neo-conservative is not angry at the idea of a welfare state; rather he dislikes the Great Society version of the welfare state. Skeptical of social programs which spawn huge bureaucracies and foster paternalism, the neo-conservative supports notions about social security, unemployment insurance and some kind of national health insurance.

Neo-conservatives tend to affirm Western Civilization, with

changes in values and systems coming in slow, and organic ways, rather than abrupt liberation from traditional values which can cause political and social imbalance and nihilism.

Neo-conservatives have a deep and abiding belief in the power of the marketplace to provide the most efficient response to economic realities, without an undue sacrifice of individual freedoms. That is why this columnist has always opposed subsidized government housing, as opposed to housing vouchers for the poor.

And while neo-conservatives have some definite foreign policy views i.e., American values ought to be promoted world wide, perhaps the most strongly held neo-conservative belief is a rejection of egalitarianism, while affirming the traditional American idea of equality.

Put another way, it is not a proper role for government to pursue the equality of condition for all citizens. The equality proclaimed by the Declaration of Independence is an equality of natural rights, as defined by natural abilities, including the right to become unequal in public esteem, wealth or influence.

And without the right to be unequal, without the right to take risk, without the right to peer over horizons rather than bump into artificially created ceilings, equality then becomes the enemy of liberty.

And in the final analysis, liberty is all that humans truly have if we have anything at all.

Library news

Library goes into auction's final countdown

By NANCY KOZEMCHAK

"This is It!" The 47th annual Back Mountain Memorial Library Auction will be held Thursday, July 8 through Sunday, July 11 on the auction grounds behind the library on Huntsville Road in Dallas. The hours of the auction are 6 to 11 p.m. on Thursday; 6 to 12 p.m. Friday; Children's auction 11 to 1, Saturday morning; regular auction 5 to 11 p.m. Saturday and Sunday 5 to whenever all items are sold.

Bill Jones is general chair of the auction with Joe Kluger as co-chair. New Goods chairman, Lois Townsend; Book Booth, Benny Matchett, chair; Odds and Ends, Sybil Pelton, Mary George and Jean Grimes, co-chairs with the Women of Dallas Kiwanis; Nearly old booth, Maryann Daily; antiques, Karen Boback, Julie Savage and Hope Chollak; Refreshment Stand, Dallas Rotary Club; Children's Auction, Dallas Boy Scout Troop 281; 50/50 drawing chances, Ruth Tetschner, chair;

Craft Booth, Peggy Harvey and Paula Scott; and Publicity, Karen Ceconi.

This great summer tradition is about to kick-off, so, gather your friends and your chairs and find your spot on the grounds to bid on some fantastic bargains.

The booklet entitled, "Happenings" in and around Northeastern Pennsylvania for July features a page announcing the library auction with many details concerning the items to be sold in the booths and across the auction block. The auction will feature nearly 1,000 varied items that attract 10,000 people over the four days of bidding. One of the most valuable items going over the block will be a Hoosier Cabinet dating back to the roaring 20's. You can enjoy browsing and bidding in the shaded country atmosphere surrounded by local food vendors. This year's fare includes potato pancakes, lemonade, ice cream, funnel cakes and homemade pies. The stuff that makes dreams come true will

be at this year's auction.

New books at the library: "Homeland" by John Jakes is the story of an enthralling new dynasty—the Crowns of Chicago—contending with awesome forces of history. It is a towering epic of the immigrant adventure in America with a vast gallery of characters.

"Summer of Fear" by T. Jefferson Parker is an intricate force of atmospheric style, hard-boiled suspense, and dark insight into the human heart. Its ingredients are the passions of a small group of intimates, a hot summer and an Orange County killer.

"The Night Manager" by John LeCarre is a hypnotic narrative charged by a luminous understanding of the paradoxes implicit in our perceptions of evil-doing and virtue.

"To Live and Die in Dixie" by Kathy Hogan Trocheck is the story of the cleaning lady sleuth who runs afoul of radicals and a murderous antiques collector, looking for truth.

Only yesterday

60 Years Ago - July 14, 1933 OLD SECTION OF RAUB HOTEL TO BE RAZED

Gene Fogle and a force of men are at work dismantling the old section of the Raub hotel property. It will be entirely razed down as far as the first floor which is occupied by Vacuum Oil Co. When the work is completed, only part of the old hotel property remaining will be the lower floor of the old section and the newer or tower section on Lake Street.

A meeting of the congregatin of the Dallas M.E. church will be held at the church to receive final plans for improvement of church property and make arrangements for the necessary financing. Question of raising the current budget will also be considered.

You could get - Smoked picnics, 10¢ lb.; Eight O'Clock coffee, 17¢ lb.; Super Suds, lg. sz. 15¢; watermelons 39¢ ea.

50 Years Ago - July 9, 1943 STATE GUARD CAMPS AT COUNTRY CLUB

Prompt action by Daniel C. Roberts Fire Co. assisted by Dr. Henry M. Laing Fire Co. Wednesday saved several closely-built stores and cottages when a blaze raged through a second floor apartment in a building owned by Charles Randall, next to the old Gosart store at the Sunset end of Harveys Lake.

Company A, Pennsylvania State Guard, comprised of 80 officers and men will hold an overnight bivouac at Irem Temple Country Club picnic grounds this weekend. The Company will leave the Armory, Kingston, Saturday at 1:30 and return late Sunday afternoon.

A successful first meeting of the canning class was held in Dallas Borough High School. Seven pints of peas were canned as a demonstration of the pressure cooker method. These meetings will be held during July and August for discussion and demonstration of different methods of preserving food.

"Stand By for Action" with Robert Taylor and Brian Donlevy now playing at the Shaver Theatre.

40 Years Ago - July 10, 1953 CARVERTON ROAD GETS HIGH-TECH LIGHT

The 7th annual Back Mountain Memorial Library Auction gets underway shortly after noon today. When auctioneer Harry Ohlman and his assistants mount the stand to sell the first item for 1953 sale, they will have the greatest collection of new goods, antiques, used goods and livestock every assembled for a Library Auction.

A new traffic light at the intersection of Carverton Road and Luzerne Highway, Trucksville will be in operation within a few days. The light is something new to this area, a magnetic detector type which automatically operates when a car approaches Carverton Road. Except when a car wishes to emerge, the highway light on Route 309 will always be green.

You could get - Porterhouse steak, 69¢ lb.; veal roast 49¢ lb.; cantaloupes 2/35¢; peach pies 39¢ ea.

30 Years Ago - July 11, 1963 WINTERSTEEN BUYS CAROUSEL AT LAKE

Bobby Wintersteen, Harveys Lake, recently bought the Merry-Go-Round at Hanson's Amusement Park and is in business for himself. In addition he works for Sun-Gas Co.

The awards committee of Pennsylvania Association for Adult Education has chosen Dr. Robert A. Mellman, Superintendent of Dallas School District for the associations's Award of Merit for distinguished and outstanding accomplishments in the field of adult education.

20 Years Ago - July 12, 1973 BMT'S FIRST GROUP OF FRESH AIR KIDS HERE

Dr. Henry M. Laing Vol. Fire Co. paid tribute to seven active members who have given 20 or more years service to the fire company and community. James Besecker, charter member 46 years; Daniel Richards, 43 years; others with 20 or more years are Donald Bulford; Dan Shaffer, Alvin Shaffer, William Baker and Howard Johns. Each of the long time members was awarded a desk set by the volunteer group's president Bob Richardson.

The arrival of the first bus load of eager Fresh Air kids last Thursday signaled the "real" beginning of summer for a number of local families. The next group of New York City children sponsored by Fresh Air Fund is scheduled to arrive August 1 and return August 15.