

# The Dallas Post

## EDITORIALS

### Solutions needed for water problems

Home and business owners in the Back Mountain are drilling holes in the ground in order to bring some sanity to the amount of money they spend for water. To find out why, just compare local rates with those in nearby communities. While a typical residential customer in Dallas can expect to pay \$446 for water this year, someone a couple of miles away in Shavertown will pay about \$140. That \$446 rate is 62 percent higher than a year ago, since General Waterworks, Inc. was granted an increase effective December 10, 1992.

But there's a dark side to individual wells—they can go dry, or they can tap into the same underground water source used by others, causing their wells to dry up. That became readily apparent in 1988, when a long drought brought dry wells and water use restrictions to much of the area. Neighborliness only goes so far, though, and many people know enough math to discover that the one-time expense of drilling a well can be recouped in a relatively short time.

What's to be done? It's easy to make a case for greater restrictions on individual wells—at least superficially—just as there are on sewers. After all, the underground aquifers that are tapped course through miles of land and are a community resource. But that argument doesn't hold up well when the monopoly water company gets such a huge rate increase that it weakens the financial well-being of many of its customers.

On the flip side, why should there be any restrictions on a person's right to drill for water on his own land? He bought and paid for it, and forcing him to become dependent on a supplier who may or may not be efficient isn't fair. Of course, neither is depriving someone else of a water source.

Ultimately, the system has failed. Local water companies were allowed for years to provide substandard service while performing little maintenance. Then, the Public Utilities Commission rolled over and granted increases far beyond reason when General Waterworks, Inc., the water companies' new owner, asked for them, using as justification limited one-time capital expenses. And, all along, officials have ignored a growing crisis in water supplies that could ultimately cripple the Back Mountain's growth and prosperity.

Once again, it becomes apparent that the Back Mountain is not seven, eight or nine separate fiefdoms, but a large area with common needs. The sooner we face that reality and begin to increase our strengths by sharing them, the sooner we will be prepared to anticipate problems and not just react to them by drilling holes in the ground.

### Publisher's notebook

## Government-watching leads to disappointment

Have you noticed that hardly any individual or group seems immune from the notion that if only the Government—local, state or federal—would make the right decision, their lives would be bliss? Looking to government, especially the one in Washington, has become a national pastime. Or maybe it just seems that way.

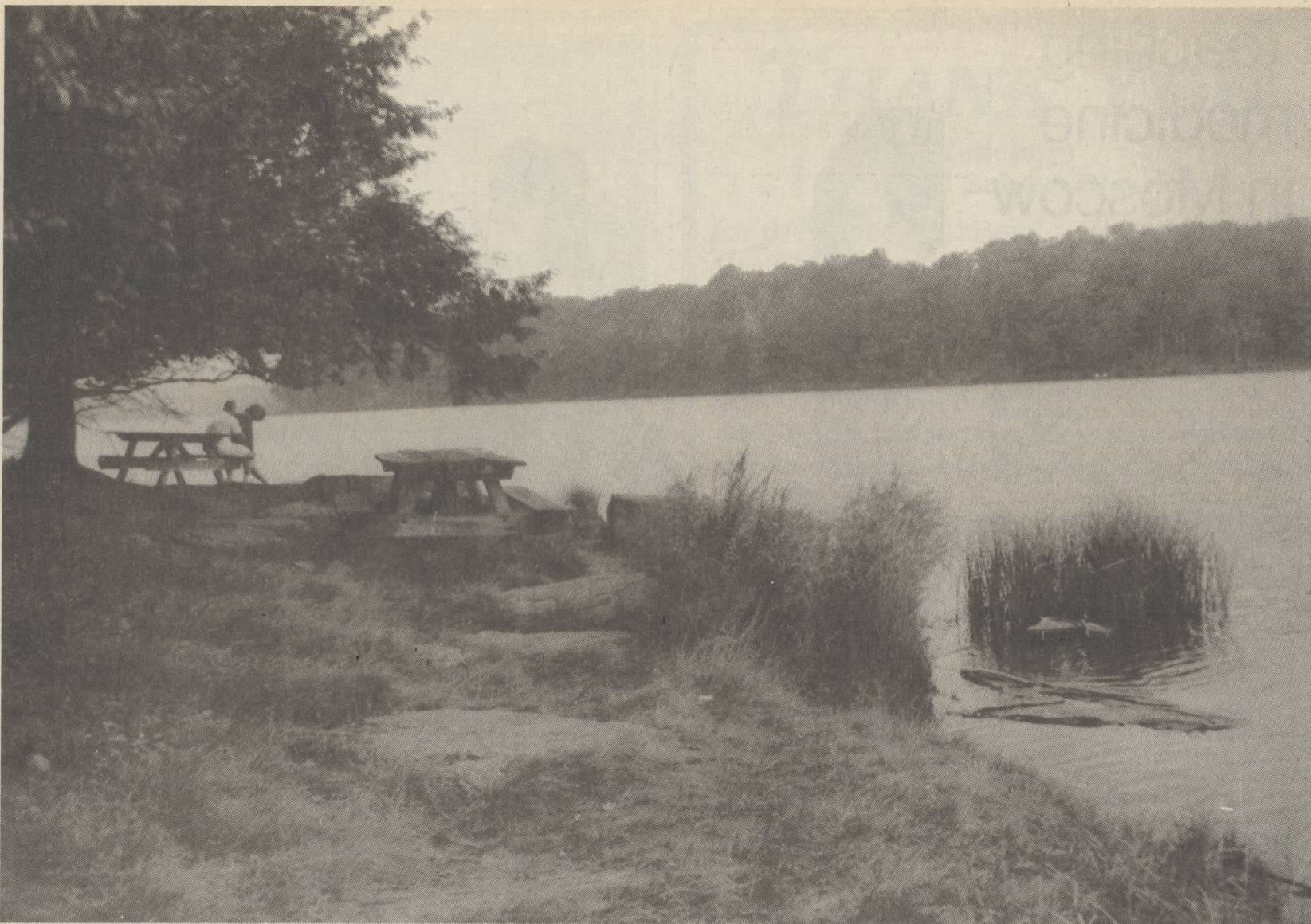
Perhaps most startling are the tearful strains of wealthy individuals and powerful business interests. Why, when President Clinton proposed a slim rise in their tax rates, you would have thought the world was coming to an end. Nary a word was heard about how the proposed rates were only about half the maximum in force just 12 years ago. No, it was made to appear that raising the top corporate rate from 34 to 36 percent would mean the demise of American business as we know it. Of course, that pales in comparison to the top individual rate, which could go to nearly 40 percent.

During the years we now see as our most prosperous—the 1950's and 60's—high bracket taxpayers and corporations were forking up marginal rates of 70 percent or more, yet growth was strong and living standards rising. Does that mean high tax rates are synonymous with high growth? Probably not, but you could make the case that high tax rates on large incomes force money into more productive uses than buying bonds or vacation homes.

This isn't an argument for higher taxes, it's just an illustration of how silly individual selfishness can be when put in perspective. Begging for government protection used to be the province of the poor and their champions, many of whom became rich in the process. Now, there's a lobbyist for everyone from the poorest to the most wealthy, more than ready to accept payment for skewing statistics in their clients' favor. And it can be done, no matter how foolish it may seem; remember Mark Twain's comment, "There are lies, damn lies and statistics."

The problem, of course, is that we've fallen into a bad habit that may prove fatal. If enough of us become convinced that our fate rests in someone else's hands, none of us will achieve anything. All people of accomplishment know that their success began when they stopped worrying about what other people were doing, or thought of what they were doing, and just got on with their lives.

High taxes and poor services shouldn't be promoted, but neither should they be entirely blamed for our successes or failures. Nor should there be no debate on the merits of government taxes or programs. It's just that the amount of time, money and attention being devoted to government-watching is out of touch with the reality of our lives, even as it deepens the belief that each tiny change in a tax or service will bring disaster or delight.



Placid moment at Lake Jean

Photo by Charlotte Bartizek

J.W.J.

## Role model vacuum opened way for Koresh

By J.W. JOHNSON

Charles Barkley, that loud-mouth of basketball, says that just because he can dunk a basketball, doesn't mean he should raise anyone's children.

Michael Jordan clearly has a gambling addiction, one which is being ignored by fans and NBA officials alike because Jordan is, in fact, the game of basketball that the marketers of which are going to squeeze before Jordan's addiction catches up with him.

The same was true for Mike Tyson, whose unchanneled aggression and immaturity were permitted to roam free and uncounseled while those same qualities were then honed for use in the boxing ring, while others profited from him.

All three of these spectacular athletes would probably suggest they are not role models; that honor, integrity and appropriate behavior should be taught at home, not sought vicariously through adulation of a given athlete. Perhaps, but there's more to this than simply shifting responsibility in what has become our 'everyone-is-a-victim society'.

I recently read Joseph Campbell's book on the death of heroes, wherein the year 1968 was particularly targeted as the

year this nation lost the notion of heroes. Many would point to the petty, vulgar and lying former President Richard Nixon as death angel for heroes. Sadly, and to a greater or lesser degree, he is just one among many.

And for our youth, the most obvious examples can be seen in athletes: Athletes who cheat, use drugs and generally set poor examples.

In fact, in the past decades we have been inundated with revelations about college level cheating, and drug usage at all levels in sports...not to mention the Pete Rose and George Steinbrenner, and Lenny Dykstra debacles.

Some defend sports heroes by suggesting that only a few bad apples are involved. Still others twist the obvious by noting that drug usage is not peculiar to sports.

This somehow makes it right? Under a system of competitive sports throughout our lives, a professional athlete, whether he or she appreciates it or not, is a role model for the nation's youth. Doing anything to tarnish that model is one more nail in the coffin of young people acquiring values with which to govern behavior as adults.

This is not to suggest a return to blind hero worship—as the thoroughly despicable, on a per-

sonal level, Babe Ruth and Ty Cobb have been idealized—while ignoring the reality that athletes, like the rest of us, are prone to human frailty.

Rather it is to suggest that the nation deserves more of a preservation of ideals from those who command so much of our attention and time, not to mention us paying unholily sums of money for the privilege.

Likewise, the question of values and honor goes beyond mere compliance with drug usage or gambling laws by athletes. In the larger society, the question is also the appearance of propriety and of simple honor.

For centuries it has been commonly held that, for example, judges must not only conduct themselves within the law, but must also give the appearance of propriety so that the integrity of the judicial system itself is upheld.

The same could be said, for example, of police officers. However, it has become commonplace for police officers at all levels to accept free cups of coffee or a free lunch and other amenities at regular stops throughout his or her shift. This casual movement away from the ideals of public service damages the appearance of propriety. Presumably then, in

the eyes of the person giving the favors, he or she expects better service, or a looking the other way. Translated, that means justice for sale.

And regardless whether the subject is athletes, judges, police officers, or a husband and wife buying laundry detergent, there is a larger issue. That issue is destruction of the implied presence of individual propriety inherent and inseparable in the concept of individual freedom: in short, honor.

So much of our freedom depends upon an exchange of honor between individuals so that honor is not replaced by the heavy hand of governmentally mandated rules to extract or modify behavior.

Seen much honor lately? And if we wonder why some of our children so casually flaunt the law, or fall victim to theological snake oil salesmen, we just might look for the answers in adults, (particularly heroes) failing to preserve ideals.

In that failure—and because extreme societal laxity always bring extreme governmental control, and extremes of many other sorts—we are most certainly letting individual freedom slip right through our fingers, and also into the vacuum that more David Koresh's of the world will certainly fill.

## Only yesterday

60 Years Ago - July 21, 1933

### MOSSER TANNERY WORKING FULL-TIME

With the erection of two large street signs in Dallas, distribution of auto stickers and placarding of telephone poles and store windows, within a radius of 20 miles, the advertising campaign for Dr. Henry M. Laing Fire Co. carnival Aug. 10, 11 and 12 got underway this week.

Problems related to water supply, sewage disposal and reduction of trolley fares, will be discussed at a meeting of Dallas Borough Taxpayers Association Monday night in the borough high school building.

The big J.K. Mosser Tannery at Noxen, owned by Armour Leather Co. is now working on a full time schedule. The leather produced at Noxen is considered among the best produced in this country.

50 Years Ago - July 16, 1943

### WELCH DISAPPEARS ON FLIGHT TO CHINA

No word has been received from Orin Welch, Shavertown, airplane designer and aeronautical engineer last heard from March 13 while flying a tri-motored transport at 17,000 feet above the Himalaya Mountains between Chunking, China and Calcutta, India on the "second most hazardous flying route in the world." Efforts to have the Red Cross establish some contact have been without success.

Persons in need of sugar after using their Number 15 and 16 stamps may apply for more for canning purposes any time between now and October, according to a clerk at Dallas War Price & Rationing Board.

Lehman Township citizens will honor 95 of their sons and daughters who are in military service Sunday afternoon when they will dedicate an imposing honor roll on the village green at Lehman Center. Mrs. Ernest Fritz, mother of Tech. Sgt. John Fritz who has been missing in aerial action since May 7 and also the mother of Staff Sgt. Lawrence Fritz who is in service overseas will unveil the monument.

### 40 Years Ago - July 17, 1953 HARVEYS LAKE SETS UP NEW SPEED TRAP

In an effort to reduce the number of highway accidents that have incensed residents and vacationers at Harveys Lake, Chief Edgar Hughes has announced that a speed trap will be put in operation, starting Saturday night.

Back Mountain Memorial Library Auction closed at midnight Monday after playing a 3-day stand to the largest and most enthusiastic crowds in its 7-year history.

High spot of the auction was the sale of a 1953 2-door Chevrolet sedan purchased at a discount at Bonner Chevrolet and

Strayer's City Chevrolet of which Arthur Strayer, a Back Mountain resident is owner. Profits from the sale went to the Auction.

You could get - Ground beef or chuck roast, 29¢ lb.; Swiss Cheese, 59¢ lb.; Crisco, 3-lb. can 87¢; Ideal lemonade, 26-oz. cans 29¢.

30 Years Ago - July 11, 1963

### CONSTRUCTION TIES UP RTE. 309 TRAFFIC

Two-lane traffic on construction-riddled Memorial Highway will be resumed in Kingston Township in about a week, as soon as drainage pipe-laying is finished according to Coon Construction Co. After drainage pipes are laid, cutting and filling for the section of the 4.1 mile new highway from below Carverton Road to Dallas will begin.

Arthur W. Cook, Fernbrook, received a signed certificate last week from the President of the United States in recognition of his son Joseph's death almost 20 years ago while flying over Bremen, Germany. He was buried in England. In 1949 word was received that the body could be brought home and is now buried at a National Cemetery in Gettysburg.

Back Mountain will have several key figures in this year's Giants Despair Hill Climb Friday and Saturday: Bonnie Gross crowned Miss Race Week and Dave Adams, a leading contender for honors in the F-Production class.

You could get - Boneless chuck, 49¢ lb.; whole fresh ham, 47¢ lb.; seedless grapes, 2 lbs. 49¢; lettuce, 2 hds., 29¢.

20 Years Ago - July 19, 1973

### LIBRARY AUCTION SEES RECORD SALES

The 27th Annual Back Mountain Memorial Library Auction grossed over \$30,000 during its three day sales. According to the publicity chairman, the gross income exceeds all previous records.

Pa. Gas & Water Co. is processing applications for new gas heating customers according to a June 25 release from the company's Public Relations Office. Potential customers being considered include those who have been placed on a priority list three years ago when the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission embargoed the gas company from further expansion of its natural gas lines in the light of the developing gas shortage.

At recent ceremonies held at the Shavertown Fire Hall, Edward D. Carey, president of Kingston Township Ambulance Association received the keys for a new 1973 Cadillac ambulance which was placed into service to replace the old ambulance. Through efforts of Rep. Frank O'Connell, the association received a grant from the Department of Community Affairs of the State of Pennsylvania to purchase the new mercy vehicle.

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