

The Dallas Post

EDITORIALS

How about a pool for Dallas High School?

You may have read the article in The Post a couple of weeks ago, explaining that Dallas School District had a \$363,000 windfall because repairs at the high school came in below estimate. Because of rules about how leftover capital funds can be spent, the school board is prohibited from using the cash for operations, and must find necessary capital projects on which to use it.

At the board's meeting earlier this month, superintendent Gerry Wycallis read a laundry list of important but mundane jobs; things like painting lockers, caulking windows and replacing ceiling blocks. We're sure those are all necessary and worthwhile items, but would humbly suggest a better use—it's high time Dallas High School had a swimming pool.

Before you leap from your chair shouting that a pool is a luxury we can't afford, consider these points:

- Swimming is the most complete exercise known to man, and its "no-impact" nature makes it suitable for just about anyone with or without athletic talent.
- If the school district had a pool of its own, it could offer free lessons as part of the physical education curriculum, and every student could learn to swim. Aside from the lifelong enjoyment that swimming brings, this might save a life now and then.
- Competitive team swimming would add a new dimension to sports at the school (maybe the lower grades could take part, too), one that requires different skills and strengths than all the others. And, don't forget diving and water polo.
- The public could have use of the pool, too, and perhaps at more convenient times than are available at College Misericordia's new facility.

Granted, pools aren't cheap, and they must be maintained. But a school district the size of this one should be able to handle the expense. How about it? Is this a good idea, or not?

Time/temp is back

Thanks to Mellon Bank, Dallas Borough, Bob Besecker and others, a time and temperature sign has returned to the center of Dallas, and in a location that's even more useful than the former one. The sign was taken down when Mellon Bank completed its takeover of United Penn.

After hearing many complaints about the sign's absence, Dallas Borough manager Milt Lutsey asked the bank to donate a sign, which they did, and Besecker offered to supply the space and power at no charge. Now it's right there alongside Route 309, flashing the time and temp for all to see.

Health care: Reform better than status quo

More than 40 years ago, President Harry Truman recognized the shortcomings of America's health care system, and proposed government-sponsored coverage for all citizens. His idea was soundly defeated, and—with the exception of Medicare and then Medicaid—no serious effort was made to revive the idea since. Until last week.

President Clinton has presented his plan to bring coverage to all Americans while controlling runaway costs. It may not be perfect, but it is the first serious attempt to confront the problems since Truman's administration, and should provide the basis from which a workable program can emerge.

At first glance the President's "managed competition" approach looks a bit like that proverbial horse designed by a committee, the camel. If the government sponsors buying cooperatives, limits spending increases, and proscribes coverage options, why is there any need for private insurance companies as middlemen? Perhaps the answer lies in our government's well-documented inability to control the cost of anything, as best illustrated by the outrageous prices the military pays for ordinary items.

Arch conservatives, of course, will protest that the government has no business assuring the security of citizens in a market economy. If that's the case, we should immediately begin to dismantle the Defense Department and let each of us fend for ourselves.

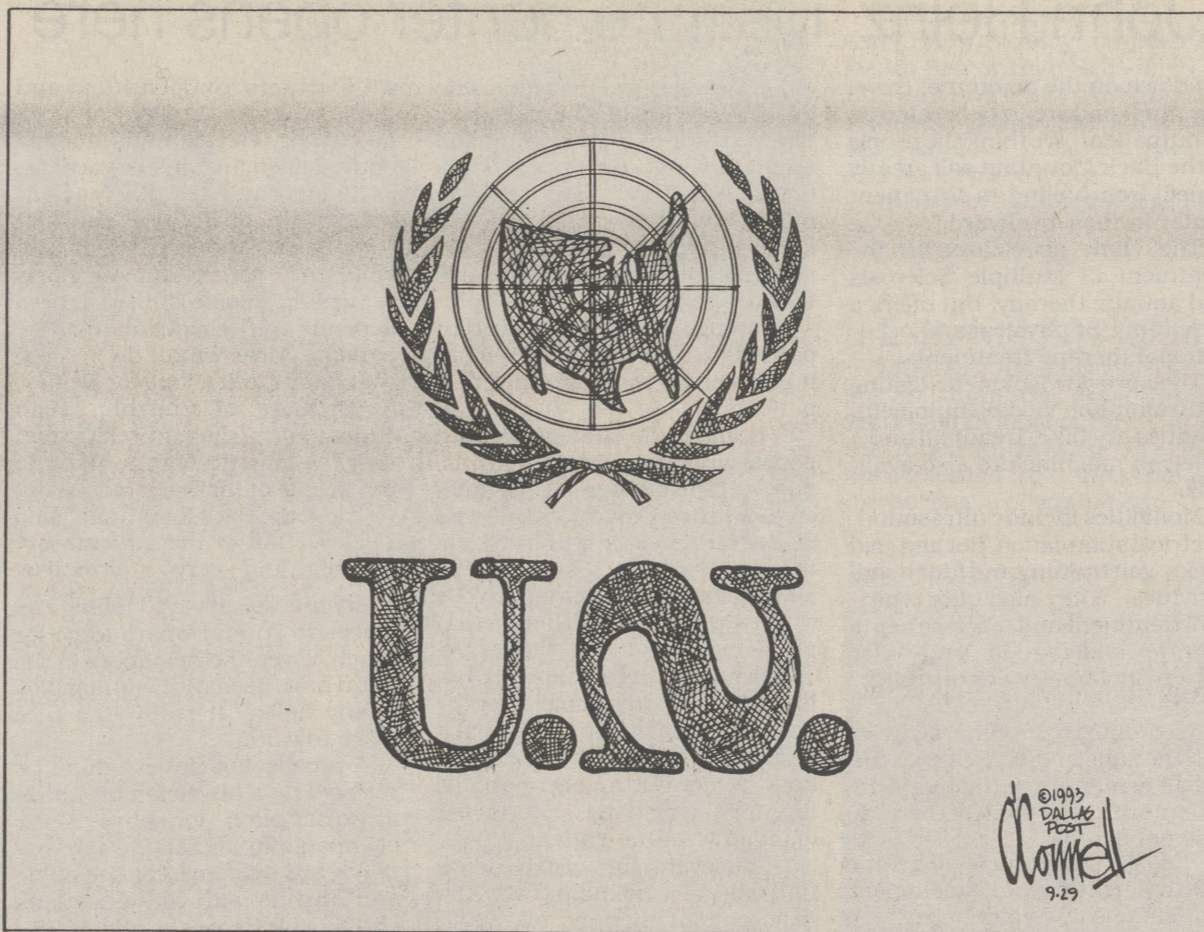
A myriad of special interests will now attempt to preserve their own profit in the present inefficient, unfair system, in the perverse belief that the status quo is preferable to progress. It's a good guess that if all the money and energy spent on lobbying were combined with the waste, fraud and profiteering that now exist, the cost of health care would be more palatable.

Regardless of what form the President's plan finally emerges, if it preserves the principles of security, prevention and efficiency he enumerated, it will deserve our support.

Register to vote by Oct. 4

The deadline for voters to register for the November 2 general election is Monday, October 4. That's the date by which registration applications must be filed at the county courthouse. If you are eligible to vote, there's no excuse for not taking the time to register now, and to vote in November.

Forms are available at the newspaper office at 45 Main Road in Dallas, across from Offset Paperback. Stop in Monday through Friday between 8:30 a.m. and 5 p.m. to pick one up.



A. Case for conservation

Cultivating discovery can enrich your life

By ALENE N. CASE

When was the last time you brought your family outside to watch a flock of geese flying south (or north)? Did you ever stop your car along the road so that you could see an egret or a heron catch fish? Have you recently slept outside and discovered that the singing of the katydids is drowned out by truck traffic noise at 4:00 A.M.?

I made one interesting discovery this summer - many Americans have lost their sense of adventure. We have forgotten how to make discoveries. Perhaps we think there is nothing left for us to discover. But, I contend that we can discover everything. Sure - someone else may have seen it first, or we may have read about it or seen it on TV; but, until we experience something first-hand, it is still waiting to be discovered.

As dusk deepened one night in August, my husband and I walked along the roads in a campground at a small state park in Illinois. The familiar strains of the Flintstones' theme emanated from a rather large camper. Soon we heard the early evening call of a screech owl. Later that day, I lay awake listening to the owl cruise around and around the campground. At one point, another bird (quite possibly a barred owl) let out a blood-curdling shriek to let the first bird know that it was invading some other territory. I laughed to myself as I listened to the screech owl disappear down the river - those folks with the TV must have thought that scream was a wild cat or a ghost or worse!

Camping is an excellent way to experience the natural world. However, too many people carry along too many modern conveniences and miss the opportunity. I would never begrudge anyone the comforts of a clean toilet or a soft mattress. But, the television set and the CD player should be left at home.

There is much to be discovered here at home. Next time you drive into the valley, look to the right of the VA Hospital. You will likely see the smoke and steam that comes from a mine fire. This fire has been burning since 1915, but most folks who have lived here all their lives are not aware of it. Centralia is big news because the fire affected a whole town. Yet, we hardly notice a long-term environmental disaster much closer home.

Discovery has several necessary components: exploration, observation, and questioning. It is a rare person who can view a place on a video or read about it in a book and really feel the essence of that place. Most of us must physically explore in order to relate to the natural world. We need to get outside in all kinds of weather. We need to drive down the small roads we pass each day on our way to work.

Exploration is most effective if we carefully observe our new surroundings. What appears to be natural and what has been influenced by humans? Has the human influence been beneficial or detrimental? Has someone tried to restore the natural order after the land is no longer used by humans? If so, what were the results of that attempt?

Obviously, exploration and observation lead quite naturally to questioning. Often this questioning leads to further investigation. For instance, if you are driving along and see a stream in which all the rocks are orange, you could decide to hike up the stream to the source of the orange pollution. Along the way, your nose is accosted by a sulfurous smell. You soon see water pouring from vertical pipes which are surrounded by more of this strange orange stuff. The odor becomes almost unbearable. You have "discovered" one of the mine outfalls where the pressure of groundwater is relieved so that it does not flow into people's basements. All kinds of questions come to mind - Is this the best way to handle the problem? Can I talk with someone to get more information? What is all that orange stuff, anyhow? Etc. Etc.

Discovery is important to conservation in two ways. First, it gives us an understanding of the natural world which is difficult to acquire any other way. Without this understanding (some would call it "love"), people tend to be disrespectful of the earth and its inhabitants. Second, discovery is an important first step in solving environmental problems. We cannot conserve nearby trilliums and Mayapples if we do not see that their survival is threatened by youths riding ORVs.

So, next time your child comes to tell you about some fantastic discovery he or she has just made, please stop what you are doing and share in it. Our world will be a better place because of your encouragement.

J.W.J.

Mars Observer loss just a glitch in time

By J.W. JOHNSON

Red ink, not red planet. War of the Wounded, not of the World's. Critics might use paraphrases like these in pointing to NASA's latest failure: the \$1 billion Mars Observer, apparently lost in space.

Critics have been hot on NASA's exhaust following the bungled Challenger shuttle explosion in which seven people were killed.

That's when NASA's clay feet began to crumble; first, the shuttle, then later the billions wasted on the Hubble telescope which can only focus for the myopic; the explosion of numerous launch rockets; and now the Mars Observer failing to answer the call from its earth bound progenitors.

Experts believe that two small transistors are the likely cause for the Mars bound craft's failure to communicate with Earth.

But isn't perhaps all of this unrequited expectation because we've become jaded to our own success?

Haven't we landed men on the moon?

Haven't they come back safely? Haven't we had a multitude of other successes by NASA when compared to the failures?

And it's completely unfair to point to the enormous sums of money spent by NASA as if, somehow, the more money spent should result in a higher level of perfection.

Just look at Congress and the fallacy of this argument becomes readily apparent.

Following the 1986 Challenger disaster, there was much wailing

and gnashing of teeth about who and what to blame. And until that bright, clear day in January, space travel was the safest form of travel known to mankind: 56 missions in space without a loss of life.

And so in the confidence of history and the arrogance of youth the march into space continued.

Yet, and even if we didn't understand specifically why back then, we knew that so many things could go wrong. We expected it in the early days; in the days when science didn't understand as much; in the early days when we named our efforts after the gods—Mercury, Apollo—striving to touch the strength of those mythologies; in claiming those names, declaring those efforts to be feeble, our knowledge to be lacking; somehow and perhaps hoping in the symbols to find wisdom.

Still, with all the success, we knew, and knew even on that day, that danger lurked. And yet it couldn't happen on that day. On that particular day...at least that's what we told ourselves...and that's because She was on board.

She was Christa McAuliffe.

A mother.

A teacher.

We denied the possibility because she was hope; as a mother, the hope of life; as a teacher, the hope of enlightenment. And on that day, carrying with her the collective freedom born aspirations of, perhaps, the Walter Mitty in us all.

To learn, to share, to touch, to taste fame, smell danger; indeed, to express that freedom in the scraped knee melding of science and joy, technology and inspira-

tion, steel and soul.

Suddenly, without warning, and in the blink of millions of eyes, the heartbeat of a nation stopped.

We watched...no, clung to the television, so often giving us mindless mayhem and insipid comedy...now shattering our gods.

We watched as She and her professional colleagues leapt into space, stepped beyond earthly constraints, daring to be truly free; daring to success by daring to fail.

We mourned her death then; we mark it again.

But we should also celebrate her life, as we celebrate our own.

Christa McAuliffe was a teacher. With bubbly courage and the enthusiasm which live and finds nourishment only in a free person, she taught us.

And the lesson she gave ultimate voice to is that free people, intending to remain so, must joyfully don the robes of risk, or perpetually be that naked child seeking fearful solace in the god-toys of apathy and ignorance. Seven human beings died on that day. Seven heroes to freedom.

And to now abandon space, as more and more critics are crying, is to give up the right to fail; to be safe among those who know neither victory nor defeat.

We would then have more money for that obviously wise Congress to spend on our behalf...but we would be dead within even to appreciate it if that collectively ignorant group were to be even randomly successful.

Only yesterday

60 Years Ago - Oct. 6, 1933 CLUB AT LAKE BEATS BEER BUST CHARGES

Dallas Borough can and should operate its own water company in the opinion of Burgess Harry Anderson as expressed in a brief talk Monday night. Burgess Anderson believes that there is plenty of pure water for all future needs right in the vicinity of Dallas without the necessity of using water supplied from Huntsville Reservoir.

One of the first cases under the new State Beverage License Law, the trial of the owner of the Plantation Club at Harveys Lake was charged with selling beer on a Sunday, ended in an acquittal on Tuesday when the prosecutor failed to prove that beer was sold illegally.

Mr. and Mrs. Alex Wilson of Demunds, celebrated their Golden Anniversary. They were married October 3, 1883. They are the parents of 14 children, 10 of whom are still living, 20 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

50 Years Ago - Oct. 1, 1943 DALLAS MAIL GOES TO TEXAS, PA., GEORGIA

Continuing its progressive community health program, Dallas Board of Health at its meeting Tuesday, decided to ask Dallas Borough School Board to appoint a part-time nurse and to institute a course in nursing in the senior high school under the direction of the Red Cross.

Mail has been missent to Dallas Texas instead of Dallas, Pennsylvania, but this week a new Dallas appeared in view, Dallas, Georgia. Claudia Cook's letter in the Outpost came to the Post via that town.

Now playing at Shaver Theatre, "China" with Alan Ladd, Loretta Young, William Bendix.

40 Years Ago - Oct. 2, 1953 NEW MOTEL AT ROUTE 309-415 INTERSECTION

Construction is moving along rapidly on the new 24-unit motel being constructed by S & S Construction Company at the intersection of Routes 309 and 415. The entire building will be faced with native stone already started on the central section.

Robert Z. Belles, Beaumont assumed the duties of supervising principal at Lake-Noxen High School yesterday. Belles, former principal at Noxen and since jointure high school principal at the main building, was appointed at a special meeting of the joint school board Saturday.

Dr. Henry M. Laing Fire Co. in cooperation with Shavertown and Trucksville Volunteer Fire Companies is planning an educational program of school fire drills, demonstrations and lectures during Fire Prevention Week, which is next week. School officials are also cooperating.

30 Years Ago - Oct. 3, 1963 NEW HIGHWAY CLOSE TWO STORES

Robert Harris, distinguished English stage and screen star will play the role of Sir Thomas More when College Misericordia's Theatre 3 offers "A Man For All Seasons", October 10 at Irem Temple.

The dilemma of Trucksville was brought to the attention of Kingston Township Supervisors Wednesday by resident Stanley Cashmark, who stated that the proposed taking over of Trucksville Pharmacy and Gavy's Market land by the State for road widening would leave its citizens without benefit of a drug store and food market, remove the last sign of identity for the community and lower property value.

One of the top games of the season in the High School Conference will take place Saturday on the Dallas gridiron when the Flyers of Forty Fort take on Dallas. Winner is expected to capture laurels in the conference this season.

20 Years Ago - Oct. 4, 1973 GREGORY SWORN IN AS MAGISTRATE

Earl S. Gregory, Trucksville was officially sworn in September 28 by President Judge Bernard Brominski as magistrate of District 3-9. He was appointed to fill the unexpired term of the late Fred Anderson. The term runs until January 1976.

Forty Fort Dairy Bar, a landmark in the Back Mountain closed its doors September 30 and reopened Monday morning as a Mark II Restaurant, which will remain open for six weeks serving a limited menu. When final plans are completed, will close for renovation and hopes to reopen in January.

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