

# The Dallas Post

## EDITORIALS

### Take L-L taxpayer group's suggestions with a grain of salt

Feeling its oats after two members were elected to the school board, the Lake-Lehman Taxpayers' Association has submitted a few "recommendations" for upcoming teacher contract negotiations to superintendent Dr. Nancy Davis.

Topping the list is an unrealistic proposal to reduce teacher salaries 10 percent across the board. In addition, the group wants health insurance benefits reduced or eliminated; personal, emergency and bereavement leave dropped; reimbursement for courses cut in half; free tuition for teachers' children scrapped and a few other odds and ends.

Taxpayer groups like the ones in the Lake-Lehman and Dallas school districts can offer a useful balance to school boards and administrators who have a tendency to be sympathetic with teachers. In fact, the ascension of the Lake-Lehman group may be linked directly with the overly generous contract that is now close to expiring. That pact gave teachers an average 8.5 percent raise each year of the 5-year agreement. With compounding, the average teacher salary in the district is now 50 percent higher than it was in 1989, and that doesn't count the additional pay teachers receive when they complete a graduate degree and other courses.

So, it's understandable that many taxpayers, who feel fortunate to be making a little more than they were five years ago, are upset that the teacher union may be returning to the well asking for another unreasonably high pay raise. Still, talk of a 10 percent reduction reeks more of political opportunism than reasoned argument, and stands almost no chance of adoption. As for eliminating bereavement and emergency leave, perhaps the taxpayer group expects teachers to arrange for family illness and death to occur the summer months.

Some of the ideas make sense, especially requiring teachers who live outside the district to pay tuition if their children are to attend Lake-Lehman schools. Another, ending the practice of making a lump sum payment for summer salaries in June, would bring teachers more securely into the world the rest of us inhabit. The recommendation that automatic salary increases based on a teacher amassing additional course credits be eliminated is a bit too harshly drawn. In some cases, the extra training should improve a teacher's performance, and a small incentive to do so is appropriate.

The Lake-Lehman Taxpayer Association's list of financial targets is a mixed bag. They should be congratulated for getting involved and identifying areas for negotiation. But, like just about every aspect of public life, everyone should keep a sharp eye out for the personal or political ambition behind the pronouncements.

### Serious and silly New Year wishes

Happy New Year! If 1993 wasn't so good for you, we hope 1994 will be better. If '93 was a winner, may your luck hold for at least another 12 months.

In sports, they call years like 1993 "transitions," or sometimes "rebuilding." In the United States, a new president lurched from left to right (okay, maybe center) trying to get his bearings. All in all, we held our own, as the economy seems now to be on a steady upturn, and "consumer confidence" is on the rebound. That last one is hard to judge; does it measure the confidence of consumers, or the confidence to consume? In any event, it's unlikely we'd be more willing to part with hard-earned cash if we weren't feeling better overall.

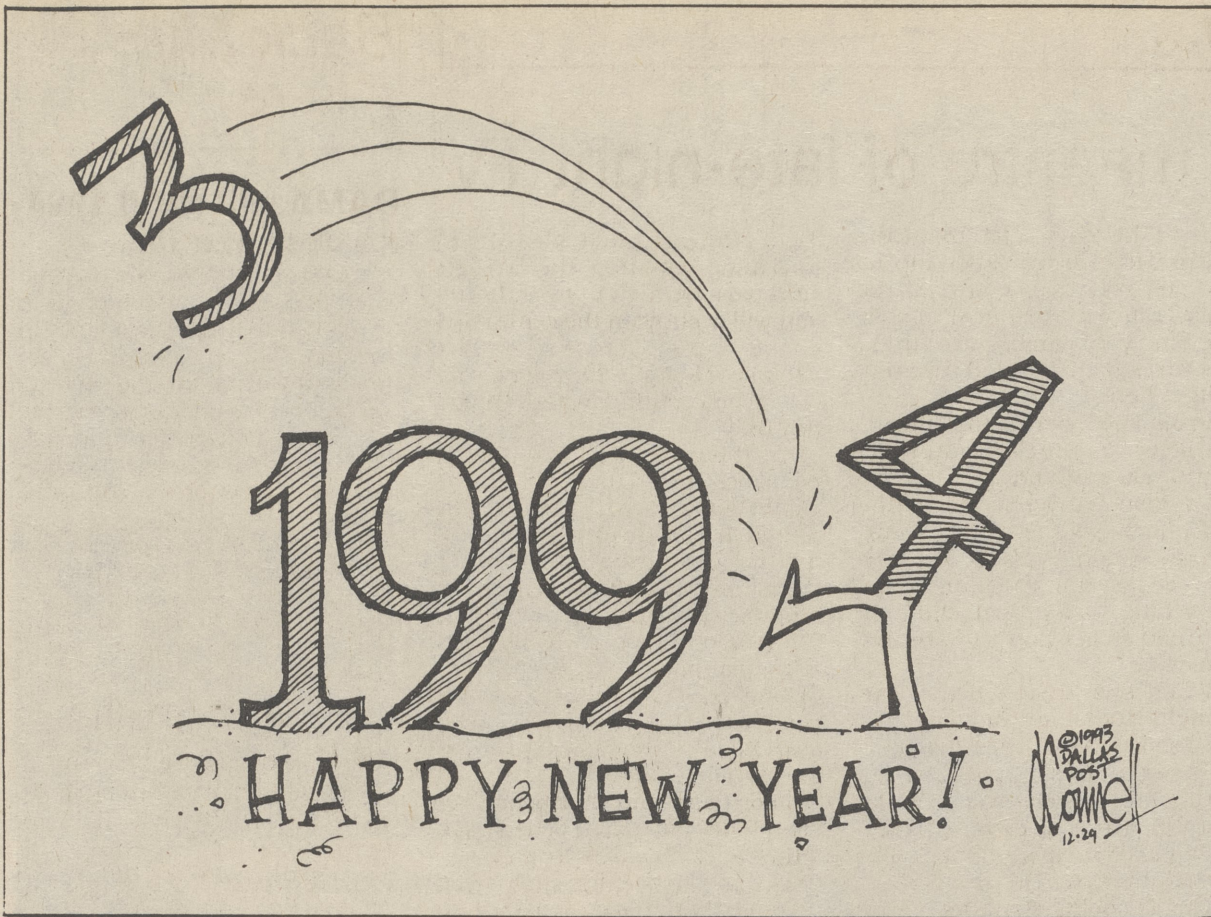
On a less ambiguous note, Unicef announced last week that diseases which cause the most deaths of small children are in retreat worldwide. The agency's report said that deaths from pneumonia, diarrhea, measles, tetanus and whooping cough are all falling, and that severe malnutrition is declining. Unicef's executive director was so impressed that he said these maladies may be in their final stages.

Another bit of good news was that The Donald and Marla tied the knot in a typically gaudy ceremony at the Plaza hotel, which he and the banks own. Perhaps fatherhood and married life will remove them from the news for awhile.

Now, if only in 1994 Oprah can keep her weight down as the fighting in Bosnia subsides, it may be a good year.

### 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.



Only yesterday

### 60 Years Ago - Jan. 5, 1934 JT SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENT RESIGNS

Absence of any new cases of scarlet fever in the Harveys Lake region this week indicated that the threatened epidemic had been curbed, but Elmer Kerr, State Health Officer asked that parents and school officials continue to guard against another outbreak.

Charging that politics rather than public welfare, motivated the motion to discharge a salaried employe of Jackson Township School District, John M. Hewitt, president of the board resigned at the meeting Tuesday night.

Noxen basketball team defeated, Dallas Borough 40-36 while Lehman defeated Laketon, 27-17. Orange bowed to Trucksville 34-29 and Noxen was victorious over Shavertown 61-35.

### 50 Years Ago - Dec. 31, 1943 MANY XMAS PARTIES BRIGHTEN HOLIDAY

Girls of the office of Commonwealth Telephone Company and those who formerly worked with them held their annual Christmas dinner party at Lundy's last Wednesday night.

Service Mothers' Club of Trucksville held their regular meeting and Christmas party last Monday at the Firemen's Hall.

You could get - Pork loins, rib-end 25¢ lb.; whole hams 38¢ lb.; Asco coffee, 2 1-lb. bags 47¢; Asco tomato soup 8¢, 11-oz. can.

### 40 Years Ago - Jan. 1, 1954 COPS COLLECT POLIO BUCKS IN TAVERNS

Dedication of the new Ross Township Elementary School at Sweet Valley will take place Saturday at 8 p.m. Open House will be held in the afternoon for those who wish to inspect the building, but who are prevented from joining the evening crowd.

Police throughout the Back Mountain area are distributing collection boxes for polio in all taverns in the district. The police of each district are responsible for the establishments in their vicinity receiving the boxes.

Now playing, "Dnagerous Crossing" starring Jeanne Crain, and Michael Rennie at Himmler Theatre.

### 30 Years Ago - Dec. 30, 1963 NEW SANTA STOLEN FROM W. DALLAS HOME

A new life size Santa Claus figure was stolen from the West Dallas property of Floyd Slocum, 20 minutes after it was set up last Monday. Slocum is offering a \$25 reward for information leading to arrest and conviction of the culprits said Dallas Township Police Chief Frank Lange.

Luzerne County Medical Association sent a citation to *The Dallas Post* for "unselfish contribution to the health of people of Luzerne County during the Victory Over Polio Campaign."

The Original New York Harlem Satellites, led by Owen Coach "Rookie" Brown former Globe Trotter and star of the "Harlem Globe Trotters Story," will appear at Dallas Senior High School, Jan. 3 at 8 p.m. against the Faculty All Stars.

### 20 Years Ago - Jan. 3, 1974 SAND CANDLES LIGHT CHRIST CHILD'S WAY

Candles at least 600 dozen of them, lined several streets in Dallas and Shavertown Christmas Eve, "Lighting the Way for the Christ Child". The custom according to Joe Muldoon, president of New Goss Manor Taxpayers Association was brought to New Goss Manor about five years ago.

David N. Schooley of Shavertown, senior vice president and treasurer of Fowler, Dick & Walker has been named co-chairman of College Misericordia's Golden Jubilee Campaign. He will share the responsibility of directing the college's first capital funds drive with drive chairman Richard F. Laux.

You could get - Chuck roast, \$1.28 lb.; chicken legs or breasts quarter cut 58¢; tangelos, doz. 59¢; Shrimp cocktail 3 4-oz. jars, \$1.00.

### Letters

#### Jitneys could be answer for bus service

Editor,  
Your December 15 editorial suggests that someone must step in to save the LCTA bus service. Obviously, since those who presently use the service are unwilling or unable to pay the full cost of its continued operation, the implication is that the taxpayers of Luzerne County should "ante up".

Since most County taxpayers don't ever use the bus service there may be some possible objec-

tions from those quarters. Maybe a little restructuring could be effected to convert the LCTA into a charitable organization and thereby make taxpayer donations "tax-deductible".

A more feasible suggestion, I think, would be for LCTA to use its offices to facilitate the inauguration of "jitney" service to replace the LCTA. Such service is common abroad and has even sprung up in some U.S. cities in response

to inadequate public bus service. Reportedly, fares are lower, operating costs are lower, operators are happier and customers are happier. If there really is a need, usually private enterprise can be depended on to fill it. Government service is not always the most economical nor most satisfactory solution.

Hugh P. King  
Dallas

#### Student seeks information for class project

Editor,  
My name is Debbie and I am a fifth grade student at Charles Hay Elementary School in Englewood, Colorado. I am doing a research project on your state and I need information. Our class is study-

ing the geography and history of the United States.

We would appreciate it if you would send us a postcard. Everyone in our class is doing a different state, and it is our goal to collect postcards and information

from all over the United States. Thank you for your help.

Debbie Wolfe  
Charles Hay Elementary  
3195 S. Lafayette Street  
Englewood, Colorado 80110

#### Thanks for support during child's illness

Editor,  
It's that time of year when people are more thoughtful, generous, and open to the needs of others; when more than at any other time, the good in people shines outward and renews our hope in humanity. Children seem to be shown special kindness, because many people feel Christmas is more for them than anyone. Perhaps that is why so many people opened their hearts and their hands to our family, especially our son, Seth, when they learned of his illness. But, I be-

lieve they would have reacted the same way no matter what time of year it was.

We asked only for prayer, and it came from multitudes of people of all faiths and from many churches for one young boy who many of them didn't know but had only heard about. It was through the strength God gave us which came by way of the prayers of these people that we were able to bear our heavy burden. We knew God had kept his promise to always be with us and never leave us.

We feel deeply touched by a

spirit of loving kindness and warmth that Christmas is supposed to bring to all.

To everyone who has given us this wonderful gift of themselves this year, we wish that this feeling of warmth and loving spirit will return to you tenfold.

Again we ask for prayers of thanksgiving and good health for Seth and all sick children everywhere.

Blessings and Peace at this Holy Season and Always,  
Lois Linsinbigler  
Harveys Lake

### J.W.J.

#### A New Year's wish list for our planet

By J.W. JOHNSON

With both a verbal and visual ferocity, the glittering chorus of Christmas/New Years descends upon us at this time of year.

But if America looks inward as it approaches years end—1993, where are we? Are we where we want to be economically, morally, ethically and politically?

As we consider those questions, the true message of last week's celebration should not be swept aside, however, by the glitter, but rather should become part of personal efforts to deal with disturbing secular realities.

The dominant faith in this nation is Christianity—a belief in salvation through Jesus Christ—hence, and to the accepting consternation of other faiths, a generally accepted celebration of Christmas as a national holiday. Many threads have been woven into the Christian fabric since Jesus walked the earth. Many interpretations have resulted in a variety of faiths subscribing more or less to the beatitudes and other teachings of Jesus.

And yet the simple message of Jesus was one of life, of life that should be lived in the shadow of the Ten Commandments. It is only through ego manifestation by the worshippers that the message gets lost in the interpretive ecstasy of denomination; or historically has been trampled through millions of people being killed in the name of Jesus; or has been deadened in a rush to argue how many angels can dance on the head of a pin; or has been cast aside today, along with the charity of Christ, as many Christians, either as individuals or as churches, stand in front of the government trough taking secu-

lar handouts to the glorification of whom?

Conversely, it is astounding in a land of a supposed separation of church and state to hear those who perceive it is appropriate for government to make moral decisions for the rest of us, a notion which stabs at the very heart of how and why this nation came to pass.

Whether the subject is church sheltering of refugees, pornography, abortion, involuntary sterilization, or a host of other issues, the simplistic, jingoistic moralizers make basically the same argument:

"Because it is legal (when referring to abortion, for example), does not make it moral." And then commit mental terrorism or attempt to terrorize lawmakers in persuasion to a particular single issue point of view.

More to the point, it would be impossible to even guess as to how many persons have been killed in the name of religion—in the name of religions which proclaim—on whatever day they worship—the sanctity of human life, and wage war on fellow human beings the rest of the week. And then, last week, Christians around the world selling the memory of Jesus as so much wrapping paper, toys and appliances.

Our government—which is to say our constitution, clearly states that it is not written within the power of government (nor should it be) to make moral decisions on behalf of its constituents; that, in fact, ours is not a 'theocracy' of any stripe.

And yet the violence, both mental and otherwise, of single issue advocates, continues to plague our electoral process, and continues to break apart our noble

experiment. We are rapidly becoming a parochial nation of regions and voting blocs primarily based upon single issues.

James Madison said our republic democracy was created "to secure the public good, and private rights, against the danger of...faction, and at the same time to preserve the spirit and form of popular government."

And while we as a nation continue to wrestle with these dichotomies, following is my New Year's list for this planet. How about a world.

—Where one death does, indeed, diminish us all rather than get us to tune in next week to witness yet another.

—Where class hatred is understood to be born out of ignorance and fear, and for us to possess the courage to act upon that understanding.

—Where politicians do not promise to build bridges even where there are no rivers.

—Where 'religion' isn't used as an excuse to judge and classify; to maim and kill.

—Where we spend more time seeking to understand the questions, rather than boasting of knowing the answers.

—Where we take individual responsibility for our actions, successes and failures.

—Where tolerance means more than the what an engineer says should be the space between two pieces of metal; indeed closing the space between ourselves.

—Where the Ten Commandments are not a ceiling, but rather a horizon.

—Where communication is not simply a road to an end, but a highway toward new beginnings.

**The Dallas Post**  
Published Weekly by Bartsen Media, Inc.  
P.O. Box 366, Dallas PA 18612  
Telephone: 717-675-5211

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