

A. Case for conservation

Octogenerian adventures at the bottom of the world

By ALENE N. CASE

Some people spend their later years writing their memoirs. Many people retire to sunnier climes or at least spend their winters "down South." Some people volunteer to spend time with school children, sharing their life experiences. Norman Vaughan has done all of these things. But, that is where his similarity to "most people" ends.

Norman D. Vaughan was a young man of twenty-two when he first went to Antarctica. He spent a year and a half there as a dog handler for Admiral Richard Byrd's 1928-30 scientific expedition to the icy continent. That was before Cortex or plastic bags were invented. That was when the only access to the continent was by boat. That was when very little of the white wilderness was charted.

Vaughan is one of two surviving members of that large expedition. He recently put his recollections down on paper with the help of writer Cecil B. Murphey. Their

book is entitled *With Byrd at the Bottom of the World*. But Vaughan has never been content to sit and contemplate anything for very long. He has completed the Iditarod race across Alaska thirteen times - the last when he was 84 years old. He spends his summers in Greenland salvaging World War II airplanes now buried hundreds of feet under ice.

Byrd named one 10,300 foot peak "Mount Vaughan" in his honor. Now, 65 years later, Norman Vaughan has decided to scale that mountain. So, while most of us dream of escaping to the south, Mr. Vaughan totally overdid it. He wanted to spend his eighty-eighth birthday on top of his mountain. He and his wife (age 50) were planning to drive two dog teams that would supply camps for six people. These teams would be the last dogs allowed in Antarctica because a new treaty prohibits non-native animals on the continent after April of this year.

Unfortunately, the weather has been just as fickle in the southern hemisphere this winter as it has

been here. It was too hot for the dogs in Peru so they were sent ahead with a veterinarian and several thousand pounds of supplies. The plane crashed just short of the intended destination. Several dogs were lost and the vet sustained severe injuries. This accident necessitated major revisions in the plans. The sixteen surviving dogs were returned to Alaska. Sleds would now be replaced by "snow machines." (The veterinarian underwent 12 hours of surgery in Minnesota and is recuperating.)

Vaughan pressed on, encouraged by the thousands school children who were following his progress through the wonders of modern communication devices. Teachers all over the USA and in several other countries were using this expedition to teach a variety of subjects in their classrooms. Students were challenged to "pack" eighty pounds of gear to last them two months. (What can you absolutely not live without?) Others teamed up with senior centers to explore the challenges

of aging. Others learned the wide variety of scientific lessons that this last true wilderness has to offer. And, all of them practiced the art of communication by sending and receiving e-mail and fax messages.

A smaller crew, accompanied by staff from the National Geographic Society, set up camp in Antarctica in early January. Then nasty weather became the biggest problem. While we gazed out of our windows and wondered if we were in Antarctica, Norman and Carolyn Vaughan gazed out of their tent each morning in Antarctica wondering if this would be the day that would be good for travel. It never was. On January 19, they decided to return to Peru and then home to Alaska to plan for another attempt this fall.

Is Vaughan discouraged? No. This is the man whose most famous words were uttered in Greenland after a similar setback when he was in his mid-70's. "We went as far as men could go. We have not failed because we have not quit."

The economic viewpoint

Tobyhanna Army Depot is big force in N.E. PA

By HOWARD J. GROSSMAN

Few people are aware of the astonishing impact which Tobyhanna Army Depot has on Northeastern Pennsylvania and its future. Tucked away in the middle of the Pocono Mountains, the Depot is a regional treasure which provides not only a strong military capability but an astonishing economic and community impact, unsurpassed in this region. It has the highest technological capacity and capability; it serves as a regional entity with employees living in all Northeastern Pennsylvania counties; it contributes to many community drives, enabling them to be highly successful and important to the quality of life of the region; and it has a direct plus indirect economic impact totaling over \$500 million based upon its current workforce complement of 9,000.

One of the most exciting facts regarding Tobyhanna Army Depot is that the Depot is rated number one of all Army Depots in the Base Realignment Closure Commission report for 1993 as far as military value is concerned. This is a quantitative measure of operational efficiency, expandability, quality of life, suitability and essentiality. It has to do with such measures as the following:

- Maintenance capacity
- Location
- Civilian salary
- Place is rated almanac rating
- Permanent facilities
- Environmental compliance
- One of the highly skilled determinants with respect to Tobyhanna Army Depot is related to the question of technology. With respect to

technology and modernization, Tobyhanna Army Depot offers the following assets:

- Flexible computer integrated manufacturing
- Fiber optics
- Multi-layer printed circuit boards
- Automated test equipment
- Surface mounted components
- Repair resource planning system
- Enterprise information system
- Hazardous material management
- Computer aided engineering

Concerning the economic impact of Tobyhanna Army Depot, it is the largest employer in Northeastern Pennsylvania. Employees have over 200 occupational skills dealing with a total inventory worth \$3.2 billion and an operating budget of \$270 million. The jobs at Tobyhanna Army Depot require a high degree of technology skills, thus salaries at the Depot are commensurate accordingly.

An interesting observation regarding the importance of the Depot to the entire region is to know where the workers at the Depot live. The following table demonstrates over 2,700 of the total workforce at the Depot live in Lackawanna and Luzerne counties. The data by county is as follows:

Lackawanna	1,578
Luzerne	1,077
Monroe	598
Wayne	245
Carbon	88
Pike	45
Wyoming	39
Northampton	20
Schuylkill	16
Susquehanna	13
Other	37
Total	3,836

The economic impact of the Depot based upon salaries, utilities, contractual services and other categories totals \$265 million based upon the category of area wages and salaries. The total impact including direct and indirect items is \$11.2 million when the numbers of regional jobs are considered that come about as a result of the Depot being a supplier of goods and services throughout Northeastern Pennsylvania. The number of regional jobs cataloged as having a relationship to Tobyhanna Army Depot is 9,533.

In fiscal year 1993, local area trade dollars in Lackawanna, Luzerne, Monroe counties and the Allentown/Bethlehem/Easton area totaled \$11,907,122 which is an increase over fiscal year '91 and fiscal year '92 figures. Tax payments by civilian employees in 1992 to the State of Pennsylvania from Depot employees was \$3,025,544.37. Local taxes paid by Depot employees was \$1,314,613.71 thus arriving at a

total tax payment of \$4,340,158.08.

Community support by the Depot include significant blood donations totaling 2,000 units annually, contributions to a combined federal campaign (similar to the United Way) of \$106,000 to 45 agencies in five counties, Operation Santa Claus, many types of neighborhood activities and support services to over 20,000 military retirees and family members. Finally, the Depot has a strong vision for the future of being the Department of Defense electronic center. Such a role would significantly expand and enhance the importance of Tobyhanna Army Depot as a key player in Northeastern Pennsylvania and throughout the entire nation. Anyone desiring further information regarding the Depot can contact EDCNP, 1151 Oak Street, Pittston, PA 18640.

Howard Grossman is Executive Director of the Economic Development Council of Northeastern Pennsylvania. He lives in Dallas.

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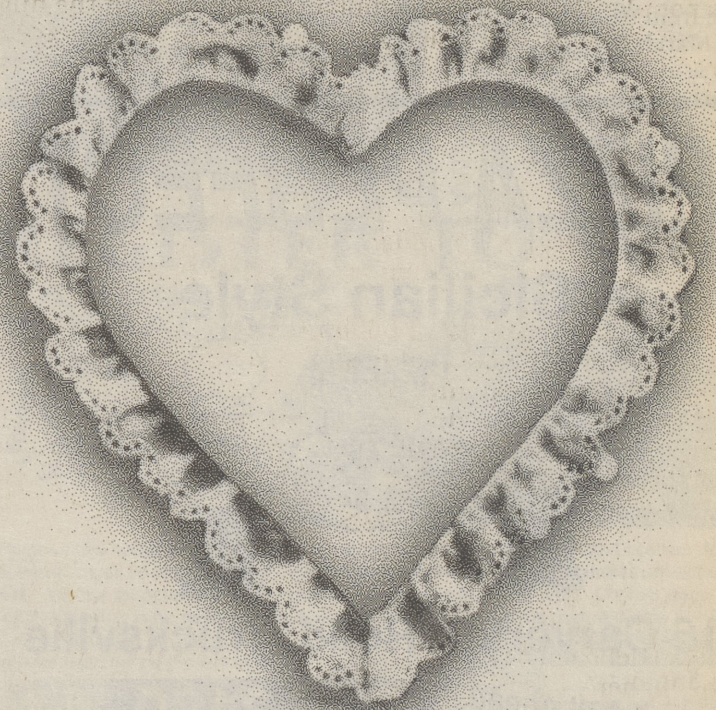
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February marks American Heart Month and Geisinger wants to direct attention to women and heart disease. We encourage you to get to *Know Your Sweet Heart*, and take part in the educational events offered by Geisinger.

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