

## Kelly honored by Victims Resource Center

Shavertown resident Mary Ann Kelly was one of three women honored recently for their outstanding contributions to the Victims Resource Center.

The honorees received VRC's highest award, the Lifetime Membership Award, presented at the Center's 18th Annual Dinner.

Mary Ann Kelly is the Immediate Past President of the VRC Board of Directors. She also served as Vice-president of the Board, was chairperson of the Geranium and Development Committees. She is a member of VRC's Personnel, Nominating and Foundations Committees, the Advisory Com-

mittee of Luzerne County Office of Human Services, the Business and Industry Committee of the Chamber of Commerce, and the Northeast Advertising Association.

Ms. Kelly is Director of Marketing for First Peoples National Bank. She resides in Shavertown and is the mother of two children.

J.W.J.

## Get serious about crimes against women

By J.W. JOHNSON

As the statistics for child abuse mount higher and higher here, as they do nationwide, hidden in those numbers are equally shocking facts:

As often as not, and often in concert with, or even before the child is abused, the child's mother is.

And if not abused in the home, then in the society in general i.e., in 1989 there were 2.96 forcible rapes in Pennsylvania per 1,000 population. Project that over the state's nearly 12 million persons and you can see that violence against women is more than just what the shock TV jerks talk about.

Violence against women is so much a part of our societal nomenclature that, for example, in New York State last year, five men were charged with first-degree rape of a drunken woman in a small town bar. They were eventually permitted to plead guilty to misdemeanor sexual conduct. Instead of the 25 years in prison which comes with first degree rape, they each received \$750 fines...and walked.

Sound far fetched....read on.

A Colorado woman was kidnapped and raped in January. She escaped from her attacker and stopped a passing motorist. The motorist was taking her to the police station when the rapist pulled alongside, shot the driver, kidnapped the woman again...and murdered her.

Juries across the country rou-

tinely underpunish perpetrators of crimes against women, failing for example, to see that a crime has even been committed when a woman is assaulted by her husband...and if you're a rape victim, be prepared to undergo hell when you go to court.

National numbers on rape convictions bear this out. Only 10 percent of reported rapes result in a conviction...50 percent of rapists get less than a year in jail...and 25 percent get only probation.

The attitude about violence against women is as old as the relationship between men and women. Men are stronger than women. When the frustration of simple existence rears its head, often the easiest and most convenient target is the woman standing next to you.

As day to day survival issues have diminished and been replaced by a relatively comfortable and safe living environment for most persons, the attitudes about how to deal with frustration and other issues of power have not caught up...many men still believe it is correct, proper, appropriate and even necessary to hit "their women" occasionally...to show them who's boss, or to keep them in line, or... (fill in the blank).

Aside from public education programs which point out that violence solves nothing, about all that can be done is for our legislatures to address the question legally.

Last year the House of Representatives in Washington adopted

"The Violence Against Women Act." If enacted, the law would place a greater emphasis on gender based violence, and provide funds for counseling and crisis shelters for battered women.

The bill is currently tied up in the much larger crime bill in the U.S. Senate...where it will languish alongwith that larger (but useless) piece of legislation; useless because it pays lip service to real crime, and puts window dressing on career criminal activities...three strikes and you're out, indeed...what career criminal is going to worry about that...and if he does, it will only be realized that if he's caught for a third time, he's going to go away for a long time...so why not kill, or rape, or assault my robbery victim while I'm at it...cause I'm going away if I get caught?

The crime bill puts a thin veneer of concern on the crime issues facing this country...the major one of which is drugs and related crime. Until we are serious about dealing with drugs in our society, all the rhetoric about crime will remain just that...rhetoric blowing in the wind.

Likewise, until we get serious about the continued abuse of women and children in this society, then we will continue to read about children being stuffed in garbage bags, and women raped, both acts of violence against the weakest of us.

That is, those who bear the future, and the future itself. Some future, huh?

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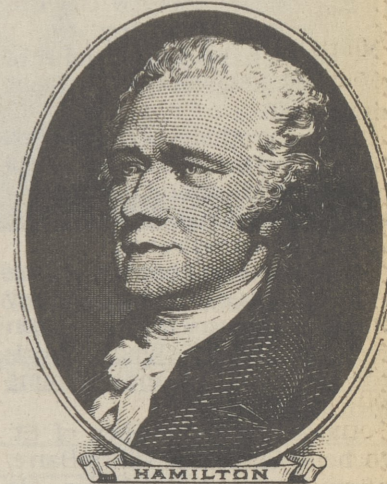
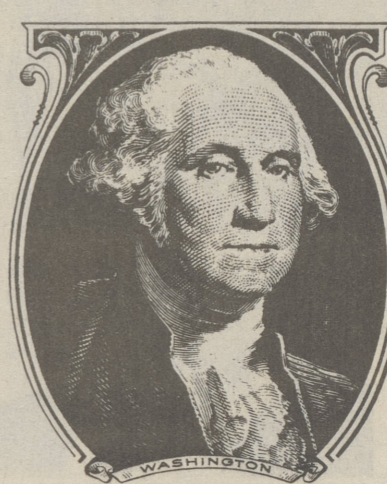
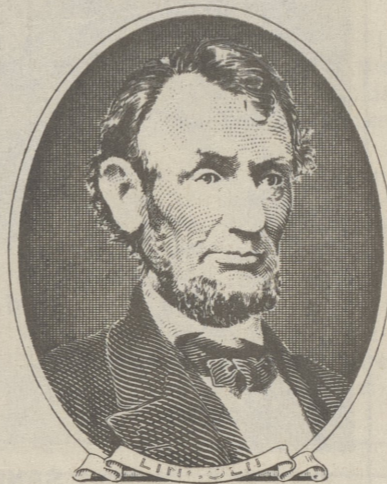
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## Library news

### 'Pennies for Periodicals' project continues

By NANCY KOZEMCHAK

The Back Mountain Memorial Library recently concluded the 'Pennies for Periodicals' project, sponsored by Friends of the Library, which netted the library a total of \$239.05. This money will help pay for the periodicals the library receives in 1994. The green jar is back in the library! In its designated position, next to the water cooler in the lobby. The jar is now ready to accept all kinds of money for the Friends on-going financial support of the library. The current project is titled: "Money for Maintenance". The library needs help with snow removal and heating costs, due to the long hard winter we have all experienced. We will appreciate whatever money is given for this project to help with the added expense of this winter.

Ruth Tetschner has announced the Western Line Dancing Lessons being held at the Dallas

Elementary School from 7 to 8:30 p.m. will continue until the last Thursday in May, which is May 26. Instructor is Larry Griffin; cost is \$3 per person and the proceeds do benefit the Back Mountain Memorial Library.

New books at the library: "Eldest Son: Zhou Enlai and the Making of Modern China, 1898-1976". Zhou Enlai was one of the greatest statesmen of the twentieth century. Long overshadowed by the more visible—and charismatic—Mao Dzedong, he and his life and extraordinary accomplishments remain little recognized outside China, where he is still revered as the beloved father of the modern nation. This is a unique social biography.

"Lethal Passage" by Erik Larson is the story of how the travels of a single handgun expose the roots of America's gun crisis. One bitter cold morning a sixteen year old boy named Nicholas Elliot

walked into his Virginia high school with a Cobray M-11/9—touted by its manufacturer as "the gun that made the eighties roar"—stuffed in his backpack. By mid-morning he had killed one teacher and severely wounded another. Only sheer luck kept his rampage from becoming one of the worst in America's long and bloody infatuation with guns. This story pinpoints one important source of the violence.

"Rama Revealed; The Ultimate Encounter" by Arthur C. Clarke and Gentry Lee is the long-awaited conclusion of the most heralded science fiction series ever. The authors reveal the ultimate Raman plan for humanity. This book is the stunning conclusion to an epic journey. A mysterious voyage through interstellar space, a massive, alien starship carries its passengers to the end of a generations-long odyssey. The great experiment has failed.

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