

The Dallas Post

EDITORIALS

Making the best of a bad situation

People who live in Lehman will soon be faced with a Hobson's choice in how to deal with gasoline contamination of several wells near the center of town. The federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has indicated it will offer the township several options for solving the problem and has committed \$1.6 million to do so. But most of the solutions also will pose ongoing expenses to the community.

Building a water system to serve the affected homes and school building probably is the most expensive and least desirable option. That's because the usual source for such systems is a well, which may itself become contaminated in the future. There's also the possibility that chemicals could spread to new areas not served by whatever system might be built now. Tapping water lines into surface water sources such as the Huntsville or Ceasetown reservoirs seems a preferable alternative to a well-fed system.

The long-term difficulty posed by a water system is how to pay for maintenance, administration and repair. Lehman Township's supervisors are correct to point out that the small township simply isn't equipped to handle a municipal water system, especially one which serves such a minute number of customers. Would the ongoing costs be borne only by the properties served, or should the whole town share the expense?

The most sensible move at this time would appear to be equipping contaminated places with filters, assuming devices to satisfactorily clean the water are available. That way, if the gasoline spreads to more wells, the homes they supply can easily and quickly be equipped to correct the problem.

In an era of whiners, real character shows

Contamination of wells in Lehman Township has been a nightmare for everyone involved, but it has so far been handled in a most sensible and mature manner.

George Maculloch, who owns the service station that apparently is the source of the chemicals, has never shirked his responsibility to the affected parties. Instead, he has consistently volunteered his assistance by supplying bottled water, filters and new wells for as long as he was able to. Now, after nearly three years of cooperation, the expense has ballooned to the point that additional intervention is needed.

Maculloch's position has been matched by the response of the affected property owners. Instead of the usual shrieks of victimization so prevalent in our society, they understand that contamination of their wells was an accident, and recognize that Maculloch has made heroic efforts to correct the problem.

The handling of this unfortunate incident is a refreshing alternative to the denials, claims and lawsuits that seem standard fare in similar situations. It also is a credit to the good sense of everyone involved, and their commitment to upholding the civility that binds communities together through good and bad times.

Publisher's notebook

Congratulations to Grace Dove and Dave Konopki, who have won awards in the Pennsylvania Newspaper Publishers' Association Keystone Press Awards contest. Each is most deserving of recognition for the fine work they've contributed to The Dallas Post in recent years.

Grace took a first place for best health article, a piece about Lyme disease. Versatility is one of Grace's great strengths, and she was able to produce an award-winning article in no small measure because of her broad knowledge of health and the sciences.

Dave won two awards; a first for best sports/outdoor column and a second for best sports story. Anyone who has read Dave's work knows that he combines an abiding interest in sports with a witty writing style. His great respect for youthful athletes is readily evident, as well.

This brings to eight the number of state press awards won by Post writers since 1990, plus our two national awards last year. We're proud of them, and of the people who produced the work. But we're most happy when readers tell us they like what we're doing, or how we can make the newspaper better. You are our most important judges, and always will be.

Ron Bartizek

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.

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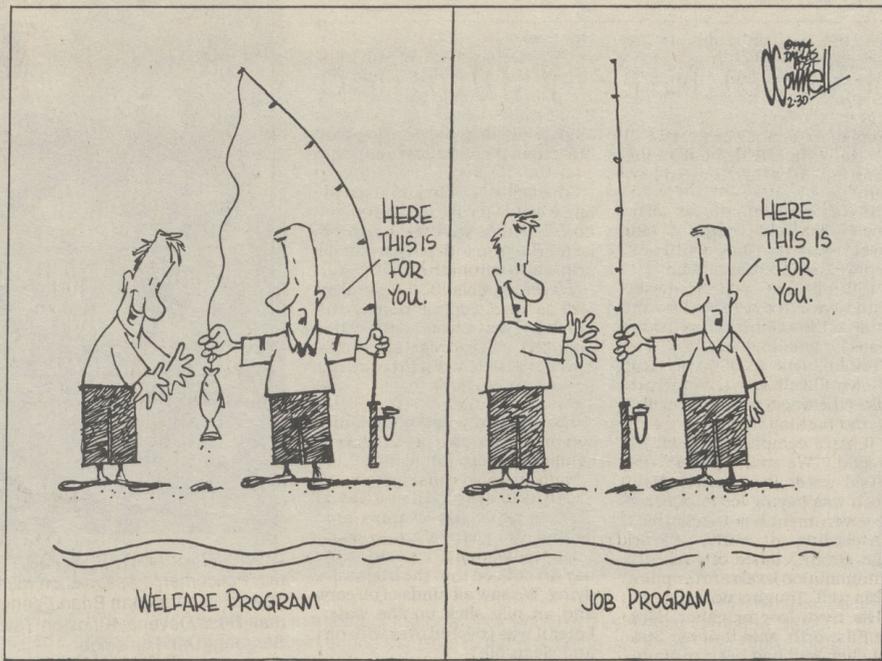
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Guest column

Assault weapons are not machine guns

By GEORGE C. HASAY
State Representative

This is in reference to the recent assault weapon issue.

When many people hear the term "semi-automatic assault weapon", they mistakenly think of machine guns and similar weapons which can fire a continuous stream of bullets with a single trigger pull. Unlike a machine gun or other automatic assault weapon, however, semi-automatic rifles or shotguns only fire a single bullet at a time. I think this is an important distinction that always seems to get lost in this very emotional debate.

For example, my dad has a semi-automatic shotgun he uses to hunt small game or ducks. I have friends who have semi-automatic rifles who go, for example, to New York to hunt big game or some of the Southern states, such as Kentucky, or some of the Western states, where semi-auto-

matic shotguns and rifles are allowed for hunting purposes.

I think it is important for people to have a better understanding of the reason why I voted to eliminate the power of Philadelphia, Pittsburgh and other local governments to control rifles and shotguns. Our law currently prohibits municipalities from regulating handguns, but Philadelphia and Pittsburgh had recently seized upon a loophole in this law to prohibit certain semi-automatic weapons. This loophole could be wide enough to permit each of our 2,500 municipalities to have its own separate set of regulations, including bans, for rifles and shotguns, depending on the politics of the people in power. Because of the chaos that a patchwork of hundreds of local laws could cause for our sportsmen and hunters, I voted to keep this issue as a statewide matter.

It is interesting to note, for your readership, that the highest crime

rates in the United States are in New York City and Washington, D.C., which also have the strongest gun control laws in the country. In a sense, these big cities told the good guys and the bad guys to give up their weapons and none of the bad guys complied. These gun bans seem to have become an urban version of unilateral disarmament.

Machine guns and other automatic weapons have already been banned through federal legislation. The anti-gun groups are now using the term assault weapon in a way that plays on people's fear and lack of understanding about the important distinction between automatic weapons and semi-automatics in order to push their agenda of banning semi-automatic rifles and shotguns. It's time to put aside such scare tactics and to focus on longer prison terms for violent criminals.

As I was saying...

Amazing resurgence of the fountain pen

By JACK HILSHER

ATTENTION ALL BALL-POINT PENS! One of America's nostalgia waves may soon be carrying you out to sea and replacing you with old-fashioned fountain pens...the Writing Instrument Association reported recently that 12 million fountain pens were sold in one year as opposed to only six million ten years ago.

Former President Reagan, normally a felt-tip pen lover, was talked into using a fountain pen when he and Premier Gorbachev signed an agreement on weapon reduction. The persuaders, not so hidden, were Parker Pen, Waterman, Schaffer and Cross, all the "old guard" in pen making.

Ball-points were supposed to bury fountain pens long ago, but it never happened and now it looks very much as though it never will. In 1945 a Hungarian hypnotist and journalist (what a combo!) names Lasalo Biro, had been playing with the ball-point idea since 1938 when he became intrigued with quick-drying ink. He left Hungary ahead of the Nazis

and wound up in Argentina where he patented his design in 1943 but not in the U.S., which indicated he wasn't all that bright.

When an American version touted as "the first pen that writes under water" went on sale at Gimbel's in NYC, 10,000 were sold the first day at \$12.50 each. By 1949 sales were far beyond fountain pens; the Bic "Crystal" sold 53 million in the UK, one for every man, woman and child in Britain.

Today a ball-point pen whose ink supply cannot be replaced sells for only 15¢, that is, if you buy a ten-pack. If you buy only two, they'll cost you 79¢ for both.

Certainly the most "AMERICAN MADE" ball points are the "TRU-ARROWS" made by Blackfeet Indians in Montana "with pride and craftsmanship." Each package bears this slogan: "Tsee-Ook-Ta-See-Tuki" which means (you don't have to believe this but its true) "Thank you for buying our product." You also get a blessing with every purchase: "May you write as swiftly as an arrow and as far as the eagle flies."

Compared to the venerable

fountain pen, ball-points are Johnnies-come-lately. A silver pen containing its own ink supply sold for ten francs in Paris as early as 1856. Samuel Pepys called his reservoir pen "very necessary" when one was given to by William Coventry in 1663. The following Sunday he used the new writing tool for taking down a sermon, and he surely wrote portions of his diary with the new pen.

One reason fountain pens are coming back is said to be the increased emphasis on penmanship in schools. "Calligraphy," the art of beautiful handwriting, is a college elective. "Cursive Writing," the joining of one letter after another, is a fancy way of describing ordinary handwriting, but it has caught on with many youngsters and a good fountain pen is a prized possession.

It was always that way really. The difference today is that kids miss the fun of filling a fountain pen the old way from a bottle of ink; now they insert a new cartridge when the old one runs dry. Aint' the same!

Library news

Luncheon With a Special Author April 28

By NANCY KOZEMCHAK

The Friends of the Back Mountain Memorial Library is sponsoring the sixth annual "Luncheon With a Special Author" to be held Thursday, April 28 at The Appletree Terrace at Newberry Estate. Hospitality will begin at 11:30 with the luncheon and speaker to begin at 12 noon. Donation for this special affair is \$16.50; checks to be made out to the Back Mountain Memorial Library. Your check becomes your reservation for the luncheon. The speaker will be Dennis McGovern, who is the co-author of two books, *I Remember Too Much* and *Sing Out Louise*. He is the editor of *Opera Scene* and a contributing editor of *American Skating World*.

As a freelance writer his works have been published here and in Europe. Born in Jermy, PA, he moved to New York to be an actor and appeared in leading roles in two Broadway productions and three national tours. He resides

in New York City. Information and reservation forms are available at the information desk in the library. Tables of eight will be available for seating, and seating preference will be honored.

The Pennies for Periodicals' project netted the library a total of \$239.05, which money will be used towards the bill for 1994 periodicals. The contest winners for the closest to the correct amount of money in the jar were: 1st, Will Aldrow of Dallas who guessed \$238; 2nd was Beth Rosenthal of Shavertown with \$237.47 and third was Craig Kasper of Hunlock Creek with a guess of \$250.

The jar will remain in its designated position, next to the water cooler in the lobby as an on-going Friends project. The current project is "Money for Maintenance"; to help with the added heating and snow removal expense of the hard winter we have all experienced. The jar is already receiving money from our patrons;

children especially look forward to dropping the coins in the top of the jar. This library is so appreciative of our tremendous community support.

New books at the library: "The Lovers" by Morris West is a brilliantly suspenseful tale of love stolen, love lost, and in the end astonishingly rediscovered. A poignant and intimate novel by a master storyteller. Bryan Cavanaugh, joins the crew of a wealthy American's yacht on a pleasure cruise for the American and his young bride. The marriage turns out to be one of convenience, as the American is a facilitator of new alliances.

"Code of Honor" by Harold Coyle is a novel which center is the dramatic courtmartial of a courageous young woman combat officer, forced to choose—on the battlefield—between an action that will save her troops and the senseless order of an arrogant general.

Only yesterday

60 Years Ago - April 6, 1934 AREA HAS THIRD WETTEST MARCH

Rainfall during March totaled 3.45 inches, a precipitation which was exceeded only twice since 1917 in 1922 and in 1933. Average for the month was 36.19, approximately 4 degrees below the average for the last 18 years and the lowest since 1932.

Rumors about town this week that Calvin McHose, supervising principal of Dallas Borough Schools, will not be retained were denied emphatically from an official source yesterday. McHose whose reappointment to position of supervising principal will receive endorsement by residents of Dallas has had a splendid record during the year.

Charles Dressel of Shavertown, who has filed petitions for the Representative nomination for State Representative from the 6th Legislative District, withdrew this week leaving Willard G. Shortz, incumbent with three opponents in the May primaries.

50 Years Ago - March 31, 1944 BACK MTN SPUDS HELP WAR EFFORT

Thousands of bushels of Back Mountain potatoes are finding their way to industrial alcohol plants where they are being distilled to aid in the manufacture of synthetic rubber and other products vital to winning the war.

The Red Cross Drive held during the month of March in the Back Mountain region exceeded the quota of \$4,085 by \$904, total returns to date being \$4,989.

You could get - Ground hamburger, 25¢ lb.; pork chops, center cut, 37¢ lb.; iceberg lettuce, fld. 9¢; new carrots, 2 lg. bchs. 13¢; oranges 33¢ doz.

40 Years Ago - April 2, 1954 DALLAS WATER'S NEW WELL READY TO GO

Dallas/Shavertown Water Company's new 390 foot well on Ferguson Avenue is waiting only for an official State permit to start supplying water to Druid Hills and portions of Shavertown. New pump, new housing, new connections and a 4 inch main await only the official green light.

Back Mountain school districts show slight fluctuations in reimbursement fractions for 1954-55, with Dallas Borough, Franklin Ross and Lehman Townships raised and Dallas Township, Jackson and Lake Township lowered. State Reimbursement fractions are estimated on either increase of pupil enrollment or decreases in market valuations in the districts.

Officials of the 6th annual Back Mountain Easter Hunt, sponsored by merchants with cooperation of Kingston Township Police Department, are asking parents to furnish each school child with one-half dozen hard-boiled and colored eggs for the big event on Saturday April 17.

30 Years Ago - April 2, 1964 STARFIRES CUT FIRST 45 RPM RECORD

"The Starfires," a Back Mountain rock n' roll band, made their first 45 r.p.m. recording at a major New York studio last weekend. Featuring two original songs "Please Come Back" and "You're My Only One" the group launched into orbit with a master recording at Bell Sound Studios, West 54th Street, New York.

The Back Mountain's little centenarian Mrs. Calla Parrish, of Beaumont is dead. "Aunt Calla" as she was affectionately known to both friend and neighbor passed away Saturday at Carpenter Convalescent Home, one month before her 102nd birthday, following a brief illness.

Mr. and Mrs. George Owens, of Trucksville, celebrated their 53rd wedding anniversary March 29.

20 Years Ago - April 4, 1974 MARCH ENDS WITH FOOT OF SNOW

The U.S. Weather Bureau reports a total of 12.3 inches of wet snow fell on the Back Mountain area last weekend. Heavy snow accumulated on power and telephone lines, knocking out service in several areas and causing miserable driving conditions of the area's roads.

P.G. & W Company has filed for water rate increases for four small subsidiary companies in Trucksville, Shavertown and Dallas Borough area. Increases are requested to be placed in effect June 1.

Larry Schuler, varsity coach of Dallas Mountaineers, has been named the 1974 winner of the Fred Hennebaul Coach of the Year Award marking the second consecutive year a Dallas wrestling mentor has been selected for the award. Last year James Bamrick received the honor.