

The Dallas Post

EDITORIALS

'Rails to Trails' can add to area's assets

Rails to Trails. It has a nice ring to it. More than that, it's a great idea, and would bring long overdue recreational opportunities to the Back Mountain.

The Rails to Trails project aims to convert abandoned railroad routes to paths for bicycling and hiking. The first local section would be a two-mile stretch between Main Street, Luzerne and Carverton Road in Trucksville. The Anthracite Scenic Trails Association is spearheading the project, which would eventually connect with other sections to form a 47-mile network stretching from Luzerne to Dushore.

There are a number of reasons to support this plan, among them opening up new avenues for safe exercise and good clean fun. As anyone knows who has tried to walk or ride any distance, the Back Mountain's roadways are not user-friendly for anything but vehicles. Traffic is heavy and fast-moving, shoulders are narrow or nonexistent and safe crossings are few and far between. In the case of Route 309 and 415, they don't exist.

There are economic benefits, too. Walkers and riders who use the paths will shop and eat at either end of their trip or along the way. New visitors will be attracted to the area just for the trails. Property values will be enhanced by convenient access to outdoor recreation. That's what happened in Dutchess County, New York, though the process took far too long. There, trails linking two small towns are helping to revitalize business, which improves the tax base.

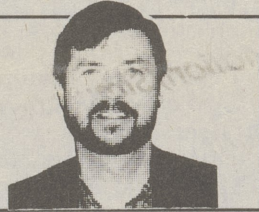
The old railroad beds are ideal for recreational use. They're wide, sturdy, gently sloping and pass through some beautiful venues. It's a shame they were abandoned, but they're not useless.

This is not a new idea, nor is it a done deal. There will be concerns from owners of property the railbeds cross, or land that may have to be used for access. These can be answered if everyone affected understands the true value of this neglected resource, and is willing to accept the minimal compromises that may be necessary.

The Back Mountain has long been known as a place of natural beauty. That virtue has been eroded in many spots, as pavement replaces grass, building continues and trees disappear from the landscape. Rails to Trails presents an opportunity to reclaim some of the attractions that are prized by everyone who lives here, or would like to.

Publisher's notebook

Ron Bartizek



If it accomplished nothing else, the unavoidable televised preliminary hearing on charges against O.J. Simpson provided a timely civics lesson for millions of Americans who may not have understood the workings of our judicial system or the value of constitutional protections. For my part, I think the judge erred, not in allowing evidence found before a search warrant was issued, but by failing to point out that the police officers who found it had every opportunity to obtain a search warrant and failed to do so. Perhaps this time they did nothing wrong, but one gets the impression these officers don't worry much about following simple procedures that are designed to uphold civilians' rights.

A front-page story in last Sunday's *New York Times* carried the predictable headline that teenagers worry a lot and distrust adults. Based on a poll of 1,055 teenagers 13 to 17 years old, the article said some teens feel alienated from their parents, cheat on tests and feel under pressure. This is news? A chart on page 1 that accompanied the beginning of the story showed that one-third of teens said their parents sometimes are not at their beck and call, while another 8 percent say their parents often aren't available when needed. I don't think it's a problem that 59 percent of parents are never or hardly ever unavailable at the moment their children want them. This is an example of news driven not by what's important but by how much time and money has been spent on it. It would seem that after investing substantial resources in the poll and subsequent reporting, the Times felt compelled to display the piece prominently, even if it didn't say much.

Despite our best efforts, nature still can reach out and put humans in their place from time to time, as the deaths of 12 firefighters in Colorado demonstrate. They were part of an elite crew equipped with the latest gear, yet shifting winds and fierce flames snuffed out their lives in an instant. There were other reminders recently; the airplane crash in North Carolina and floods in Georgia. But we can affect things too, and not always for the worst. Removal of the bald eagle from the endangered species list was a small triumph and a repayment for the bird's near extermination by man-made chemicals. Let's hope there are more examples of our ability to enhance the natural world, or at least to restore the parts we're guilty of harming.

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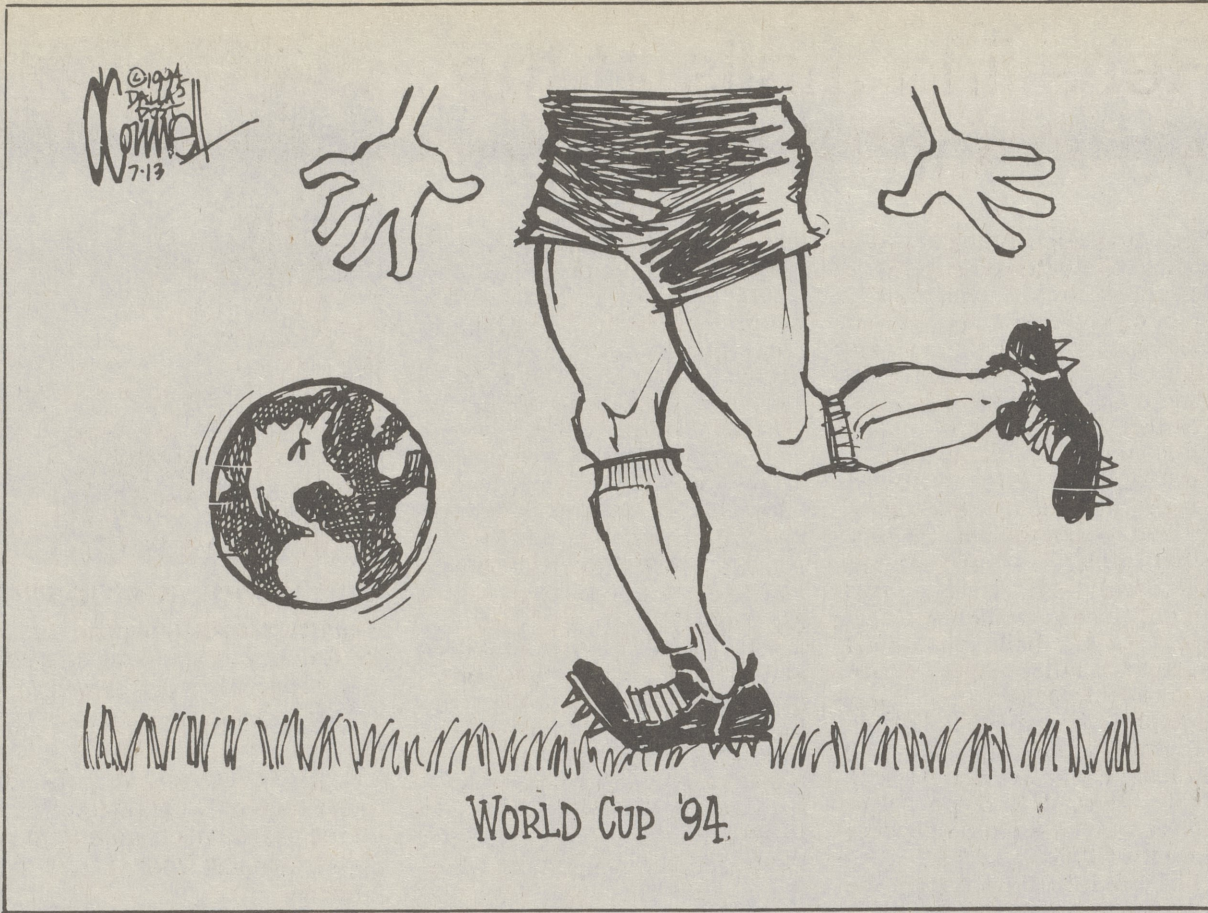
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Thanks

Meadows Center receptionists are tops

Editor:
I wish to compliment the four lovely receptionists at the Meadows Nursing Center in Dallas - namely, Eleanor Piazza, Mary Hodgson, Mary Ellen Gless and

Marjorie Brobst. Their unfailing interest and caring for both residents and their loved ones who visit them.

It creates a positive attitude that is so very important to all

concerned.

Many, many thanks and many hugs and kisses.

God bless all of you!

Elanor Ambrose
Dallas

The economic viewpoint

River of Dreams was once a nightmare

By HOWARD J. GROSSMAN

Have you ever wondered about the astonishing impact the Susquehanna River has had on Northeastern Pennsylvania and the entire Commonwealth as well as the Chesapeake Bay region?

In a book titled "Susquehanna, River of Dreams" by Susan Q. Stranahan has dramatically told the story of the Susquehanna River, its beauty, its horrific overflows, its fishing and recreational benefits, its long term significance and impact on parts of three states (Pennsylvania, New York and Maryland), its historical significance on the growth, development, and protection of the Northeastern Pennsylvania community. Told within the framework of 322 pages, the book outlines the geology, economic development, logging, floods, pollution, nuclear development, farming, shad restoration, and the river and the bay.

The magnificence of the river is in its awesome power and its strength in determining where, when, and what type of economic growth, development, and recreational and aesthetic opportunities occur, are occurring and will occur in the next century. Stranahan notes that "the history of the Susquehanna is one of repeated assaults-by humans and by the river.

The early race to control the riches of the Susquehanna extracted a toll. Canal builders diverted water and erected obstacles that impeded those who once traveled the river freely. Waves of loggers and miners laid bare the hillsides and opened veins of coal. The river retaliated with rampaging floods, but ultimately descended into squalor, choked with filth from the towns and industries that grew along its banks."

She goes on to say that "today's

problems appear more subtle, but nevertheless pose daunting challenges to the Susquehanna. Even such a seemingly benign neighbor as farming has inflicted serious harm. Experts are only beginning to understand the mysterious synergies that operate in the fragile ecosystem dominated by the Susquehanna. One thing has become clear however. The focus of responsibility has shifted. No longer is it a simple matter of pointing to someone else and affixing blame. Rather, the mundane daily decisions made by all who live within its vast watershed will determine the future of this beautiful river."

In technical terms, the pollution attributed to the destruction of fluidity of the river comes from point and non-point pollution. In other words, the blame for the increasing destruction of the river and many of its tributaries, is not solely directed to those who happen to live along the river but those who are far distant from the precise geographical location of the river itself and who may add to the fertilizers, add to the dumping of waste from industrial facilities, whether they be intended or unintended and the myriad demands being placed upon the river by a variety of interest groups as noted in the listing of Stranahan's chapter headings.

Within seven pages of the book with respect to the topic of farming and the river, Stranahan outlines some of the techniques which have been suggested and some of which have been tested to control the indiscriminate casting of by-products into the ground through agricultural practices which eventually reach the river scores of miles away from the actual location of the Susquehanna.

On the other hand, she also notes the amazing number of or-

ganizations which have sprung up to control the continuing pollution of the watershed and at the same time create institutional settings such as the Chesapeake Bay Commission, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay and others which have contributed strongly to a new wave of protection of the Susquehanna Watershed.

Furthermore, Stranahan noted the lack of land use planning protection and some of the difficulties which exist, especially in Pennsylvania, with its myriad and complex forms of local government, all of whom have ultimate control over the destiny of the use of land through planning, zoning and other techniques. She believes there is a need for more and better land use management control than the system which currently exists in states such as Pennsylvania within the Susquehanna River Watershed.

This is a book which deserves the attention of the Northeastern Pennsylvania community and all other communities and peoples throughout the Susquehanna River Watershed. It sets a tone, provides a well written historical perspective on the heritage which has made the Susquehanna a significant influence on the lives of many generations of people, and suggests that "there is reason to be optimistic about the future of the Susquehanna...it springs from the fierce loyalty the River has engendered in the people described in the pages of this book. They love the Susquehanna and revel in its remarkable comeback. But they also understand their obligations toward ensuring that the progress continues."

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

Library news

Cows of all size and description on display

By NANCY KOZEMCHAK

The display case at the Back Mountain Memorial Library is showing a super collection of cows, borrowed from Jana Stec of Dallas. Jana is seven years old and will be in 2nd grade at Dallas Elementary School in the fall. When Jana was 18 months old, she saw a particular cow in a shop at Gay's True Value and fell in love with it. Her mother bought it for her on the spot. Jana took it home, wrapped it in a blanket and took it everywhere with her and to bed as most children carry a doll. Charlie at the post office told her she had better put the cow in the refrigerator so the milk wouldn't get sour. And she did, it stayed in the refrigerator unless she was carrying it with her. She now receives cows for birthdays, Christmas and special occasions.

A small cow in the display with a bell is her favorite now. There is a large boy and a girl cow, which she received from Grandma and Grandpa Stec. Jana's mother made a jumper and a Christmas

vest for her from 'cow' material. There is a necklace made by Aunt Patty; salt and peppers, one made from an antique quilts bought from Pat Price, who's hobby is quilts while Jana's mother's hobby is antiques. An Amish friend has a dairy farm and to keep the lineage in line, the mother cow's name on the farm is Jennie, all female heifers produced by Jennie are named with girl's names that start with J. The next female heifer that Jennie produces will be named Jana, which will be her namesake.

Mrs. Stec and her twin sister were honored with twin females born to Susie and named Sharon and Shirley. The display also includes cows as clocks, stuffed animals, a hot pad, a wind sock, a door cold air stopper and a Hershey's candy box. These cows will be in residence at the library until August 3.

The library sponsored Western Line Dancing project was held at the Dallas Elementary School from January through May. The pro-

gram ran longer because of the snow cancellations. Ruth Tetschner chaired the project and the profit amounted to \$740. This is another way worthwhile money maker for the library and will be hopefully repeated the next year.

Our 'Cash for CD's' green jar project produced \$62 which money will be used to purchase new CD's to add to the library collection. We plan to buy some modern, western and jazz as well as some oldies. Our new project is AC for AC, which is all cash for air conditioning, which money will be the seed money for an air conditioned library in the future.

New books at the library: "Twelve Red Herring's" by Jeffrey Archer contains a dozen startling tales, each of which makes use of misleading clues to surprise the reader. A real gem. "Prince Charming" by Julie Garwood is a very special new love story...Taylor Stapleton was a lady and ladies never lost their composure. Lucas Ross hated England. A story of a scam.

Only yesterday

60 Years Ago - July 20, 1934 WATER MAIN BREAK LEADS TO SHORTAGE

With the discovery of a break in one of the water mains causing a leak of 64 gallons of water per minute, employees of Dallas-Shavertown Water Co. believe they have found the solution for the recent shortage of water in Dallas Borough. The break was discovered in the vicinity of College Misericordia, but not until after thousands of gallons had seeped away into the ground.

Efforts are being made to have the State Department of Highways take over the road from Lehman Center to Orange. During the past few weeks petitions have been circulated throughout, Lehman, Dallas Borough, Dallas and Franklin Townships and as soon as they are filled they will be forwarded to Gov. Pinchot for his consideration.

50 Years Ago - July 14, 1944 WALK-IN CANNERY OPENS IN BEAUMONT

The Beaumont Community Cannery officially opened this week. All the housewife needs to bring are vegetable or fruits she wants to can, sugar and glass jars. The cannery offers to residents of Beaumont and surrounding territory the most modern equipment and instructions.

Allan Sanford, Leslie Warhola and Harry Ohlmen, have been appointed by Dallas War Price and Rationing Board as members of the auto price panel who will supervise the new price ceilings which went into effect July 10 on used autos.

All persons interested in horses, and riding have been invited to gather at the stables of Gerald Frantz in Huntsville on Sunday evening to organize a Back Mountain Riding Club. In extending the invitation, Frantz said, "This is an opportunity for every horse lover to meet his neighbors with like interests."

40 Years Ago - July 16, 1954 LEGION POST IS DESTROYED BY FIRE

Fire originating in garbage cans at the rear of the building shortly before noon Wednesday completely destroyed the \$40,000 Home of Daddow-Isaacs Post American Legion on Huntsville Road, Dallas. Mr. and Mrs. Harold Lamoreaux who lived in the apartment on the second floor of the two 1/2 story frame building lost all their possessions.

With record gross receipts of \$12,469.80 the 8th Annual Library Auction will fall \$1,000 below 1953's banner year when total sales exceeded \$13,500. Crowds were larger this year than any previous auction but bidding was less spirited and sales at the auction block fell behind by \$1,068. This was largely in the antiques and new goods category.

You could get - Standing rib roast, 49¢ lb.; chicken breasts, 79¢ lb.; jumbo size cantaloupes, 2/33c; Star Kist Tuna, 6 1/2 oz. can 36¢; Ocean Spray jellied cranberry sauce, 2- 7 oz. cans 23¢.

30 Years Ago - July 16, 1964 PHONY ACCIDENT CALLS RILE POLICE

Three crank calls got Dallas police out of bed in the early hours of the morning in the last week with reports of accidents that did not actually occur. Borough Chief Russell Honeywell believes the calls were all made from a pay phone and police are very interested in finding the culprits.

The 18th Library Auction was again an unqualified success, all departments doing brisk business with especially heavy trade at the food stand in the books, odds and ends and candy stands. Crowds which filled the Risley barnyard for three days were estimated at peak on Saturday at about 9,000 people and 740 were served the chicken barbecue at Gate of Heaven School Thursday.

Now playing at the Dallas Outdoor Theatre, "Spencer's Mountain" and "P.T. 109".

20 Years Ago - July 18, 1974 PETITION ASKS FOR POOL AT DALLAS HIGH

A petition signed by 300 residents requesting a swimming pool be built on the Dallas High School grounds was presented to the Dallas School Board. Dr. Linford Werkheiser, superintendent of the district reported several meetings have already been held with the district's architect Paul Rodda to discuss construction costs, possible site and possible reimbursement from the Department of Education Bureau of Buildings.

Ralph Lewis, Back Mountain Memorial Library Auction treasurer said Tuesday that he anticipated a gross of just under \$30,000 from the 28th annual auction held last weekend. He said it appears the net would match last year's and perhaps exceed it in excess of \$25,000.