

The Dallas Post

EDITORIALS

Bad idea: Hunting in Frances Slocum Park Good idea: No ATV's

Officials of the state Department of Environmental Resources are seeking public comment on some ideas they have for Frances Slocum Park. Anyone who is interested will have a chance to speak out at a meeting March 30 at 7 p.m. Note that the meeting site has been changed from the park visitor center to the Fortinsky Auditorium at Penn State Wilkes-Barre. The most drastic proposal is one to allow deer hunting in the park in order to cull the 102-animal herd closer to the 27 deer thought to be the proper level. As it stands, the proposal would allow hunting in the 185-acre campground area only during the flintlock muzzleloader and winter archery seasons.

There are several reasons to question the wisdom of this plan, among them:

- The park covers more than 1,000 acres, and park naturalist Jerry Kozlansky says that acreage can support only 27 deer. The deer seem to disagree with that assessment.

- Under the proposal, hunting would be allowed in only 185 acres, just 18 percent of the park. Unless the deer are somehow lured or driven into that space, hunting won't do much to lower the population.

- Even if you kill off a few deer, won't others simply migrate into the park from nearby areas? Conversely, making the park less hospitable could encourage them to move onto nearby private land.

- Have the deer done so much harm? They aren't all that visible to visitors, except perhaps the ones who feed them regularly at a consistent time and place. Kozlansky is right to ask that the deer not be fed, especially food that isn't good for them.

- The park would have to be closed during any hunting season, to avoid the chance of injury to visitors.

Left alone, the deer will find their own equilibrium in the park, as they do anywhere else. If that is at a higher population than park officials project, so be it. Hunters have plenty of places to practice their skills without gaining access to the park, where some deer have become comfortable with humans and would be sitting ducks for an arrow or bullet. It doesn't make any sense to open Frances Slocum Park to hunting.

Other proposals have more merit, especially the ones that would protect habitat for birds and animals and encourage maintaining a natural setting throughout the park. The best idea would prohibit the use of all-terrain vehicles in the park. That prohibition should include motorcycles and perhaps even mountain bikes because of the damage their wheels cause which leads to more soil erosion. At the very least, the bikes should be restricted to areas where they will do the least harm.

Publisher's notebook

Ron Bartizek



I have watched with dismay the hysterical coverage of an incident at GAR High School in Wilkes-Barre, in which a teacher made racial remarks to two students. The facts appear to be uncontested; the teacher, annoyed with the teens, responded with mild racial slurs and perhaps even pushed one of them. There's no question in my mind the teacher should be punished with a formal reprimand or other discipline. After that I part company with many of my colleagues in the news media who have hammered away at this minor story as if it were of major import.

Chief among the drum beaters has been *The Times Leader*, which has led with the incident almost daily for two weeks. No detail is too small for a big, bold headline as the paper apparently tries to impress upon us bumpkins just how irredeemably racist we all are. Add Steve Corbett's predictable drivel on page 3, and you have a package to warm the heart of any down-and-out civil rights attorney.

This kind of overblown concern does more harm than good. My support for equal-rights is second to none, but I'm sick of every petty slight being expanded into an excuse to shout "racist" at the top of the lungs. Imagine how this whining sounds to someone with a preconception that minorities are always looking for special treatment.

Perhaps the exaggerated reaction to this small incident reflects how far race relations in American society have come. Thirty years ago last week, marchers arrived in Montgomery, Alabama to complete a three-day protest against the rank segregation of the time, and to draw attention to the denial of our nation's most fundamental right — to vote — to people of color. Three participants in that landmark event paid with their lives for daring to suggest that all citizens be treated equally.

I fear the inflated coverage of the incident at GAR trivializes the epic struggles that came before. Worse, concentrating on other people's paltry racism deflects attention from what really matters in an individual's life. I don't know a single successful person of any race who got where they are by complaining about how other people treated them. I know plenty of less successful ones, however, who spend plenty of time blaming their failures on someone else.

Encouraging individuals to succeed despite obstacles is far more compassionate than giving them excuses for failure. I fear the slant we've been given on this case offers little support and too much emphasis on nettlesome but ultimately meaningless aspects of life.



A small herd of deer enjoyed the spring weather alongside Huntsville Road in Dallas. Photo by Charlotte Bartizek.

A Case for Conservation



Alene N. Case

Our neighborhood has lost its greatest gardener. Her name was Kay and she lived for more than eighty springs. She knew each plant that grew on her small lot. She carefully removed, by hand, the "weeds" she did not want, and she saved seeds and propagated the plants that were special. Her yard was a riot of color from early spring through late fall. Thank goodness she shared many of the seeds and plants with us before she died! Kay's garden lives on.

Kay had discovered many of the secrets of maintaining a splendid flower garden. As more and more people are opting to grow wildflowers instead of large lawns, they will also discover these secrets. In his book *Landscaping With Wildflowers*, Jim Wilson puts it this way: "So many gardens disclose everything at first glance—they are constant, predictable, pat. Not mine. It has mystery, surprise, contradiction, movement, drama. I could never have planned it that way, and I rejoice in its sweetly chaotic spontaneity."

And then, of course, Mr. Wilson proceeds to tell the readers how to "plan" a wildflower garden appropriate for the region in which they live. And, he has some very good suggestions. I will include some of those ideas with things we have learned by experience so that you might be inspired to make your yard more natural.

One of the first steps in wildflower gardening is learning which plants are native to your area and which of those might do well in

A living monument to one who knew, loved wildflowers

your yard. One of the best ways to begin is by contacting the Pennsylvania Native Plant Society, 1806 Commonwealth Building, 316 Fourth Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15222. Many of the 200 species available from the New England Wild Flower Society would also be appropriate for Pennsylvania. Their address is Garden in the Woods, Hemenway Rd., Framingham, MA 01701. Borrowing seeds, cuttings, and small plants from friends is also an excellent way to assure healthy growth because local plants become adapted to local conditions.

You will be tempted, as we have been, to buy wildflower mixtures from seed catalogs. Some of these mixtures are specially formulated for the northeastern USA. Others are shade-loving species or ones that require direct sunlight. If you choose carefully, these may work for you. But, do not be surprised if annuals fail to reseed and return to your garden in future years. And, many seed mixtures include plants that are not native at all — like poppies — that put on a good show the first year while biennial or perennial plants are becoming established.

That brings me to the most important secret of wildflower gardening — patience. Please do not plow up your entire lawn the first year and try to convert it all to a wildflower meadow. As Jim Wilson says, "To match plants and habitat, you have to think like a plant." That takes time. Learn what grows well in one area of your yard and then expand to other areas. Remember that many wildflowers do not bloom their first year. Be patient. Also, be prepared to be pleasantly surprised. We accidentally encouraged the growth of a clump of "butter and eggs" near our driveway and found that it returns year after year in spite of road salt and other insults.

One of the most interesting discoveries that we have made is that wildflowers can be successfully mixed with other types of flowers in a garden. Bulbs such as tulips or daffodils are especially good because they tend to bloom early, they thrive where there is a mulch of leaves, and they do not like to have their leaves cut back before they have stored nutrients in their bulbs for the next year.

As your garden expands and you encourage the growth of native trees and shrubs, you will begin to notice that your yard is a magnet for a wide variety of butterflies and birds. One of the most important reasons for this is that wildflower gardens do not require added chemicals. Mulch, compost and water (and perhaps lime) are the only additions the gardener should consider. Wild plants have adapted to life with insects. They need insects to pollinate them so that they can form seeds. A few bites taken by a caterpillar is a small price to pay for the work of the adult butterfly. Birds are attracted not only by the seeds that form in the fall but also by the insects themselves. In fact, many birds prefer insects, especially when feeding their young.

Variety is very important to the ultimate success of wildflower gardens. Plant early-bloomers such as violets with late-bloomers such as New England asters. Flowers with a wide range of colors and sizes attract a wide variety of insects and birds. And, if a problem arises with one type of plant, others will be there to fill in the gaps.

People who have tried growing wildflower gardens have found that it is fun. Whether they approach it by studying books or by trial-and-error, they find that few other pastimes are as rewarding. Let's carry on Kay's legacy together.

Library news

Book Club membership continues to grow

By NANCY KOZEMCHAK

The Book Club of the Back Mountain Memorial Library met for the first session of the new season on Monday, March 20 in the reference room at the library. Elin Northrup, treasurer reported there are now 179 memberships paid for the year 1995.

Member dues are \$10 for a single and \$15 for a double membership for each year. Mary Panaway reviewed the list of recently purchased books by the book club for the members present. The program consisted of a book review by Mary Panaway, Christmas party pictures from Gene Wert, and a visit to the community room of the library by the members present. The community room is nearing completion and a formal dedication will be held in the near future. The next Book Club meeting will be held on the fourth Monday in April, April 24, due to the Easter holiday falling on the regular Monday. Guests and visitors are

always welcome at the meetings.

A new book donated to the library is titled 'Shingles' by Thomas Carl Thomsen. Anyone who has suffered from this disease is aware of the terrible pain and suffering involved. A very dear friend of the library has donated the book to the library; as she has been a victim of the disease also. There seems to be very little detailed information on the subject and this book was started by the author because he had trouble finding detailed data. The book includes an introduction by Dr. Benjamin L. Crue, Jr., the medical director of Durango Pain Rehabilitation Center, Durango, Colorado. The VZV Research Foundation in New York City claims this book is of immense help and comfort to the victim and the victim's family. The foundation deals with VZV infections: Shingles and related diseases. At the present, work is being conducted to find a vaccine for Shingles. The book may be borrowed from the library.

New books at the library: "Fare Play" by Barbara Paul is a mystery with Marian Larch. Who said life as a lieutenant in the New York City Police Department is easy? Three weeks into her new promotion, Lieutenant Marian Larch faces one of the most puzzling cases of her career: How did someone commit a murder, with no witnesses, on a crowded crosstown bus? It looks like a professional killing, to be able to carry off a murder in such a location.

"Moo" by Jane Smiley is a novel which is delicious and ambitious; a rich, blackly comic, brilliantly on-target send-up of our society. A midwestern university nicknamed Moo U is desperate for money and rife with intrigues and machinations—private, public, sexual, intellectual, financial, technological, domestic, global, social, and political. Laughter comes without warning as she lightly balances a cosmic cast with unleashed desire and consumption.

Only yesterday

60 Years Ago - Apr. 4, 1935 ROTARY CELEBRATES EIGHTH BIRTHDAY

A communications from Dallas Unemployed League, requesting that council employ some of its members as special police this summer, was received at the Dallas Borough Council meeting Monday evening. The councilmen assured the league that every consideration will be given.

Final plans for observance of the eighth anniversary of its organization were made by the Greater Dallas Rotary Club last night at its regular meeting in Suburban Inn. The Charter Night program will be given next Thursday night at Irem Country Club.

Dallas basketball team in the Rural League clinched the Back Mountain Championship 28-26 in a tense and exciting game with Lehman Wednesday in the borough high school.

50 Years Ago - Mar. 30, 1945 BORO GIRLS ARE BASKETBALL CHAMPS

Two Back Mountain communities, Trucksville and Shavertown, will open their new Teen-Age centers on successive nights this week. Carverton opened its youth center some weeks ago and a similar center will be opened shortly in Dallas.

For the first time since 1938, Dallas Borough High School produced a championship basketball team this season. Brilliant passing, speed, cooperative teamwork and the skilled coaching of Miss Florence Park combined to put the girls' team in a class by itself.

Incomplete returns last night indicated the Back Mountain has exceeded its quota in the Red Cross War Fund Drive by more than \$625.

Now playing at the Shaver Theatre, "This Is the Army" with George Murphy and Joan Leslie.

40 Years Ago - Apr. 1, 1955 FIRE GROUPIES WILL BE ARRESTED

Almost 90% of the parents of pupils in the first two grades of Dallas Borough, Kingston Township schools have signed consent slips to have their children given polio vaccine as soon as it is certified for use in Luzerne County.

Dr. Henry M. Laing Fire Company is taking immediate steps to prevent possible tragedy or serious injury to firemen by ordering the arrest of all "fire followers" who trail the truck within less than 500 feet. The near tragedy Tuesday evening when John Stenger fell from the Daniel C. Roberts truck has emphasized the necessity for such action.

Carl Swanson has the contract for razing the building formerly occupied by Boyd White to make way for the new parking lot for the Dallas Branch Miners National Bank.

30 Years Ago - Apr. 1, 1965 AREA'S OLDEST MAILMAN RETIRES

It is with sincere and deep regret that we note the death of Mr. John T. Jeter on March 28 at Mercy Hospital, Wilkes-Barre, and the passing of the Borough's most public spirited citizens. A regular professional engineer, Jeter donated his services to the borough without compensation for many years. After retiring from the Lehigh Valley Railroad he devoted full time to his borough duties.

Milton Perrego, 77, retired after 54 years of carrying mail out of the Dallas Post Office. Perrego, Dallas's oldest mailman has few misgivings about turning in his postal department operator's license. "I guess I'm entitled to a rest," he admitted last week.

20 Years Ago - Apr. 3, 1975 BURGLARS TRASH TWO SCHOOLS

Windows were smashed, doors jimmied, files destroyed and a large "burglar-proof" safe broken into at the Dallas Senior and Junior High School buildings late Monday or Tuesday morning. Despite the amount of damage the person/persons who broke into the building only obtained \$40 from the Senior High School candy machine. Due to the long holiday weekend all other money had been deposited.

Volunteers from the Kiwanis Club of Dallas, met recently to lay the groundwork for the second annual Back Mountain Charity Ball to be held at Irem Temple Country Club Pavilion June 28. Mr. and Mrs. Frank Muchler, RD 3, Dallas, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary at the home of Mr. and Mrs. George Ondish. The couple has two children; four grandchildren and 4 great-grandchildren.

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