

# The Dallas Post

## EDITORIALS

### Volunteers again show their worth

Once again, Back Mountain volunteer emergency service personnel were pressed into service and performed admirably, this time when Jackson Township employees were stricken ill by toxic fumes in the municipal building. What was originally a call about smoke in the building became an incident fraught with danger as an unknown agent was believed to have caused the illness.

Local emergency services have trained in the handling of hazardous materials for several years, often at their own expense. Fortunately, that training hasn't been put to much use, but when it has been, the level of skill has been evident. Perhaps the best example was the response to a gasoline truck that overturned on Route 309 several years ago. The situation was quickly controlled, even to the point of trapping leaked gas so that it didn't run into a nearby creek.

No one was seriously injured in the Jackson Township incident, and the mysterious toxin vanished as rapidly as it had appeared. It's good for the Back Mountain that the people who respond to emergencies don't disappear, but are there whenever they are needed.

### Welcome back, Thom, sort of, maybe, perhaps

He's baaaack! That's right, Thom Greco says he'll open the amphitheater at Harveys Lake (we won't use that other name and give the sponsor free advertising) after a year's hiatus to what he thought would be greener pastures at Montage Mountain.

Of course, it wouldn't have been a Greco-like announcement without an expression of his great altruism. You may recall he once said he was opening the amphitheater here in order to support Harveys Lake, which in his eye was a rotting carcass in need of revival. Now, Thom's sights are higher; he told another newspaper the main reason for his change of heart was loyalty to Luzerne County over that distant, foreign land to the northeast.

Come off it, Thom. You're in business to make a buck — actually, to make as many bucks as possible — and whatever happened between you and your partner at Montage, you figured you'd be better off going it alone at the lake. That's okay with us, as long as you run a tight ship and don't reopen the Tijuana bar until it's soundproofed. No grand statements of your charitable heart are required.

### Let's get on with 309 signal installations

Back Mountain motorists are eagerly awaiting the installation of new traffic signals along routes 309 and 415. Part of an overall plan that included last summer's widening and the addition of a fifth lane in Shavertown, the installation of five signals along with modifications at each intersection are necessary to control the heavy traffic flow on the highway.

Last year's work has cut down on the frequency and severity of accidents on 309, except in the area just below Carverton Road, which remains dangerous, especially in wet weather. The lights will make driving in the Back Mountain even less risky and much more pleasant. As anyone who has tried to pull onto 309 during rush hour, which seems to be the entire day lately, knows how frustrating it is to wait for a break in the flow. Too often, the result is a stab on the gas pedal and a too-close encounter with oncoming traffic.

The construction is far behind the original timeline announced three years ago, but once it begins later this year it should go quickly. We can't wait.

### Publisher's notebook

Ron Bartizek



Add one more hall of shame award to Pennsylvania's highways. During a trip to Harrisburg last week, I was treated to a demonstration of why the state's roads are considered the worst in the nation when I spent nearly an hour in a traffic tieup on I-81, only 15 minutes from my destination. The delay occurred in a construction zone; however, in the entire time, I didn't see a single PennDOT worker or state policeman either at work or trying to speed the traffic flow. On the return trip, I was struck by the volume of filth along our roadways, made apparent by the lack of snow cover or vegetation. It won't be picked up, but at least the grass will hide it in a month or so.

Locally, I vote for Lower Demunds Road as the trashiest in the Back Mountain. The amount and variety of junk is astounding, from the usual cans and bottles to plastic of all description. This is a perfect example of how welfare recipients could put their idle time to good use cleaning up the roadsides and parks. The next order of business would be to beat some sense into the slobs who have so little regard for their surroundings, or, apparently, themselves.

THE LODGE AT WILDWOOD. GIRL SCOUT TROOP CAMP. HARVEY'S LAKE. PA.



In years past at Harveys Lake.

### Letters

#### Game Commission should tell it like it is

Editor:

After reading several articles on the increase of hunting license fees in Pennsylvania, I believe the main issue is being overlooked. Many hunters are complaining of a low deer herd, and they are right. But on the other side, look at the length of the seasons — with archery, regular antlered, antlerless with bonus tags and muzzle loader, I know hunters, if they could get eight Bonus Tags, they would do their best efforts to fill those tags! These are the same hunters that blame the Pennsylvania Game Commission for the drop in the deer population.

To put it very simply, deer move into an area where there are three things — food, water and shelter,

and hopefully not to be disturbed. That is why there are so many deer in Frances Slocum Park. Now you can hunt in state game lands #57 for many days and not see a sign of deer, and you don't have to have a Ph.D. in Zoology to figure it out. NO FOOD!

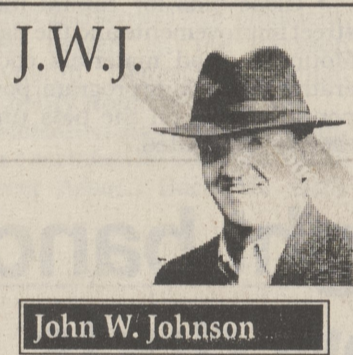
No one in their articles or letters mentioned the cost of operations of the Pennsylvania Game Commission. They have 725 employees on the payroll, most with families to support, mortgage payments to make. They have medical plans, dental plans, retirement benefits and that has to come out of license fees. They have retirees that have to be paid and they have cost of living in-

creases.

There are 135 vehicles that have to be maintained—gas, oil, filters, tires and other miscellaneous items. There are six regional offices and the main office in Harrisburg with heating, phone, and electric bills that have to be paid.

That is why they want a license increase. Don't tell us sportsmen and women in this state about the cost of raising pheasants, we know what happened to them. I have hunted in this state for over 50 years. It used to be great, let's get it back! The Pennsylvania Game Commission should tell it like it is.

Fred F. Murray  
Shavertown.



John W. Johnson

One of the more pressing issues now being addressed by the new Congress is an attempt to reform the legal system.

Even the system's most staunch supporters acknowledge the need for reform in a system where, if there were only two lawyers in the entire United States, there would be a minimum of four lawsuits filed. And those suits would be filed because, greedy citizens, aided and abetted by too many talented lawyers chasing too few legitimate clients, are both viewing the legal system as simply another way to make money...an extension of free enterprise.

From this chair, a favorite (sickening) example of this trend comes in the form of an accountant who, along with his two children, were flying to a Bahamas vacation. As the plane neared Nassau, it began to buck violently, and a pilot announced that an engine failure would force a return to Miami.

Within minutes, the plane's other two engines had stopped, and the passengers were informed that the plane would have to 'ditch.' However, the pilot managed to get one engine restarted and the plane landed safely. All's well that ends well, right?

Not if you're the alleged victim of alleged "psychological injuries," as the accountant claimed. Not that he and the other two dozen passengers are ungrateful for the pilots having saved their lives;

### We desperately need to reform our legal system

rather, the accountant wanted to be compensated for being frightened.

Perhaps more frightening is that he's not the first, and that there are some court cases on the books where plaintiffs have received favorable treatment by the courts when seeking to be paid for psychic-damage and phobia claims...witness the incredibly stupid woman who was awarded millions of dollars because she was dumb enough to place hot coffee between her legs and then drive away, burning herself. Other cases have included:

—A federal appeals court upholding a \$207,000 verdict to five persons who claimed a fear of becoming ill after a chemical firm contaminated ground water.

—The famous case of Rock Hudson's lover, Marc Christian, who was awarded \$5 million for Christian's alleged mental anguish over learning that Hudson had AIDS.

Put another way: Is it now reasonable for us to sue another driver because he or she almost hit us?

Better still: will major league pitchers eventually be the subject of litigation for keeping batters off the plate?

You laugh...but where there's greed seeking a lawyer, there's a potential and probably lawsuit.

According to several members of Congress with whom this writer spoke last week, following are highlights of ways the new Congress wants to rein in our runaway legal system:

—Limit so-called punitive damages to \$250,000, or three times the amount of actual losses, whichever is higher. Medical malpractice pain and suffering

claims would also be limited to \$250,000.

—Block plaintiffs from receiving money from defendants beyond their share of blame for any injury.

—Prevent damage recoveries if alcohol or illegal drug use was more than 50 per cent responsible for any injury.

—Permit judges to require some losers of federal civil cases to pay the winner's legal fees.

The need for reform speaks to our society becoming "victim" oriented...everyone is someone else's "victim," and there's always a lawyer to hold your hand.

The tendency to bring litigation today has all but brought the legal system to its knees, and true respect for the law to the brink of becoming a laughing matter.

To quote English jurist Lord Moulton: "The measure of a civilization is the degree of its obedience to the unenforceable."

In the accountant's case noted earlier, the unenforceable was a reasonable expectation that equipment does, indeed, malfunction, and that, indeed, life is not fair, nor a respecter of circumstance.

And if you agree with Lord Moulton—that whether or not we are civilized is measured by our self imposed obedience to the unenforceable—then the truly frightening reality is that this nation is rapidly becoming a band of savages, roaming the court-rooms of America in search of legal firewood with which to burn the bonds of honor, integrity and mutual respect, the very fibers of which a free nation, intending to remain so, depends.

And reforms—serious, broad ranging reforms—are needed now.

### Only yesterday

#### 60 Years Ago - Apr. 26, 1935 ROUTE 309 LUZERNE BYPASS DISCUSSED

An attempt to speed plans for the construction of the proposed by-pass at Luzerne to shorten the route between Dallas and Wyoming Valley will be discussed by directors of Wyoming Valley Motor Club and C.B. Forbes, district engineer of the Pa. Department of Highways. The project would eliminate the present roundabout route through Luzerne Borough and would provide a modern highway to connect with the concrete road which begins West of Luzerne. It has been considered for several years.

Work will start shortly on a big, new gasoline filling station, to be constructed by Atlantic Refining Co. in the parking lot owned by James R. Oliver in the middle of Dallas. The new station will be one of the largest in this region and will be equipped with 12 modern pumps and tanks of large storage capacity.

#### 50 Years Ago - Apr. 20, 1945 SUNSET HALL IS SOLD

Sunset Hall on Lake Street, a familiar Dallas landmark for five generations has been sold by owner Mrs. Morgan A. Wilcox to George Uebe, textile exporter/importer of Boonton, N.J. Mr. and Mrs. Uebe expect to move to their new home as soon as alterations can be completed.

Cpl. Edwin A. Burkhardt missing in action since his flight over Germany Dec. 17, 1944 is now back with American Forces. Sgt. John Owen, also missing in action March 19 in a bomber flight over Germany, is now back with his old outfit in England.

Dallas area is being seriously considered as a possible location if a VA Hospital is established in Luzerne County, according to persons close to the movement since its inception. Four such hospitals are to be located in Pennsylvania under grants made by the Federal Government, one to be located in Philadelphia and one in the Pittsburgh area and two others in other parts of the state.

#### 40 Years Ago - Apr. 22, 1955 WESTMORELAND HILLS PLAN IN THE WORKS

F. Gordon Mathers, Trucksville contractor, is preparing to open a new residential development to be known as Westmoreland Hills on a 38-acre plot along Carverton Road opposite Trucksville Gardens.

At noon on Opening Day of trout season, Lois Avery of Harveys Lake was way ahead of hundreds of fishermen. Her 16-inch rainbow trout was the biggest caught up to that time at the Alderson end of the lake.

"Bridges of Toko-Ri" starring Grace Kelly and William Holden now playing at the Himmler Theatre.

#### 30 Years Ago - Apr. 22, 1965 CHASE PRISON TO GET 100 NEW CELLS

A new nuisance ordinance adopted by Kingston Township Supervisors last week will rid the community of junked cars and other eye sores and health hazards formerly uncontrolled. Solicitor Mitchell Jenkins prepared the ordinance.

Test drilling began this week on state grounds at Jackson, preparatory to building a brand new cell block at the Correctional Institution. The cell block, projected some time back, will be the 11th at the Jackson Institution. It will have 100 cells housing 100 more inmates.

Mr. and Mrs. Edward Roberts, Pioneer Avenue, Shavertown will celebrate their 59th anniversary April 25. A family dinner will be held at the home of a grandson Raymond Roberts. They are the parents of four children and have four grandchildren.

#### 20 Years Ago - Apr. 24, 1975 BROTHERS OF BRUSH VISIT SHAVERTOWN

An ordinance making it unlawful to maintain or permit nuisance or dangerous structures was adopted at the regular April meeting of Dallas Borough Council. Charles Lemmond, borough solicitor, brought the ordinance to council for approval, which was granted by a unanimous roll call vote.

Brothers of the Brush will be one of the many attractions at the upcoming Shavertown Fire Co.'s 50th Anniversary Celebration May 18-24. The men will act as Keystone Cops to enforce any violations of the Brothers of the Brush.

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**State Officials**

**State Sen. Charles D. Lemmond** (R)

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**State Rep. George Hasay** (R)  
287-7505 or 542-7345 or 474-2276

or 477-3752

369 South Mountain Boulevard, Mountaintop PA 18707  
Hasay's district encompasses: Harveys Lake, Lehman Township, Jackson Township, Lake Township, Franklin Township, Ross Township, and Dallas Township's north voting district.

**State Rep. Phyllis Mundy** (D)

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