

# The Dallas Post

## EDITORIALS

### Do your part to keep kids, guns separated

Reports of alleged youth "gang" activity in the Back Mountain are troubling. And frightening.

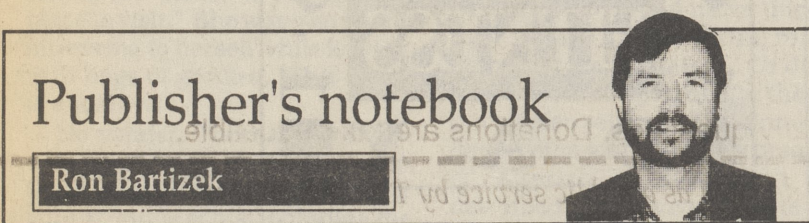
Last week's arrest of five teenage boys, all below 18 years of age, was the second incident in only a few months in which police say youths stole guns from private homes. Officers displayed five guns, 1,600 rounds of ammunition and a large knife they say was confiscated from the boys. An earlier incident involved even younger boys who allegedly stole a gun in the belief it would be an "equalizer" in their rivalry with other youths.

It is fortunate that in both cases police were able to recover the weapons in short order. But there probably have been other thefts that either went unreported or weren't solved, leaving deadly weapons in the hands of teenagers whose experience with carnage is limited to the movie theater, so far.

Ours is a violent society, and the fascination with guns is apparent to anyone who cares to see it. Combined with the currently fashionable resentment of government and other authority figures, easy access to guns has made the United States by far the murder and mayhem capital of the developed world. That is true even though we have a higher percentage of our populace in prison than any other "civilized" nation. Throw inexperience and immaturity into the mix, and you have a formula for disaster.

It was reported recently that only about 50 percent of gun owners keep their weapons unloaded and locked up at home. We don't know if the guns stolen in these two cases were kept under lock and key, or if locking them up would have made a difference. But it stands to reason that keeping lethal weapons safely out of reach would save lives. We urge anyone who keeps guns, knives or other weapons at home to store them in a securely locked case kept out of easy reach. It's not only thieves we should be concerned with, but curious children and their friends as well.

The Dallas School District will hold a special forum June 2 about dangerous youth activity and the growing influence of gangs. Police personnel and others who are familiar with the phenomenon will be on hand to present what they know and discuss the subject with parents. Anyone who suspects their child may be involved or who simply cares about the alarming rise in risky behavior should make it a point to attend.



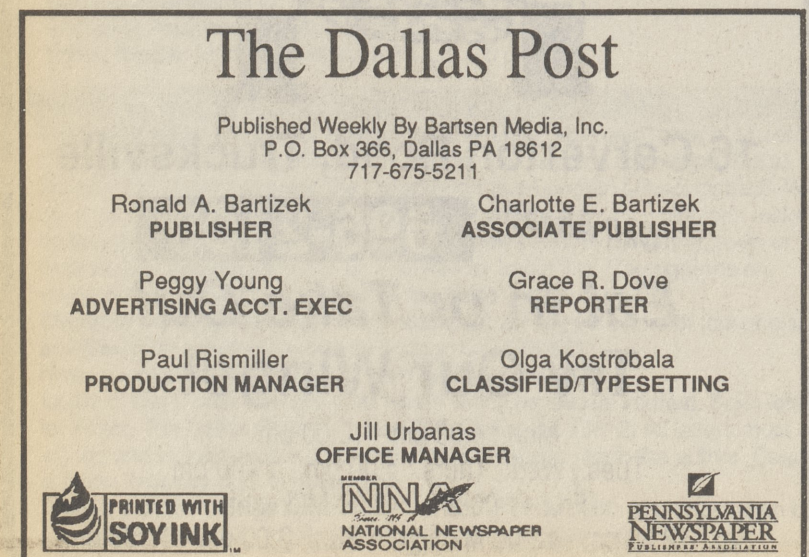
**Publisher's notebook**  
**Ron Bartzek**

Monday will be the official observation of Memorial Day, when we honor all the men and women who have died in uniform during all wars. Begun May 30, 1868 by General John A. Logan, commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, it is a day of solemnity and remembrance of those who paid the ultimate price to preserve our freedom and way of life. The most serious conflicts seem far away now, as it's been two decades since the U.S. left the killing fields of Vietnam after a disastrous dozen years. Thankfully, the battles since then have resulted in fewer casualties. I hope the distance between the horrors of war and the present don't diminish our appreciation of those who sacrificed their lives to save ours.

I can't remember a spring when the white dogwoods looked more magnificent. It seems whichever way you glance, the woods are splashed with the brilliant white blossoms. I wish I could say as much for the small pink dogwood in our front yard. We planted it a few years ago, just before the caterpillars attacked, and the combination of their appetite and my clumsy attempt to protect the tree by wrapping the trunk may have doomed it. It does have a few blossoms, after showing none last year, so perhaps it can still be saved.

Another sign of the season is the family of geese at a small pond alongside Upper Demunds Road in Dallas. A pair has nested there, and now proudly displays three downy offspring. They are very comfortable in that neighborhood; perhaps too much so. When I drove by last week they were at the very edge of the pavement and showed no fear of the speeding cars. So keep a sharp eye out for them, and don't assume they'll scamper out of your way.

Now that the arena referendum is over (or is it?), some reflection is in order. I found it remarkable — and disheartening — that this project became such an emotional issue. Both sides exaggerated their claims to a wild degree and the whole affair took on an importance that was unjustified. I voted for the arena because I think it could be a useful site for entertainment and other events we now must drive too many miles for. It will probably stimulate some job growth as well, but I don't for a minute think the arena will attract substantial employers. A more rational attitude by our populace toward relatively small steps of progress might, though.



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Sandy Beach, once upon a time



**As I was saying**  
**Jack Hilsher**

What would you think if you read this rave review of a new book... "a ferocious, totally absorbing, non-stop thriller, destined to become this year's most controversial suspense novel."

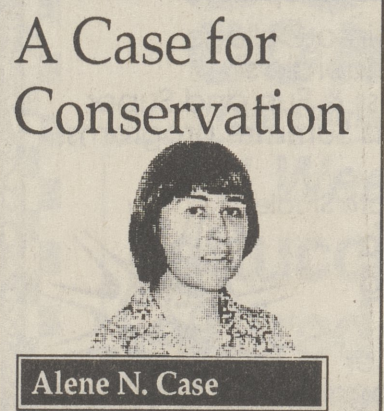
Well? You like thrillers don't you? Would you say to yourself, "Gee, I've got to look for that one on my next visit at the library."

Don't bother. That totally absorbing novel has to be one of the worst I have ever had the displeasure of trying to plow through. Didn't finish it. Never will.

What pains me is that those rave review words came (supposedly) from another thriller author I admire very much, William Diehl, and they are quoted as coming directly from his as the "Bestselling Author of Primal Fear."

How come? Did Diehl actually read that turkey? And if he did, why did he allow the publisher to claim he said those flattering things?

Well, I'll tell you and you can't stop me. That sort of thing goes on all the time all over the publishing world. Take, for instance, this little gem: "One of the best novels I've read in a long time. I was unable to put it down."



**A Case for Conservation**  
**Alene N. Case**

All the recent discussions about "state's rights," "takings," and the role of the United Nations have set me to thinking about the meaning of boundaries personally, politically and ecologically. Personal property has been both a blessing and a curse as far as environmental protection is concerned. Ownership generally has implied responsibility. Therefore, the owner of the land takes very good care of it so that he/she can continue to reap the benefits of ownership for a long period of time and pass the land along to heirs while it is still in good condition. This owner does not slash and burn as a nomadic farmer would. The nomad expects to deplete the land and move on to some other place to repeat the process.

Unfortunately, property ownership has also had disastrous effects. Owners tend to get the idea that anything they do within their property boundaries is OK. They forget that water, air, wildlife, and even soils do not recognize these boundaries. Some people burn disposable diapers and then wonder why their neighbors complain about the fumes. Some people spray harsh chemicals on their lawns or fruit trees, never thinking that the insects they are killing are food for their favorite song birds. Some people pave or

### Only yesterday

#### 60 Years Ago - May 31, 1935 CITIZENS UPSET OVER SUPER'S DISMISSAL

Although a month has elapsed since citizens banded to protest against Dallas School Board's dismissal of Calvin McHose as supervising principal of Dallas Borough High School, no date has been announced by the directors for the requested conference to discuss the dismissal. A member of the board delivered a letter to C. Lapps, chairman of the citizen's committee this week, but that letter dealt only with a general defense of the board. The Citizen's Committee group charged that the dismissal of McHose had political motives expressed themselves as dissatisfied with the answer to their charges, pointing out that no explanation has been made to justify dismissal of McHose and subsequent appointment of Ronald Doll.

You could get - Pears, 2 lg. cans, 29¢; Ritter Tomato Juice, 3-20 oz. cans 25¢; Asco coffee, 19¢ lb.; tomatoes, lg. red ripe, 2 lbs. 25¢; bread crumbs, pkg., 5¢.

#### 50 Years Ago - June 1, 1945 AREA HIGH SCHOOLS HOLD COMMENCEMENT

Dallas Borough High School will hold its Commencement June 5, at 8 p.m. Twenty five seniors, four of them in the armed forces, will receive their diplomas.

"They Dream Home," a pageant written and directed by Mr. William H. Crum Jr. acting high school principal, will be the main feature of the 35th Annual Commencement of Lehman Township Senior High School.

Memorial Day services were conducted at the Dallas Honor Roll and Woodlawn Cemetery, Wednesday morning by Daddow-Isaacs Post 672 American Legion. Rev. Fred W. Reinfort gave the invocation at the honor roll, while Rev. John O'Leary closed the services with Benediction at Woodlawn Cemetery.

Anyone purchasing War Bonds from a member of Dallas Senior Woman's Club is entitled to attend the premier given at Himmler Theatre, June 7.

#### 40 Years Ago - May 26, 1955 DALLAS TWP. SCHOOL MILLAGE TO INCREASE

Dallas Township school directors have voted an increase of millage from 33 to 35 for the fiscal year beginning July 1 to help finance the new 4-room and shop addition now under construction.

Fourteen members of the New Goods Committee for the 9th Annual Back Mountain Memorial Library Auction met at *The Dallas Post* to work out some new innovations. New Goods they aged, are the items which bring in the greatest amount of money. A plan to display such goods in advance of sale was proposed. Surprise packages of genuine value will also be offered for auction.

The Junior-Senior Prom, "Springtime Gambol," featuring a rock garden, wishing well, swing, frolicking lambs and parasols, will be held tonight at Dallas-Franklin High School with music by Panky Stolarick and his orchestra.

#### 30 Years Ago - May 27, 1965 QUICK BOWLS NEAR PERFECT GAME

Approximately 4,100 customers of Harveys Lake Light Co. will benefit from a general reduction of rates amounting to \$22,853 annually, starting June 14 with the approval of Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission according to A.J. Sordani Jr., president.

The Dallas School Board at their Tuesday night meeting passed a \$1,471,000 budget for the coming school year, with receipts expected of the same amount. Broken down, estimated receipts of \$577,612 were expected from real estate and \$30,709 from per capita taxes.

In bowling news, Charlie Quick scored a big 297 for Phillips Supply. Charlie had 11 strikes in a row, all set for a perfect 300 game in sanctioned play; but shaken from the pressure and feeling tension, he missed his mark with the last ball and took only seven pins, falling short of the perfect game by three.

Obituaries are published free of charge. Priority is given to residents of the Back Mountain. Relatives of Back Mountain residents are published as space allows.

The Dallas Post

### "... a profound column, filled with insight," I think

Not very original was it? Not even much of an accolade, yet it comes from a very flowery eloquent celebrity, Dream Team Star himself, F. Lee Bailey, whose career almost got started rolling again except that he stepped on his own rhetoric and should never have tried to tackle Marcia Clark.

But did F. Lee actually read that novel? Or did David Morrell, another fine thriller writer, actually read something and then fire up his word processor to say, "A page-turner...as real as it gets...one hell of a hard, fast novel."

Or did Dean Koontz (the jury is still out on him) really say, "The story combines terrific suspense with a subtle and powerful exploration of the effects of loss and unresolved grief." (Good grief Dean!)

And one final classic quote from Eugene Izzit, "Seizes your attention right from the reality-shattering first pages and just won't let loose... This is only the second book I've ever read that has taken me away from family, food, work and everything else." (Gene boy, quick...wotinell was the first book??)

By now you get the picture, and sense my profound skepticism. They all do it...Ed McBain, Clive Cussler, Sidney Sheldon...or rather, they have it done for them by publisher's PR geniuses who think we all swallow all this static.

It's called "blurbing," the endorsement of new books by other authors, usually well-known ones.

Supposedly the practice started around the time of Samuel Johnson, and I am too lazy to look up the year. Actually when books started coming out with fancy dust jackets, the custom of printing raves on the back started, somewhere in the early 1900s.

It was a helluva marketing technique because obviously it sold more books, and anything that sells more stuff is repeated and repeated until it no longer works.

Some blurbing like most of those I quoted above, is suspicious and smacks strongly of "You scratch my back and I'll scratch yours." One critic said, "If you know the author and his work, and you've read the book, you get the clear feeling he didn't read any part of it." So practice is not universally liked.

Authors who blurb too much are called "literary sluts" in the trade. Writer Richard Elman being interviewed in the Philadelphia Inquirer said, "Some of the great classics of literature have true blurbs of real admiration, but it's a shame that the practice has been corrupted like everything else."

Just don't discount them altogether. Holley Bishop, a Houghton Mifflin marketing manager, says "If Margaret Atwood - who I trust, who I think is honest, and whose name doesn't turn up on every other book - said it was good, I would pick that one up."

I haven't decided who I want to blurb my first book.

### When it comes to pollution, our boundaries are absurd

build on a large portion of their land, preventing natural percolation of water into the soil and contributing to flooding downstream.

Let's think about boundaries for a moment. Look at a map of the United States. Most of the state boundaries are drawn for the convenience of surveyors and cartographers. Many boundaries run along latitude or longitude lines. Others run along the tops of mountain chains or down the middle of rivers and lakes. About the only ones that make sense ecologically are those that follow the continental divides where raindrops falling on one side or the other find their way to different bodies of water. This happens so rarely that it makes me wonder if there is any logical reason to hand over environmental protection to the states.

The Great Lakes provide an excellent example of the absurdity of artificial boundaries. I looked at a map of the drainage area of the lakes this morning and decided (facetiously) that judging from the amount of area each jurisdiction contained, Michigan and the province of Ontario should be expected to shoulder the entire responsibilities for the lakes. What would happen if Pennsylvania, which controls a very small portion of the shoreline of Lake Erie, suddenly decided to discharge effluent from dozens of factories into the lake? I imagine we could have war declared on us by New York, Ohio, Michigan and Canada.

The Chesapeake Bay would still be dying if it were merely the responsibility of the states of Maryland and Virginia, which border it. The great floods along

the Mississippi River have demonstrated the foolishness of absolute ownership of a floodplain. If we intend to give responsibility for environmental protection to smaller entities, we had better design those entities with ecological facts in mind. In other words, the quality of water in a drainage basin should be supervised by all the inhabitants of that basin and those that live downstream.

Air quality is an even more universal problem. Air moves continuously mixing my pollution with yours, no matter where we live. Generally, the air in the Northern Hemisphere is separate from that in the Southern Hemisphere. But, that conventional wisdom has recently been challenged by the existence of the large hole in the ozone over the Antarctic continent. Also, pollutants in the air are washed down in various forms of precipitation which eventually flow to the oceans. And, although we all learned the names of the oceans in grade school, I am here to tell you that there is really one ocean. It circulates around and around, top to bottom, and from one basin to another.

It would be much better for our planet if we all shared the view of Vasily Glazyrin. Vasily is a mathematician who is head of the Baikal Center for Ecological and Citizen Initiatives. Lake Baikal in Russia is the world's largest lake, containing 20% of our fresh water. In the May issue of the ECOLOGIA Newsletter, Dr. Glazyrin states "We live near the sources of three seas, (Lake Baikal, Pacific Ocean and Arctic Ocean) and we are the first who are responsible for their purity." Think about it.