

The Dallas Post

EDITORIALS

Now is the time to expand recreation

At last, the Back Mountain will have a place to walk, jog and bike which is removed from the ever-growing traffic that makes getting casual exercise a death-defying experience. What is hoped to be just the first leg of a scenic trail network reaching 47 miles to Dushore is now being prepared for public use. The 2 1/2 mile stretch of former railroad bed from Luzerne to Trucksville will be cleared and repaired this summer, creating a gently rising (from Luzerne) byway that parallels Route 309 but rests above the noise and danger of the highway.

We hope this is only the beginning, not just for the "Rails to Trails" project, but for the creation of other safe paths for walking and biking. The Back Mountain offers areas of striking natural beauty and plenty of fresh air, but unless you happen to own those parts of it, enjoying them is a risky proposition as you teeter on the edge of narrow roadways while speeding vehicles flash by. A drive up East Center Street in Shavertown, for example, means dodging teenagers who must walk in the gutter or on the roadway to make their way to Center Street Park.

It's time the communities of the Back Mountain cooperated to form a web of connected parks and open spaces; a "green-belt" of recreation areas, expanding the opportunities now available separately. Imagine if you could ride a bike from Kenneth Young Park in Dallas Borough to the rail trail at Trucksville, or power walk from Center Street Park to the fields at Dallas High School and back. And do it all safely by staying out of the path of cars and trucks. It wouldn't be easy, and would require cooperation among several towns and with PennDOT for highway crossings, but it would be worth it, in two important ways. First, such a complex would provide safe recreation areas for anyone who cares to use them. Second, it would reserve at least a small portion of the Back Mountain from overdevelopment.

You can get around now, of course, but it's not easy. Crossing Route 415 at the center of Dallas, for example, requires a certain agility, since there's no true "walk" light. Instead, you get to take your chances against traffic from Main and Church streets, which has a green light when you do. The same is true at Route 309 and Center Street in Shavertown, only the traffic is heavier and the roadway is wider. As anyone who tries to take a stroll around the Back Mountain knows, this is a remarkably walker-unfriendly area.

There also is a need for more playing fields for organized sports like soccer and baseball, and those could be incorporated into a coordinated plan for the entire region.

Let's seize this opportunity while we can. As the "Pails for Trails" fundraiser conducted by Dallas Middle School students illustrates, there's plenty of interest in creating better recreation areas. But that won't happen without pressure from people who care about this issue. You can start by attending a meeting of your township or borough council, and urging officials to look into expanding the space available for safe, enjoyable exercise.

Publisher's notebook

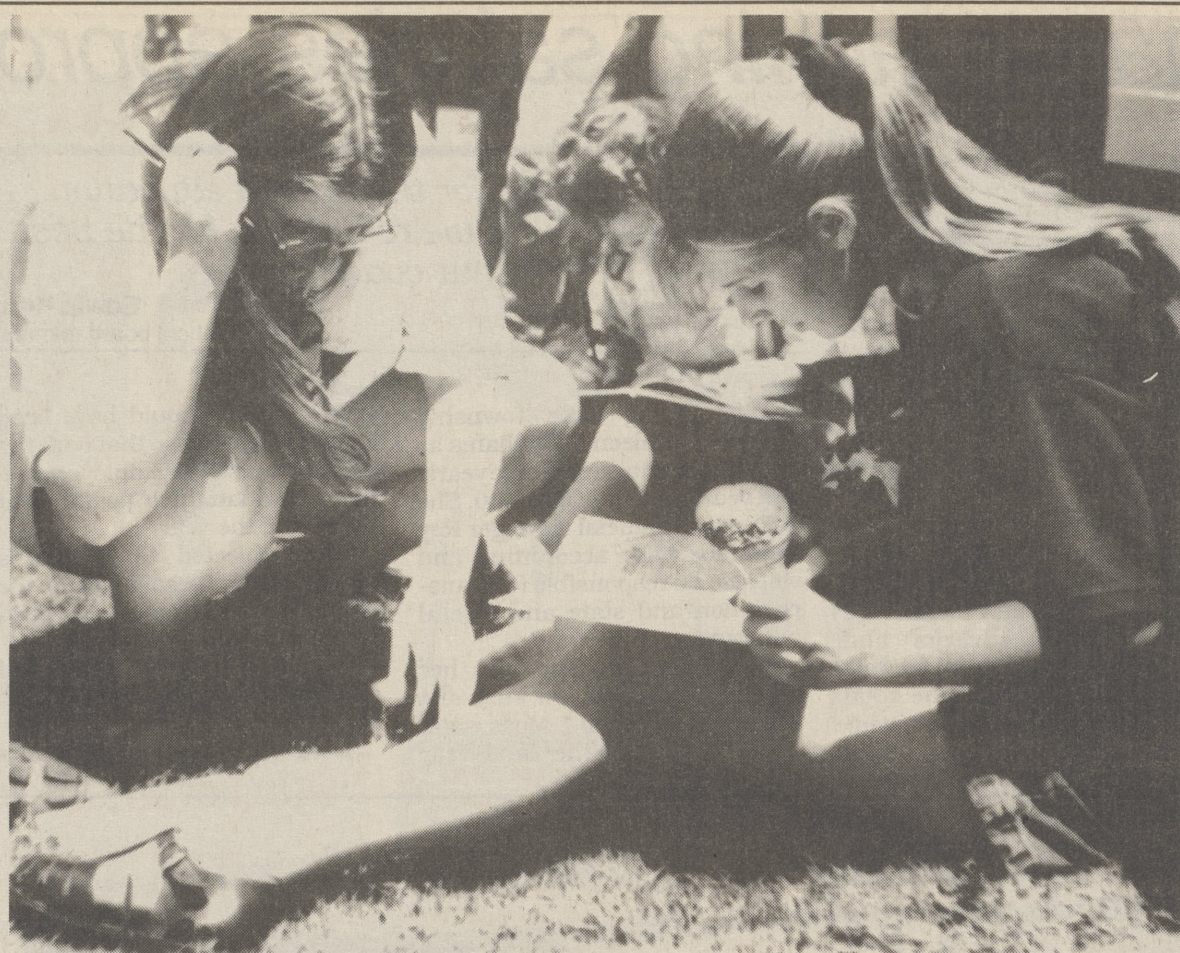
Ron Bartizek



It appears a rare and long-overdue confluence of fiscal responsibility and political expedience has created the climate for a balanced federal budget. When President Clinton weighed in with his plan last week, it marked the first time in recent memory when leaders of Congress and the President paid more than lip service to the cause. I have been a member of the Concord Coalition for a couple of years. That's the group formed by former Senators Paul Tsongas and Warren Rudman to fight for a balanced budget. Having been involved in business for two decades, I have learned that there is a stiff price to be paid for irresponsible borrowing. In our nation's case, it is high interest rates, a falling dollar and shortages of capital that could be used to modernize factories and raise productivity. A balanced budget will not come without some discomfort, but it is certain that the longer we wait to achieve that goal, the more painful it will become to do so. I have a couple of Concord Coalition booklets at the office that anyone who cares to is welcome to come by and look over. One is filled with charts and graphs that will scare the daylight out of anyone who cares about the future of his children and his country.

It is always difficult to decide how we should display a story about great local tragedy, such as the shootings last week in Kunkle. If we downplay an incident, some readers will think we're ducking an uncomfortable story; if we play it boldly, others will say we're just "trying to sell papers" with sensational headlines. In this case, I thought the incident so shocking that it deserved big play, not to vilify the alleged shooter, who in this case is a clearly deranged individual, but to call attention to a horrifying crime that no one had anticipated. The least we can do for the victims is see that this incident is thoroughly investigated for clues that may prevent needless tragedy in the future.

Our hearts go out to the families involved, who have shown remarkable acceptance of this senseless act, knowing that the troubled young man who police say committed it lacked the ability to control his actions. I hope they are able to see some usefulness come from the resolution of this tragedy.



Memories that will last

Lake-Lehman Middle Level students Kristen Teetsel and Michelle Stolarick autographed yearbooks for friends at the school's Spirit Day. Photo by Grace R. Dove.

A Case for Conservation



Alene N. Case

It is one of those weathered faces that speaks of character and a lifetime of activity. The face is topped by a shock of thin white hair. In this particular photograph, the garb is a flowing robe appropriate for yet another award ceremony. But, you must know by now that I never write about people who sit around on their laurels! No, on the very next page are photographs of Jacques-Yves Cousteau in a wet suit guiding a dive boat through the water and handling camera equipment above a coral reef.

On June 11, 1995, Jacques Cousteau turned 85. He was born in St. Andre-de-Cubzac near Bordeaux, France. Part of his youth was spent in the United States (hence, his better-than-average English), but at age 20 he enrolled in the French Naval Academy because of his "love for water and my desire to travel and see the world." You might think that young Jacques studied physics or oceanography or engineering. Actually, he was a cinematographer. Most of the inventions that came later were the direct result of the desire to get better pictures underwater.

Cousteau is one of those rare individuals whose inventions become so commonplace during their lifetimes that we forget how revolutionary they really were. He

As I was saying



Jack Hilsher

Kids in the block where I grew up in Williamsport probably wouldn't have gone for the new kids' game called "POGS." We had our marbles (my agate shooter was neat, or was it glass?) and everyone had a favorite top to spin. There was also the game of jacks, with that tiny rubber ball.

Indoors we played Parchesi, where I think you rolled dice and moved stuff on a board, and of course, Tiddly-winks, whose spelling I had to check in a dictionary. Tiddly-winks was where you snapped little celluloid discs (plastic hadn't been invented yet) into a glass cup. Rules? Who cared? But that was as close as we came to POGS.

In this game of POGS you pile up to 11 cardboard discs in between you and your opponent. You hit your opponent's pile and he hits yours - with another disc called a "slammer." These are slightly larger and 1/4" thick. The one I am looking at now is marked "OFFICIAL" and "Pat. Pend." which makes one wonder about the U.S. Patent Office today.

Cousteau: scientist, inventor and caretaker of the oceans

and his friend, Emile Gagnan, developed the first diving regulator that allowed people to dive with their own air supplies — thus, the beginning of SCUBA diving in the 1940's. Cousteau established limits for dive times and decompression tables for the French Navy and used that information to help clear mines remaining after WW II. He was also the first to develop waterproof housings for movie cameras, to tow cameras and lights on sleds in deep areas where diving was impossible, to experiment with living and working in undersea habitats, and to design small submarines for scientific use. His crews literally started the field of underwater archaeology, diving on shipwrecks and recovering ancient artifacts.

His ship, *Calypso*, is probably the most famous oceanographic vessel in the world. And, ten years ago, he added *Alcyon*, a new sort of wind-powered ship with rotating towers instead of sails. Both ships have taken crews of scientists and photographers to many parts of the world's oceans and seas and to several major rivers, such as the Amazon, Mississippi and Mekong.

Since all of these adventures have come into our living rooms as documentary films for television, at least two generations of youth have been inspired by Jacques Cousteau to study oceanography. Many have eventually gone into other fields, but the initial enthusiasm for life and curiosity about the world around them has not been lost. This certainly pleases Cousteau who stated in an interview in 1989, "As soon as education declines, the behavior

of societies goes to chaos. It's a danger that is comparable to the atomic bomb."

Many of us have come to know Cousteau through his books as well as his films. He is no less a master at the craft of writing about the water he loves. Can you imagine not reading further when faced with this question: "...how is it ensured that young salmon hatch from their eggs as salmon instead of baby ducks or alligators?" Or, consider this from the 1953 book, *The Silent World*: "The ink of the octopus has been liberally diluted with journalistic fantasy."

In 1963, a reviewer from the *Christian Science Monitor* had this to say: "In *THE LIVING SEA*, as in his earlier best seller, *THE SILENT WORLD*, Captain Cousteau conveys the sense of adventure and the vision that continue to inspire his work. Perhaps the most striking comparison between the two books is that the enthusiasm has not flagged at all while the vision has greatly matured." The final paragraph of chapter seventeen of that book illustrates his point: "Why do we think of the ocean as a mere storehouse of food, oil and minerals? The sea is not a bargain basement. We are blinded by our gloating over the wealth below. The greatest resource of the ocean is not material but the boundless spring of inspiration and well-being we gain from her."

As Cousteau now works tirelessly for the health of this world and its liquid environments, my hat is off to this modern Renaissance man. May the rest of his years be as exciting and worthwhile as the first 85.

Pogs and slammers — the newest, coolest kids' game

Anyway, when hit with the slammer, a pile goes every which way and the ones which turn over (one side is plain) belonging to your opponent you get to keep. He keeps any of your pile which flip over. The first player to get six discs wins.

So you can see why POGS wouldn't make it in my neighborhood. We never played keepers in anything. Everyone went home with what they brought. Even those pesky girls.

Take a close look at one of those POG discs. Their artwork is varied...Disney's Lion King on some, O.J. on others. Power Rangers, weird animals, anything seems to be acceptable. They all remind you of nothing more than old milk bottle caps, and that is exactly what they are, or rather, were.

Back around 1990 or '91, dairies in Hawaii, where this all started, began using paper cartons and plastic jugs. One dairy however continued to use the milk-caps to cover their popular juices. Flavors were Passion, Orange and Guava. Hence P.O.G. A teacher used them to explain math and a game was born.

The nearest place to migrate to was the West Coast, where, if you want to start a trend, you had better go. They bite on anything out there. A state where no one says "Have a nice day!" They say instead, "Maintain yourself!" and

that state - yes, California - is the perfect place to start a POG fortune.

APOG "starter kit" costs \$4.75, and includes a free slammer. Individual POGS cost from 25¢ to 35¢ each and I will wager anyone that productions costs hover somewhere in the vicinity of .005¢ per POG, and that's being generous.

The gradual infiltration east did not take long. I talked to a POG dealer in the aisle of a mall in Exton. His big seller was a five-dollar sack of POGS. He wore \$250 shoes and he also wore an aura of Scotch and expensive cologne. Business, he stated comfortably, has been "very good. Last weekend I sold a grand wort. A whole grand." He also puffed on a good cigar.

An eastern dealer said he had already moved millions of discs up and down the coast. A new book called "POGS: The Milkcap Guide," says, "Industry analysts predict that there is a huge potential in at least three areas: as a game, as a collectible and as a promotional marketing tool."

An elementary school principal near Chester has banned the game, saying "It's too competitive. It goes against our emphasis on cooperative learning," causing parents to write or call saying "Thank you!"

I don't know. I think Tiddly-winks was more fun.

Only yesterday

60 Years Ago - June 28, 1935 ISAACS OPENS CAR DEALERSHIP ON 309

The financial difficulties of Kingston Township School Board were solved temporarily on Monday evening when the directors decided to borrow \$4,500 to meet current expenses. The loan will be paid from revenues due the district from the State.

A group of tennis enthusiasts from Kingston Township have leased the Henry Sipple Property on the upper road and plan to construct a tennis court there. When plans are completed a new tennis club will be organized with membership limited to 16.

Howard Isaacs, son of Mr. and Mrs. Ray Isaacs of East Center Street, Shavertown, has opened a Chrysler and Plymouth auto sales and service agency in Bush's Garage. Howard Woolbert will assist in the sales department and Albert Bush will have charge of service.

50 Years Ago - June 29, 1945 CANNING CENTER IS JUDGED TOPS IN AREA

Recognized as one of the most efficiently equipped and modern house canning centers in the State, Lehman Township's new canning center will be dedicated July 10. H.L. Fetterolf, chief of Agriculture Education for the State of Pennsylvania will make the dedicatory address.

Miss Miriam Lathrop, librarian of Back Mountain Memorial Library, has announced that several hundred books have already been donated and scores of others promised by local citizens. Lathrop said gifts of all types of books will be welcomed by the library.

40 Years Ago - June 24, 1955 DALLAS POST BURIED IN TIME CAPSULE

Class of 1889 of Dallas Borough High School had its 66th reunion June 12 at Hotel Sterling, Wilkes-Barre as guests of Dr. John Hay, Philadelphia dentist. Three of the four living members of the class, which originally numbered six, were present to recall incidents of a former day.

A copy of the graduating issue of *The Dallas Post* with over 405 other newspapers carrying the Babson Column, was last week buried at the base of the World's Largest Revolving Globe at Babson Park, Wellesley, MA. These newspapers are in a sealed concrete vault with instruction to open June 18, 2055.

You could get - Peas, corn, string or wax beans, 8 1/2-oz. cans \$1; Princess toilet tissues, 10 rolls, \$1; Smoked picnics, 29¢ lb.; cantaloupes 29¢ ea.

30 Years Ago - June 25, 1965 LACK OF FUNDS SLOWS BUILDING

Half of the revenue now derived by taxes within Lake-Lehman School District from per capita, amusement, and real estate transfer taxes will go to the school district some time after resolutions levying similar school taxes are made at a forthcoming interim committee meeting. A col-machine license fee will also be set.

Progress on the proposed Lehman Township municipal building has been bogged down because the Board of Supervisors is unable to latch on to federal money, *The Dallas Post* has learned. When the purchase of land was made two years ago, it was hoped to get APW funds from the federal government to help build the structure. In a letter to the board, Congressman Daniel J. Flood informed that the APW program expired last year.

Now playing at Sandy Beach Drive-In, "Goldfinger" with Sean Connery.

20 Years Ago - June 26, 1975 BORO REC CENTER GETS WATER LINE

Members of the Dallas School Board approved an annual budget of \$4,861,837 for the 1975-76 school year at a special meeting Tuesday evening. At the same time they also approved a real estate tax of 67 mills, a 5 mill increase over last year, \$5 per capita per taxable person under authority of Sec. 679 of Pennsylvania School Laws of 1949 and its amendments, a per capita tax of \$5 under Act 511 of December 31, 1965, an earned income tax at the rate of 1% and real estate transfer tax of 1%.

Dallas Borough Council approved the installation of a water system for the Borough Recreation Center at its June 16 council meeting.

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