

The Dallas Post

EDITORIALS

Our library needs and deserves more support

The Back Mountain Memorial Library has just completed its 49th annual auction, which traditionally raises about one-fourth of its operating budget. The event is a tribute to the commitment dozens of individuals make to this important institution, both as a community resource and as a unifying force in a region that has precious little else to rally around.

There are other important sources of funds, and one of them has been an underachiever for years; contributions from local towns and school districts. As Grace Dove's article last week — based on research by library board member Bruce Rosenthal — pointed out, the Back Mountain library is near the bottom of the heap in support received from these sources. Hazleton leads the pack in Luzerne County, with the city providing 90 percent of library funds, followed by the Hoyt Library in Kingston, which receives about \$1.25 in municipal support for each book circulated. In contrast to that, our library received just 4¢ per book last year.

There are other ways to fund libraries. Lackawanna County has used a tax to raise money since 1982, and Wyoming County voters are trying to put a library tax on the ballot in November. Attempts to institute a library tax failed in Luzerne County about 20 years ago, and no politician has had the courage to broach the subject since.

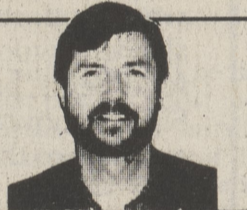
To be fair, Back Mountain municipalities haven't in the past been properly asked to up their contributions. That is changing now, as a task force of library board members and others plan to visit each township and borough to present the case for greater funding. It's an easy argument to make. While this is a relatively affluent area in overall terms, the majority of families are of quite modest means. A properly financed and managed library can provide children and adults access to resources they simply can't afford on their own, along with intellectual stimulation that can spur curiosity and the desire for achievement. As the economic gaps in society widen, the library becomes even more important. Most families, for example, can't simply write a check for the \$2,000 price of a well-equipped home computer, but those with access to one will have a clear advantage over those without.

Providing resources comes at a price, and we are at a moment when that price is rising. The Back Mountain library needs a larger and more comfortable children's area, which will accommodate our growing population. It should have computers with access to material useful to students in the higher grades, as well as connections to the Internet. And it needs to continually restock its shelves, maintain the building and compensate employees.

If you have never before attended a meeting of your town's government, now would be a good time to start. Show your support for the library by asking elected officials to meet the request the library is making, or perhaps even exceed it. With a list of more than 11,000 borrowers, and a circulation of nearly 300 items each day, the library is far too important to ignore.

Publisher's notebook

Ron Bartizek



You'll notice several changes in the appearance of The Post this week. We have redesigned the paper, something that had been planned for several months. Among the changes is a new headline typeface, a condensed version of Times, one of the classic newspaper type styles. We like it for several reasons, not least of all its elegant look, and the fact that we can get more characters into each line. We also changed the "standing heads," such as the one that goes over the menus, in order to catch the eye but take up less space than our old style.

The changes aren't just cosmetic; we also are looking for ways to add or improve content. A roundup of items from the District Magistrate's office makes its debut this week, and will appear on page 2 each issue along with police news and the property transfers. We are wary of running just the police reports, because some of the arrests never make it to court, or are dismissed once they get there, so all that we would print is the initial arrest. With the court briefs, we'll present a more balanced picture of the actual resolution of cases. We also plan to add a column of brief items about local business, which will depend in large part on stores and offices submitting material. And, we will be adding to the staff in order to cover more news events.

If you have any suggestions for us, or comments good or bad, please give me a call at 675-5211.

Do you agree? Disagree?

Editorials are the opinion of the management of The Dallas Post, and are written by the editor unless otherwise indicated. We welcome your opinion on contemporary issues in the form of letters to the editor. If you don't write, the community may never hear a contrasting point of view. Send letters to: The Dallas Post, P.O. Box 366, Dallas, PA 18612. Please include your name, address and a daytime phone number so that we may verify authenticity. We do not publish anonymous letters, but will consider withholding the name in exceptional circumstances. We reserve the right to edit for length and grammar.

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Karen Boback and Kerry Freeman took their turn on the auction block during last week's 49th annual Back Mountain Memorial Library Auction. Photo by Charlotte Bartizek.

LETTERS

Friends helped him reach goal, help others

Editor:

I would like very much to thank the people of Wyoming Valley and especially the people of the Back Mountain.

I signed up to participate in the 1995 Pan-Massachusetts challenge, 192 mile bike ride to benefit Dana Farber's Cancer Institute's Jimmy Fund. I had to pledge and raise \$1,000 to enter. For the past two years I have been working at Children's Hospital in New Orleans, and have seen how can-

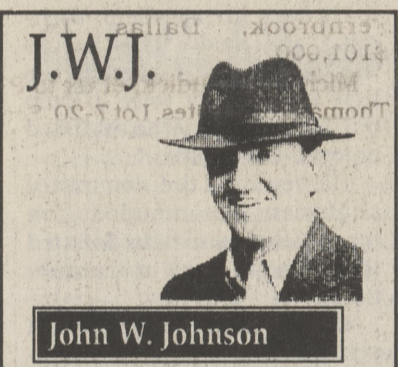
cer touches the lives of everyone including children and their families. My determination to ride in the 2 day-192 mile bike ride comes from the smiling eyes, hearty laughs, and inner strength that these children continue to have after endless hospital stays, doses of chemotherapy, pain and suffering.

After I signed up, then came the heavy rains that flooded parts of New Orleans. I was even a

victim. I lost most of my sponsors because they lost everything. I asked the people of the Back Mountain and Wyoming Valley to help me in my quest to raise \$1,000. Not only did they help me raise the money but they surpassed my goal.

Again from the bottom of my heart and also from the cancer victims - Thank You.

Keith Schultz
Jackson Township



John W. Johnson

According to the federal government's Department of Health and Human Services, some 10 million persons in this country are on 'welfare' of some kind or another. That's roughly 2.6 percent of the nation's entire population.

The government also says, however, that of those 10 million persons, 40 percent are black and 38 percent are white.

In simple terms, we are now spending \$548 billion a year on the elderly, more than twice that the \$282 billion we're spending on defense, and three times more than the \$179 billion we spend on the poor.

Still, and perhaps more to the point, the real numbers are these: one out of every 50 white persons in this country receive some sort of government welfare...one out of every six, black persons receive welfare, and one out of every ten persons of Hispanic origin are on the welfare rolls.

And when you add the following fact...that as late as the 1930's illegitimate black children were far fewer in actual numbers than illegitimate white children, then the abject failure of the liberal approach to welfare becomes all too apparent.

We also now have a service, rather than a manufacturing economy. In concert with this shift to a service economy has been a move in education which, ironically, has deemphasized vocational training, replaced by emphasis on the so-called professions.

We have now, in fact, institutionalized the notion of our daughters (and sons) growing up to marry doctors, lawyers and accountants, while deriding the notion of craftsmen and manual laborers in general. We have, in effect, said that non-intellectual work is unworthy; therefore, the people who do it are unworthy. Works out great for one's self-

Hidden costs of welfare

esteem, doesn't it?

The rhetoric of those who allege fraud and abuse of the welfare system is the least of welfare problems. The major problem is the system itself, not its manipulations.

Welfare benefits often equal or exceed the pay of many jobs. This creates a disincentive to work. As a result of misplaced humanitarian concerns, many states now give welfare recipients a package of benefits which far exceed the value of the recipients potential earnings. Conversely, there's no small connection between an individual being pushed into (and unable to grasp) an intellectual educational track, and that same individual ending up on welfare in the first place.

Likewise, it is ridiculous to believe that welfare recipients would be willing to give up these benefits for a lower net income since working itself may be inconvenient, uncertain in duration and expensive in itself. And if a family can get even more money based on the number of children it has, is it any wonder that we've had a dramatic increase in the number of illegitimate births among those already at the bottom of the economic ladder?

On one hand we have an educational system which largely laughs at manual labor (vocational education), and on the other a welfare system which funnels many of the other so-called educated in a system which provides more compensation than a person could earn by using his or her own, even refined, abilities. Does it then take a college degree to figure out this system will be replete with fraud? Will be abused?

Put another way: How many of you would, given the opportunity, pass up a free lunch? How many of you do?

At the same time, the welfare system has all but eliminated the 'push of poverty.' Without deficit spending by the federal government, therein lies a major reason for a stagnant economy and repeated cycles of recession and recovery. People whose poverty may only be temporary if left alone (or if manual labor were once again elevated to a position of honor) are treated as if they have a perma-

nent and debilitating disease. By putting these people on welfare, we give them more money (in actual cash and benefits) than they could earn at the bottom of the economic ladder.

And what's wrong with that you might ask?

It's wrong because it effectively removes those persons from any opportunity to climb the economic ladder because incentive has been removed. Without incentive, access to the economic ladder is effectively denied.

Now citizens below an arbitrarily established poverty line are labeled "disadvantaged." Incentive has been stolen from them by a welfare system which cannot wait to smother incentive with mounds of humanitarian concern. Incentive has also been sidetracked by an educational system which now refuses to value manual labor, replaced by a glorification of the professions.

Being poor is nothing to be ashamed about.

In a free enterprise system, doing nothing about being poor is the cause for shame.

When a government, in order to keep itself employed, artificially raises a citizen's standard of living beyond that citizen's ability to do the same, it's time for reevaluation.

When an educational system devalues vocational education in favor of the professions—and when the latter is the idealistic exception rather than the realistic rule—then it's time for reevaluation.

While this country may now be reacting smugly to events in Eastern Europe; while we may now think we are poised on the pedestal of greatness as a shining example of what our European brethren believe they want, our present course of manual labor derision and its welfare/illegitimate children by-product, actually is threatening to topple us into an abyss fraught with the very real danger of a future Civil War between ever more clearly defined haves' and have nots'.

In the meantime, and with manual labor derision, there may soon not be enough people left to construct the ivory towers in which those who've created this mess have hidden themselves.

ONLY YESTERDAY

60 Years Ago - July 19, 1935 BORO CONSIDERS STRICT ZONING REGS

The need for more rigid zoning and planning provisions in Dallas Borough in anticipation of the predicted building increase, will be discussed by members of Dallas Borough Business Men's Association, at their meeting tonight at the Suburban Inn.

A proposal to have citizens of Dallas Borough and Dallas Township vote this fall on a plan by which Dr. Henry M. Laing Fire Co. which serves both communities and receive a modest amount each year for maintenance and development was discussed by officials of the two towns at a meeting Wednesday evening. The plan, which has the support of prominent citizens and a number of officials, calls for one tenth of a cent to be levied on each dollar of assessed valuation in the two communities.

50 Years Ago - July 20, 1945 HADSAL GIVES LIBRARY FIVE MEMORIAL BOOKS

Additional information concerning the fate of their son Lieut. Herbert C. Culp, reported missing in action July 12, 1944 while piloting a B-24 bomber over Germany, has been revealed to Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Culp of Huntsville, in two letters from his co-pilot of that fateful day and one from the War Department.

Five beautiful volumes, loved by all young folk and illustrated by the famous artist Wyeth, have been contributed to Back Mountain Memorial Library by Miss Martha Hadsal of Dallas and a member of the class of '42 at Lehman High School in memory of five young men from that school who have given their lives during World War II.

You could get - Cantaloupe, 10¢ lb.; carrots, 2 lg. bchs., 17¢; Cod filets, 35¢ lb.; Orange juice, 46-oz. can 46¢; Old Dutch Cleanser, 2 cans/15¢.

40 Years Ago - July 15, 1955 AUCTION SETS RECORD

The 9th annual Library Auction closed Tuesday at midnight, making it the longest and hottest sale on record. Tentative figures indicate that total sales exceeded \$15,800, the highest on record. Net income will probably not exceed \$11,000 since there are a number of expenses, including the purchase of the Ford Thunderbird auto, refreshment stand supplies and incidental items.

Arthur Nuss, son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Nuss, was elected to the position of instructor of physical education at the Lehman-Jackson-Ross joint school board meeting Tuesday evening. A 1954 graduate from Stroudsburg State Teachers College, Nuss has for the past year been working with the YMCA in Bradford. He leaves a more lucrative position to accept the teaching post in his hometown.

30 Years Ago - July 15, 1965 BORO MULLS NEED FOR UTILITY TAX, SEWERS

Borough Council covered everything from A-Z in a meeting Tuesday evening, touching on such topics as need for a Back Mountain sewer; legality of barbed wire fences around homes in Dallas; legality of shooting guns in Dallas; possibility of imposing a tax on utilities; need for new paving; need for zoned heating in the Borough Building. An un-studied motion to tax utilities brought a 4-3 vote with Wilbur Davis making original motion and Bob Post moved to form a committee to study the legal problems and draw up an ordinance.

The Committee on Antiques for the Library Auction made \$3,565 free and clear with no expense to detract from the total take. A number of pieces, which would have totaled at least another \$500, were not sold, due to lack of time over the block.

20 Years Ago - July 17, 1975 HL SEWER AUTHORITY OWES OVER \$88,000

A treasury balance of \$577 and a notice due that \$88,326.61 in interest is due the Girard Bank by the Harveys Lake Sewer Authority was revealed at the authority's July 9 meeting. The revelation came during the reading of the treasurer's report and it was explained that the interest was payable at a 4.857% reduction rate. Earl Mumert, representing the authority's engineers, Glace & Glace Inc. stated that application had been made on behalf of the authority for an Environmental Protection Agency grant of approximately \$800,000.

Q: Where do you find the most Back Mountain news each week?
A: Only in The Dallas Post