

J.W.J.



John W. Johnson

## The Constitution contains no guarantees for anyone

point to the growing wealth gap and cry out for even more manipulations of people and systems, buying votes in the process.

Nevertheless, it is part of the American melting pot psyche for us to dislike seeing the poor get poorer; it's just somehow wrong for the American dream to turn into a nightmare, even if the reality is that many dreamers can only fantasize about having the necessary combination of intellect and drive to change their circumstances.

Other dislike seeing the rich get richer, although in many cases those getting richer deserve what they're getting because they have "capitalized" to do so. You remember that word...capitalized? That's right...it is an integral part of free enterprise. Otherwise known as capitalism, but also a word dropped from the do-gooders vocabulary.

And while the vote buying politicians continue to lament the rich getting richer, the focus of genuine concern is the poor getting poorer.

Some suggest raising the minimum wage again.

Raising the minimum wage again perhaps would help temporarily...but it won't help those millions not employed, among them millions not seeking employment.

It won't help the drug addicts, alcoholics and the welfare system trained beggars who just won't work, many of whom prefer to live on charity and welfare of one kind or another.

Fact is, 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 (as opposed to vocational) educational track, and that same individual ending up on welfare in the first place.

And as we've seen with drug arrests in theoretically tranquil Wayne County, we have far more drugs addicts today than ever before...which is (when added to

long lines at the State Lottery ticket counter) on reason there are more poor getting poorer. Drug addiction, and public gambling against impossible odds, are recently expanded and expensive vices.

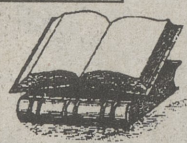
Another reason for the poor getting poorer is that, in the past 40 years, this country has steadily become a less self disciplined society. Beyond the educational system devaluing vocational training, and otherwise turning out many persons unfit for employment, the old disciplines of hard work, responsibility and self sufficiency have been replaced in many cases by dependency, despondency, addiction and the disease of welfare. There are also millions today who can get work but who won't accept the jobs available...which doesn't sit too well for those who remember the 1930's when citizens leaped at any chance for employment. Any employment.

The truth is that in the last two decades, more jobs were created than at any time in this nation's history. A record number of individuals are now employed. Percentage unemployment is not historically high. And all of us know that if a person wants to work badly enough, he or she can usually find work today, some kind of work. This is less true in metropolitan areas, but work can usually be found if the search is determined enough.

The shiftless, addicts and quitters are often lulled by the self-serving words of self-righteous politicians who imply that government owes them employment, higher wages and a better life...clearly a wrong attitude in a society which supposedly cherishes free and independent human beings, finding the best and brightest among us through rewards of the free enterprise system.

It's also clear that the rich will probably go on getting richer and the poor poorer until we once again value vocational education; until we once again value self-discipline and the work ethic over today's values which find uneducated and unqualified millions out to do their own thing rather than get ahead by hard work and reliability.

### LIBRARY NEWS



By NANCY KOZEMCHAK

The Back Mountain Memorial Library is displaying a unique collection of Matchbox Cars in the office area of the library. These cars were borrowed from Marty Musto of Shavertown.

Marty is 9 1/2 years old and will be in 4th grade at Westmoreland Elementary School. He has been collecting Matchbox Cars for eight years; having received his first one from McDonald's in Shavertown with a Happy Meal when he was a year old. He collected 12 cars from McDonald's. He also buys some at Toys 'R Us and Kay Bees and receives them for gifts at Christmas and for birthdays.

His favorite car is a red Dodge Viper; a new one is a Lexus. Another special one is a red Chevy 4 x 4 truck and a really old 1969 rig without a back with a blue

## Matchbox car collection is on the roll in the library

windshield. The cars are divided into groups: a fire engine division; sports cars; racing cars; tow trucks and road equipment trucks;

emergency trucks, police cars and helicopters; jeeps and tanks; a motorcycle ice cream truck and Good Humor truck. This display has already delighted the children who have been in. It will be here until August 23.

New books in the Children's Room for 4th to 6th grade readers: "The Dark Stairs" by Betsy Byars tells of the mystery that is in Herculeah Jones's blood. How could it not be, with a father on the police force and a mother running a private eye business?

"The Crystal Garden" by Vicki Grove begins when Eliza and her mom are each trying to make a fresh start at their new home in Gouge Eye, Missouri. Eliza's mom is crossing her fingers that her country-singer boyfriend can finally find success in nearby Branson.

"Darnell Rock Reporting" by Walter Dean Myers tells of 13-year-old Darnell who is not the

kind of kid who would normally volunteer on a school newspaper—it sounds way too much like homework. But Darnell is being given one last chance to get his act together.

"Shark in School" by Patricia Reilly Giff starts with, although Matthew Jackson still misses some of his old friends at the Polk Street School, he's gotten along pretty well in his new town of Deposit, Ohio. He has made friends with J.P. from next door and expects changes.

"Guests" by Michael Dorris is the story of Moss, who is frustrated when his father brings different people to the harvest meal; but he is told 'Someday you'll understand why'. He grapples with the ultimate truth of being a grown-up: you are who you are.

"A Teen's Guide to Going Vegetarian" by Judy Krizmanic is written in a relaxed nonjudgemental style and covers all the bases; from nutritional requirements to dealing with anxious parents and skeptical friends and deals with answering tough questions.



POST PHOTO/GRACE R. DOVE

### New equipment to serve the community

Franklin Township Volunteer Fire Company president Harold Hoover, left, and board member Louis Bedford, right, accepted a Legislative Initiative Grant check from Representative George Hasay, center. Hasay and junior legislative aide Rachel Hasay, in the truck's cab, stopped by the fire company to see the new pumper/tanker which was recently purchased.

## The economic viewpoint



Howard Grossman

A new initiative has been launched in Northeastern Pennsylvania. It is the founding of the Conservancy for the Pocono Northeast, Inc. This new land trust will serve nine counties including Carbon, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Monroe, Pike, Schuylkill, Susquehanna, Wayne and Wyoming. It comes about as a result of 12 months of intensive assessment as to the needs to protect land which should not be developed in Northeastern Pennsylvania.

An Eastern Pennsylvania Land Trust Coalition Steering Committee was organized to study the opportunities which exist to create a larger land trust than exists in many places in Northeastern Pennsylvania. With the trend toward the establishment of smaller land trusts and with the difficulty of raising funds and maintaining properties, the thought is to establish a major and conservancy which can benefit a larger region of Northeastern Pennsylvania. The mission of the Conservancy for the Pocono Northeast is to protect and enhance a natural quality of the nine county Northeast Pennsylvania region, both in terms of area and interconnecting links.

To carry out this mission, the Conservancy will undertake the following responsibilities:

- Direct land saving actions, such as land acquisition and acceptance of conservation easements.
- Technical assistance to local communities and other conservation organizations, including lo-

## Pocono NE Conservancy forms to protect open land

cal and regional land trusts.

• Education of public officials and agencies, the business community and the general public regarding their interest in environmental quality and their commonality in interest with land trust community.

• Active participation in regional planning activities.

The Conservancy has been incorporated as a 501 (c) 3 not-for-profit corporation in Pennsylvania. Recently, the Conservancy Board of Directors met for the first time in the conference room of the Economic Development Council of Northeastern Pennsylvania (EDCNP). It has prepared a set of by-laws which will be adopted by the Board at its next meeting. The Board will conduct a one day retreat meeting in September of this year.

A Conservancy feasibility study is underway to help develop and direct the actions of the Conservancy over the next few years. Furthermore, the four major land trusts serving Eastern Pennsylvania, the Nature Conservancy, the Wildlands Conservancy, the Heritage Conservancy, and the Natural Lands Trust have joined together to submit an application under the Key 93 bond issue program to the Pennsylvania Department of Community Affairs for a grant of \$50,000 to undertake a major effort leading toward the identification of resources which are important to the conservancy movement in the nine-county region.

Land trusts exist in various parts of Northeastern Pennsylvania to help protect treasured land areas in portions of the region. Such groups as the Back Mountain Regional Land Trust, the Delaware Highlands Land Trust, the Pocono Heritage Land Trust and others are all interested in the new organization. The Board of Directors of the Conservancy

includes representatives from the land trust community, the business community, the academic community, government and the non profit community.

It is estimated that there are 1,200 land trusts or conservancies scattered throughout the nation. With much concern being expressed by Congress as well as legislation being introduced in the General Assembly in Pennsylvania concerning private property rights, the role of land trusts and conservancies should prove to be of extreme importance in coming months and years. The ability to blend both economic growth and environmental sensitivity within a given governmental jurisdiction is a key and complex issue.

In the near future a new report published by the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, based in Cambridge, MA on the topic of "Managing Land as Ecosystem and Economy" should be a significant contribution to the dialogue necessary for the benefit of Northeastern Pennsylvania and other substate regions across the nation. The Lincoln Institute of Land Policy is an outstanding institution which has contributed to much dialogue in the past on issues such as land development, planning, community development, and a variety of other topics of importance to this nation. Those who would like to communicate with that organization may write 113 Brattle Street, Cambridge, MA 02138.

Anyone interested in learning more about the new Conservancy should write Conservancy for the Pocono Northeast, Inc., 1151 Oak Street, Pittston, PA 18640 and request information.

Howard Grossman is Executive Director of the Economic Development Council of Northeastern Pennsylvania. He lives in Dallas.

## The Back Mountain's hometown paper ...from people who live here



"You'll like coming over to The Dallas Post. Jill Gruver is easygoing and helpful. You get the feeling she really cares that things go smoothly and well."

Jill just became Mrs. Ron Gruver in a June wedding. The Gruvers live in a newly-purchased home in Shavertown, but she grew up in Dallas. There are no pets yet, but there is an empty fish tank which is soon to be filled with exotic goldfish. Both Gruvers are active sports fans - any sport.

Jill's title of Office Manager covers

more than it implies. She handles the paper's accounts receivable, sends out ad billings and does the "Local Pros" page. Jill says, "I also fill in on the typesetting computer, and some days the phone keeps me going all day."

Jill Gruver is just one of the local people who help put out the Back Mountain's hometown paper, The Dallas Post.

**Joan, why haven't you written?** Let the Back Mountain know what you think by writing a letter to the editor. Always include your name, address and a daytime phone number; we don't publish anonymous letters. Send letters to: The Dallas Post, P.O. Box 366, Dallas, PA 18612

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