

## Publisher's notebook

Ron Bartizek



A few random thoughts as we begin a new year.

First, we want to thank all our employees, friends, readers and advertisers who helped make the year just past a successful one. Despite new competition from *The Times Leader*, The Post's subscriber list was at a 10-year high as we ended 1995, and advertising ended the year on the upswing. We will do our best to retain your support in 1996.

The budget crisis charade in Washington is an affront to all thinking Americans. As politicians attempt to use it as leverage for their positions, ordinary citizens suffer. Most federal employees are as conscientious as private sector workers, and face the same pressures and problems in life off the job. Now they are coming up short of money to pay bills and mortgages. At the same time, the people they serve, from the elderly to vacationers, are being inconvenienced — and more — because offices aren't staffed. In the end, nearly all federal employees will receive full back pay, and will have to put in overtime to get their departments up to speed. The net result will be more billions of dollars spent, and less service for the rest of us.

That said, it's good to see the nation's financial future being taken seriously after years of neglect. We simply cannot go on the way we have in the past unless we care nothing about the generations to follow. The cost of programs like Medicare and Social Security will skyrocket as the population ages, and there simply won't be enough working people to support them. What is being discussed now is merely a precursor to much more radical changes to come, which will go far beyond tinkering with programs as they are now structured. Are you ready to accept need testing for Social Security? If you aren't, the whole program will collapse. But with today's sophisticated computers, maybe we'll be able to give everyone benefits up to what they've contributed, then means test after that.

Once again the economic powers that be in Luzerne County are saying 1995 was a year when they helped lay the foundation for future growth. I've heard that refrain every year for more than a decade but the future never seems to put in an appearance. I don't know the reasons for our stagnant economy, but am willing to bet the lack of ambition in the Courthouse helps explain it. Luzerne County's commissioners have shown little interest in projects that could make our region more attractive to new investment, preferring to maintain the status quo that put them in office. Perhaps Red Jones will make a difference in that respect.

The icicles hanging from the south-side eaves of our house are not a good omen for the rest of the winter. The early snow and cold was broken for a few days, but all that did was melt water that refroze overnight. It reminds me too much of the winter two years ago. Our house and the office fared quite well in that one, but many others didn't. I hope we see a change in the weather soon.

If you haven't listened to *Car Talk* on WVIA-FM Saturday mornings, you've missed a treat. Hosted by Tom and Ray Maliacci, known as Click and Clack, The Tappet Brothers, this hourlong comedy of the car is always entertaining, and sometimes informative. Last week they got a call from a top official in Montana who wanted to respond to the brothers' satirical comments about that state's removal of speed limits on many roads. The official explained that most people in Montana drove well above 55 mph before the change, and average speeds were up only slightly after. I subsequently read an article that explained there was more to the matter than I had known. It seems the previous speed laws included only a \$5 fine and no points on a driver's record, while the new ones hold fines of over \$500 and points. Still, the only restriction on speed on many highways is a policeman's judgement of what is reasonable and prudent, and that is likely to be subject to legal challenge. Given the wide open spaces and flat terrain in many western states, higher speeds are probably appropriate, but there should be upper limits.

## Letters, columns and editorials

The *Dallas Post* attempts to publish opinions on a variety of topics in many forms.

Editorials, which are the opinion of the management of *The Post*, appear on the editorial page and are written by the editor unless otherwise indicated. Any artwork represents the opinion of the cartoonist, and columns are the opinion of the author.

Letters to the editor are welcome and will be published, subject to the following guidelines:

- Letters should not exceed 500 words.
- No writer may have more than one letter published during a 30-day period, except as a reply to another letter.
- Letters must be signed and include the writer's home town and a telephone number for verification.
- Names will be withheld only if there exists a clear threat to the writer.
- *The Post* retains the right to accept or reject any letter, and to edit letters for grammar and spelling, as well as to eliminate any libel, slander or objectionable wording.

In addition to letters, we welcome longer pieces that may run as columns. The author or subject's relevance to the Back Mountain will be the prime consideration when selecting material for publication.

## Your news is welcome

The *Dallas Post* welcomes submissions about Back Mountain people and events. In order to plan each issue, we must adhere to self-imposed deadlines, as well as those of our printer. To have the greatest likelihood of publication, items should be received at our office by 4 p.m. the Friday prior to each issue. Items will be accepted until 4 p.m. Mondays, although much of the paper is already assembled by that time. Send or bring items to: The *Dallas Post*, 45 Main Road, P.O. Box 366, Dallas, PA 18612. Our normal business hours are 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. A deposit box is located at the front of the building for after-hours submissions.

## The Dallas Post

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Park bench and pond, Bulford Road. Photo by Charlotte Bartizek.

## As I was saying



Jack Hilsher

When the news first came out I called Joe Cooper, founder and first president of the Glenn Miller Society (now called the Big Band Society) and told him swing band leader Miller would be featured on a U.S. stamp next year...Coop and others had fought for this for years. He wasn't too excited at the news. Sort of grumpy, in fact, saying, "Well, okay, but it's about time. They should have done it years ago, at least before that Presley guy."

True enough. The Postal Service receives approximately 40,000 letters each year, each touting a particular subject for stamps. Letters are supposedly reviewed by the Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee, a group of private citizens who recommend stamp subjects and designs to the Postmaster General.

Next year's subjects cover American traditions, music, history and statehood stamps for Iowa, Tennessee and Utah. P.G. Marvin Runyon says, "The '96 stamps represent the best of what America is all about. They stand for the pursuit of ideas, knowledge, courage, excellence and success. Most importantly, they feature subjects that the American people have told us they want to see on U.S.

## New stamps long overdue, but enough is too much

postage stamps."

Perhaps. But the collector public is getting fed up. Ninety different stamps for any one country is a bit much. One collector (among many) wrote a stamp journal saying, "I am discontinuing this hobby. For many years - 60 or more - I have been collecting but no longer can I afford to buy all the new issues."

Another wrote, "I, too, have found that the number of new issues and their varieties has posed a financial burden that I can no longer justify, and I have collected for 40 years."

These writers are typical of those being turned off the collecting of U.S. stamps, but there are other reasons besides this blatant money-making volume. All you have to do is compare modern stamp designs, and subjects, with those of other countries, say France, whose painstaking engravings are breathtakingly beautiful. We feature Marilyn Monroe or bloated Elvis on slapdash,

poorly-executed artwork. (As role models perhaps? You've got to be kidding.)

Anyway, come September next year Major Miller will appear on a first-class stamp "se-tenant" with three other swing era band leaders. Se-tenant means an issue "joined as a pair, strip or block with other stamps differing in design."

The three leaders joining Glenn Miller will be Count Basie (piano), the Dorsey Brothers, Jimmy (sax) and Tommy (trombone) and of course, virtuoso clarinetist Benny Goodman. (Oddly enough, Artie Shaw is nowhere in sight, and you can bet there will be static about that oversight.)

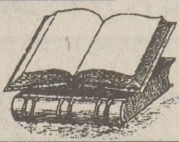
Our bureaucratic postal mismanagement will in no way ruin one of man's oldest and best hobbies. A recent list of notables who collected stamps reveals some surprises: Lily Pons, Adolph Menjou, General Mark Clark, our 31st Prez, Herbert Clark Hoover, and the dean of them all, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who once said, "I can almost say that I owe my life to my hobbies, especially stamp collecting."

The diversion and pleasure from collecting stamps had helped him recover from infantile paralysis. And another White Houser, ex-chief of staff John Sununu also collected, but on that note I had better end this column before I get into trouble. (It was ok to attend stamp shows on "company time" but John, on Air Force One?)



Band Leaders stamps coming next year, including a 32c Glenn Miller stamp. Glenn Miller, who is believed to have died in a plane crash in 1944, has long been proposed for a United States stamp, including by many collectors. (Reproduction furnished by Lynn's Stamp News, Sidney, Ohio.)

## LIBRARY NEWS



By NANCY KOZEMCHAK

The Back Mountain Memorial Library Book Club dues for the year 1996 is now payable at the library. The membership fee is \$10 for a single membership and \$15 for a double membership. The dues entitles each member to take two book club books from the special shelf each time they visit the library. The 1995 total monies received for book club books was \$2,156 which money was used to purchase the books for the special book club shelf. These books stay on the special shelf for six months and then go on the regular library shelves, and become a part of the library collection. The Book Club will hold its next meeting at the library on Monday, March 18 in the Community Room.

New books at the library:

## The Book Club members' 1996 dues are now payable

"Angel Light" by Andrew M. Greeley starts with Toby Tobin saying: "I do not want 10 million dollars. I do not want to end a Tobin family feud. And, above all, I do not want to court my eighth cousin, once removed." Even as he says the words, he knows it's useless to resist. His late grandfather's will must be obeyed, and his family is determined to make him respectable by his 25th birthday.

"Shades of Grace" by Barbara Delinsky is an unforgettable story of three generations of women in one family, examining the limits of love, responsibility, and commitment. Grace is the confidante, a seasoned advice columnist. Grace's daughter, Francine, and granddaughter, Sophie, manage the vast Dorian empire, overseeing Grace's speaking engagements, interviews, and demanding publicity schedules. Grace develops Alzheimers.

"Breakfast in Bed" by Sandra Brown is the story of Sloan

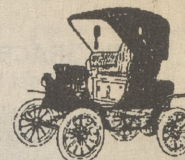
Fairchild who is convinced that she will never be able to trust her heart to a man again. Instead, she pours all her energy into making a success of her elegant San Francisco bed-and-breakfast inn. Her friend asks her to house her fiancé for a month, and Sloan opens her doors to Carter Madison and meets a man who turns her world and her concept of herself upside down.

"Choke" by Stuart Woods is a large print book set against the shimmering sands of Key West and explodes with twists, shocks and action that have made these novels international bestsellers. Chuck Chandler was nearly a Wimbledon tennis champion until, he choked on his serves and ended his career in the last crucial moments. Now he lives in a 32-foot boat in the waters off of Key West, working as a tennis pro at an exclusive club. He is implicated in the murder of a wealthy club patron, who has a stunning wife.

## 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

ONLY YESTERDAY



## 60 Years Ago - Jan. 10, 1936 BATTLE OVER WATER RATE INCREASES LOOMS

Miss Angeline Dymond, teacher in the commercial department of Dallas Borough High School, will be asked by the school board to reconsider the resignation she submitted recently. At a meeting Wednesday evening, members of the Dallas Borough School Board explained they have been unable to find an applicant who measures up to the standards of Miss Dymond, although there have been a number of applicants. Miss Dymond is reported to have an offer of a similar position at Forty Fort High School.

Prospects of a long battle over the increased rates filed by Dallas Water Co. with the Public Service Commission loomed this week as consumers with businessmen prepared to launch a protest in the vanguard. The new rates, filed with the Public Service Commission at Harrisburg, calls for \$1.00 a year increase on flat rate for consumers and establish a new system of meter rates for commercial consumers.

## 50 Years Ago - Jan. 11, 1946

### STOLARICK BUYS NEELY STORE IN LEHMAN

George Williams, prominent in Luzerne County newspaper and Republican political circles for more than 40 years, was sworn in as Burgess of Dallas by Judge Andrew Hourigan. It was the third time that Mr. Williams, who establishes something of a national and state record, has been sworn in as Burgess of a Luzerne County municipality.

George Stolarick, former manager of the old A&P Store in Dallas, has purchased the three story W.R. Neely store in Lehman Center from Mrs. Alice Elston and will shortly open there a modern farm equipment and electrical goods store. In addition to the farm equipment and electrical goods departments, he will also operate a 5c and \$1 store.

Now playing at Shaver Theatre, "Conflict" with Humphrey Bogart, Alexis Smith and Sidney Greenstreet.

## 40 Years Ago - Jan. 6, 1956

### KINGSTON TWP. OPENS THREE NEW STREETS

St. Paul's Lutheran congregation in Shavertown will hold services in the church edifice on Sunday but within a week or 10 days will transfer to Westmoreland High School auditorium while the break-through of walls is made and the new heating plant is hooked-up.

Kingston Township will open three streets, according to documents filed by supervisors Arthur F. Smith and Ralph M. Sands at Luzerne County Courthouse. They are Highland Avenue, Youngblood Avenue and Lawn Street. The ordinance was enacted Dec. 7.

## 30 Years Ago - Jan. 6, 1966

### NEW COMPANY MOVES INTO NOXEN TANNERY

Dallas Borough has stipulated it would not try to enforce its ordinance imposing pole inspection fee on utility lines until a hearing is held on the matter. Borough solicitor Robert Fleming told *The Dallas Post* the dispute will be argued when the next equity court convenes, or in other words less than two months hence.

The first of what is hoped to be several new industrial occupants of the old tannery building, this one with a possible employment of 35-50 men, signed a lease this week at Noxen, inaugurating what may well be a new era of prosperity in the lower Wyoming County region.

## 20 Years Ago - Jan. 8, 1976

### DALLAS TWP. RESIDENTS SIGN DECLARATION

Dallas Township residents, their friends and neighbors will have their first opportunity to officially sign the U.S. Declaration of Independence Saturday morning at the township municipal building. The ceremony will officially designate the township as a bicentennial community. A facsimile of the original Declaration of Independence will be on hand for visitors to the ceremony to sign. The document will remain in the township building for signatures during '76 and then be framed and displayed in the building.