

EDITORIALS

# Prison water-use deal is worth a try

While we are disturbed by a comment from state Corrections Commissioner Martin Horn, in which he implied that his decision to limit use of the Chase prison's wells came not because of evidence, but simply to be a "good neighbors," the change of pace is welcome.

People who live near the prison have argued for years that the institution's reliance on well water — even after a line to the Ceasetown Reservoir was installed — put their own water supplies in danger. Several nearby homes have suffered poor water pressure or dry wells from time to time, which they attributed to the quarter million gallons of water drawn daily by the prison wells. While no one has been able to definitively prove those wells lowered the water table, it's probably a safe bet they did so. The case was compelling enough for the state to run the line from Ceasetown, and begin to use it in 1994. But a new administration saw things differently, when they realized it cost more to use PG&W's water than their neighbors, and shut down the water line last June.

Under the compromise announced last week, the prison will use the wells for half its needs from November through April each year, but only one day each week from May through October, when dry conditions are most likely to occur. That seems like a reasonable stance, at least until it has been shown that even that plan poses a hazard to other wells in the vicinity of the prison. Unfortunately, evidence that the prison still adversely affects home wells will arise only when someone's well goes dry.

But until that happens, this seems like the new plan is worth a try, which balances the concerns of people who live close to the prison with the fiscal realities of government in 1996.

## Zoning matters

As mundane as it sounds, few matters are more important than zoning to the life of communities like ours. How and where Back Mountain towns develop is largely dependent on the strength and breadth of zoning codes, which define such basic guidelines as minimum lot sizes and the share of each zone within a town's borders. But zoning — and its more abstract cousin, planning — aren't of concern only to each town on its own. Just as no man is an island, so too with communities, so when towns establish zones and the regulations that go along with them, it is incumbent upon them to examine how their plans affect neighboring communities. That hasn't happened to the extent that it should in the Back Mountain, but there are forces trying to develop a wider vision.

Two recent examples demonstrate zoning's impact, and its ability to raise tempers. In Franklin Township, revised regulations that increase minimum lot sizes have been a topic of controversy for more than a year, and were the primary cause of a change in political leadership last November. An attempt to build on undersized lots brought several protesters to the latest meeting of the Jackson Township supervisors.

Zoning is important for many reasons: It affects who lives in a town, and how many people; it determines a town's visual character; it sets limits on the ultimate total of taxable property; it can even expand or restrict the number and type of jobs available. All these and more factors give a community shape, size and a sense of itself.

Most Back Mountain towns have rewritten their zoning codes in recent years, as they were required to do by state statutes. In each case, officials set a course for their community based on what they perceived as the needs and desires of residents, as well as practical considerations such as the level of tax income necessary to sustain operations. Other than in Franklin Township, the process was smooth and uncontentious, and our guess is that a tiny majority of residents paid attention to the changes.

The Back Mountain has absorbed a substantial amount of residential and commercial growth in recent years, and it hasn't all been for the better. If you are concerned about changes in your community, pay attention to the zoning code and variations from it, then make your wishes known to your township or borough leaders.

## Publisher's notebook

Ron Bartizek



We've been trying to pack an awful lot of sports into the Post lately, especially as winter seasons come to an end with playoffs and tournaments. While we're able to get to quite a few events, we just don't have the manpower to cover them all, so we rely on contributors for much of the material. Our thanks to correspondents George Narcum, Mary Wright, Dr. Juan DeRojas and Rick Guntli, who have supplied most of the Gate of Heaven basketball information; to Dave Domzalski, who provided results for Dallas Youth Basketball grades 7-8; Phil Dale and Bonnie Saba, who wrote grades 5-6 results, and George Gracely, who did the duty for grades 3-4.

All newspapers rely on contributors for this type of information. If you feel your group — sports or otherwise — is being slighted, keep in mind that in many cases, if you don't tell us about it, we won't know about it. Deadline for submissions is noon Mondays, but Friday is better. They can be dropped off, mailed, or faxed.



Camp meeting cottages, waiting patiently for spring. Photo by Charlotte Bartizek.

## A Case for conservation



Alene N. Case

There are many remarkable people in this world. The ones that fascinate me most are generally scientists or writers and often both. On this International Women's Day (March 8), it seems quite appropriate to consider the life and work of the lady who revolutionized the study of primates and who brought these nearest relatives into our living rooms through books and television. Her name is Jane Goodall.

In 1960, Jane Goodall had just completed secretarial school. But, the great anthropologist Louis Leakey did not look at her credentials but at her love of animals and her careful attention to detail when he offered her a job in Africa. He sent her to the shore of Lake Tanganyika, to a place known as the Gombe Nature Reserve, to observe a wild population of chimpanzees. She says he thought the project might take a year — 35 years later the work continues.

In the beginning, she went out each day with notebook and binoculars in hand, but she could

## Jane Goodall, pioneer of primates

not get close enough to the chimps to learn much. However, gradually, they began to realize that this quiet young woman meant no harm and they stopped running away. Over the years, she and her associates have recorded the behavior and biology of one community of chimps in such a thorough way that we are beginning to get a glimpse at how our ancestors might have lived. That, of course, was the reason Leakey sent her there in the first place. But, she has gone far beyond that original purpose.

Dr. Leakey was either extremely smart or extremely lucky in his choice of an assistant. Jane Goodall had qualities that might have been overlooked. The first was that she was untaught. She did not know the usual techniques for studying animal behavior. So, she was free to invent her own and to record all items that seemed relevant to her. For instance, she did not know that researchers always numbered their subjects. She gave them names. And, these named individuals have turned out to have very distinct personalities. She describes many of these in her books: *My Friends: The Wild Chimpanzees* (1967), *In the Shadow of Man* (1971) and *Through a Window* (1990).

She also did not "know" that animals, including other primates, were not endowed with devious minds like humans. So,

when she reported that one young chimp had learned to stifle his food call so that the older males would not take his bananas away, she was surprised by the cold reception she got from experienced primatologists. At this point, she did not even have an undergraduate degree. But, thanks to Leakey's recommendation, she was accepted into the graduate program in ethology at Cambridge and received her PhD there in 1967. That degree, of course, gave her much more credibility, and she proceeded to change the way in which primate behavior is studied. As she says, "We can only find the answers by waiting, waiting patiently and watching and recording."

That brings us to another quality that Jane had — determination. She was not willing to give up when she went for months without getting close enough to the chimps to observe them. She was not willing to give up when the experts questioned her data and techniques. She was not willing to give up when an accident claimed the life of a student or when four students were kidnapped by rebels (and later returned unharmed). She did not give up the work when she was busy caring for her own son, Hugo (known to this day as Grub), but met with the field staff each evening to hear reports of the day's activities. She did not give

up when one marriage ended in divorce and the second in the death of her beloved. In other words, this work has truly become her life.

Today, Jane Goodall is happiest when she is at Gombe in the company of her "friends". But, she has little time to spend there. She is now a busy lecturer and advocate. The Jane Goodall Institute works to educate the public, especially children, about these nearest relatives of ours (Humans and chimpanzees share 99% of their DNA). She is also working very hard to improve the lot of those chimpanzees who are in captivity around the world and to provide refuges for orphans or injured chimps that cannot function in the wild. There are only about 250,000 chimps remaining in the wild. All live in Africa. Their range has been cut from about 20 countries to four or five. She also works to try to preserve this remaining habitat.

Jane Goodall has this advice for young people today, "Every individual matters and has a role to play in this life on earth. The chimpanzees teach us that it is not only human but also non-human beings who matter in the scheme of things... We have a choice to use the gift of our life to make the world a better place — or not to bother." I for one, am very glad Jane bothered.

## As I was saying



Jack Hilsher

It is all I can do to restrain myself from beginning this column by saying, "When there is a will, there is a way." No, I would never do that to you, even though today's deathless dissertation is about wills...famous ones, that is.

You know, despite what you'll hear or read, there is no legal obligation to have a will. It's perfectly okay to die "intestate," which means not having one. Every state has laws which provide equitable distribution to one's heirs, if any. If not, your remaining worldly goodies go into the public trough for the benefit of all.

However, as these examples will clearly demonstrate, it is

## Strange bequests through history

much more fun, and, I think, follows the Lord's wishes to have a will, written or oral. (Isaiah 38:1 - "Thus saith the Lord. Set thine house in order, for thou shalt die, and not live.")...

**LAST WILL OF NEK'URE**, son of an Egyptian Pharaoh, who died in 2601 B.C. - Provided for the disposition of 14 towns, two estates, distributed to his wife, three children and an unknown female (!). Carved on his tomb, this is the oldest will known, and states King Khafre's son had made decisions about his property, "while living upon his two feet and not ailing in any respect."

**LAST WILL OF WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR**, the British King who died in 1087 - Distributed large sums of money by dictating to his secretaries. Two bequests: 5,000 pounds in silver to his son, King Henry I, and to the clergy-men of Nantes, money to repay them for burning the town.

**LAST WILL OF FRANCOIS RABELAIS**, French author who died in 1553 - When opened in Paris his entire will read: "I have

nothing. I owe much. The rest I leave to the poor."

**LAST WILL OF JOHN DONNE**, British poet who died in 1631 - Donne left 500 pounds to his mother and a 54-line poem titled "The Will." (Donne wrote earlier, "Any man's death diminishes me because I am involved in Mankind. And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls. It tolls for thee.")

**LAST WILL OF PETER THE GREAT**, Russian Czar who died in 1725 - Told his ministers to keep Russia continually at war for the good of the nation, and left them a strategic plan for the conquest of all Europe.

**LAST WILL OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN**. Because of the assassination Lincoln died intestate, the only president to do so. His net worth was \$110,295, left to his wife and sons. Congress, following strict accounting procedures, paid his salary only until the day of his death.

**LAST WILL OF BRIGHAM YOUNG**, Mormon Church leader who died in 1877 - \$2.5 million in

cash and real estate were to be divided by 17 wives and 48 children.

**LAST WILL OF W.C. FIELDS**, comedian who died in 1946. Fields had 200 bank accounts under fictitious names all over the world but he kept no record of names or deposits. Executors found 45 accounts which totalled \$700,000 but believed that almost that much more existed and was never found. He left \$10,000 to his wife, \$10,000 to his son, and \$25,000 to his mistress, Carlotta Monti, plus a dictionary, two bottles of perfume and a Cadillac. Surprisingly, the man who once said, "Anybody who hates children and dogs can't be all bad" founded a college for orphaned boys and girls, "where no religion of any sort is to be preached. Harmony is the purpose of this thought."

That's all, but I must warn you, I've dozens more. If you enjoyed these and want more you'd better let me know.

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