

LETTERS

Valley Cat Rescue's Spay Day was a success

Editor:
Fifty-two cats will not be contributing to the pet overpopulation problem in Wyoming Valley this spring, thanks to the veterinarians who provided services for "Spay Day USA 1996." Spay Day USA, held February 26, was sponsored nationally by Doris Day Animal League, and coordinated locally by Valley Cat Rescue.

The following local veterinarians participated in Spay Day USA:
Dr. I.H. Kathio of Pittston Animal Hospital, who spayed 40 female cats and neutered 14 male cats; Dr. Brock Phillips of Back Mountain Veterinary Hospital, who neutered four male cats; Dr. Paul Kutish of Wyoming Valley Veterinary Hospital, who spayed three female cats and neutered two male cats; and Trucksville Dog & Cat Hospital.

Every resident of this area should be thankful for the partici-

pation of these veterinarians. Because they contributed their services at a reduced cost for Spay Day, many fewer unwanted kittens will be born this year and in years to come - kittens that would end up either in local animal shelters, or else in homes that might otherwise have provided an adoptive home to an animal in one of those shelters.

In seven years an unpaid female and her unaltered offspring can add 420,000 cats to the population.

And not only will animal lives be saved, but also taxpayer dollars. The cost of every animal brought into a local shelter or humane society can be as high as \$100. Every dollar spent on spaying or neutering today will save taxpayers approximately \$18 in the year 2004.

Valley Cat Rescue has also established a permanent "Sponsor-

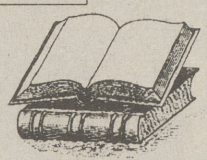
A-Spay" Fund to provide disabled, blind and elderly low-income residents of Wyoming Valley with reduced-cost spay/neuter services for their pets, but sometimes find it difficult to afford to have them altered. We want to help them prevent the birth of unwanted kittens, preserve the good health of their pets, and avoid the unwanted behaviors exhibited by unaltered cats, both male and female.

Donations in any amount are welcome, and may be sent to: "Sponsor-A-Spay" Fund, Valley Cat Rescue, P.O. Box 242, Wilkes-Barre, PA 18703-0242.

For more information about "Sponsor-A-Spay" or Valley Cat Rescue's Pet Adoption program call Valley Cat Rescue at 824-4172 between 10 a.m. and 8 p.m. any day.

Heather Balester, president
Valley Cat Rescue

LIBRARY NEWS



By NANCY KOZEMCHAK

The Book Club of the Back Mountain Memorial Library will hold its first meeting of the new season on Monday, March 18 at 1:30 in the community room. All members of the book club are welcome and guests are always invited. The program will consist of book discussions and some interesting show and tell items. Membership dues for 1996 is payable at the library; \$15 for a double membership and \$10 for a single. This is the money used to purchase the books for the special book club in the library.

Our special 'Pennies for Periodicals' is continuing for the month of March. These are the monies that are donated to the green jar campaign. The jar is located in the main foyer of the library. In conjunction with the

'Pennies for Periodicals' drive continues this month

'March Madness', we are having a 'Guess how many pennies' contest. A patron donated a full jar of pennies and we are asking patrons to estimate how many pennies are in the jar. This contest will also run until the end of March. Prizes will be awarded for the closest estimates.

New large print books at the library: "The Tent of Orange Mist" by Paul West is a stunning novel of a valiant young girl and her ailing father who struggle through the sweeping change in their native China during the Japanese invasion of 1937. Scald Ibis is a remarkable heroine, resourceful, imaginative and determined. After her country's invaders have killed her mother and brother, she is forced to work as a prostitute as her only hope of keeping her father, an eminent, scholar alive.

"Brothers and Sisters" by Bebe Moore Campbell, is set in the white-hot center of racially troubled Los Angeles. It is the

story of Esther Jackson an African-American who has built a promising career at a downtown bank. When a black man is hired as senior vice-president, Esther Jackson is heartened—until his interests in a white bank officer percolates into sexual harassment and Esther is forced to choose sides. She must rethink her life and vision of the American dream even further with suspicions along racial lines.

"The Standoff" by Chuck Hogan begins with a routine Monday that turns into catastrophe when the sheriff of an isolated Montana town serves an eviction notice to the town recluse, Glenn Ables. Ables turns out to be a federal fugitive wanted for illegal arms trafficking. He responds to the notice by shooting two policemen and barricading his family inside his cabin. The local police officials, State Troopers, helicopters, a US Marshals group and the FBI's elite hostage rescue team all converge to disarm Ables.

J.W.J.



John W. Johnson

Last of a three-part series

The old doctor raised his finger and stabbed the air with it for emphasis.

"It would be the worst thing ever to happen to medicine here"

The "it" referred to is socialized medicine.

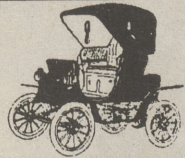
And the doctor who is so adamantly opposed to it knows whereof he speaks. He worked as a doctor in socialized medicine for more than 17 years.

Each time the question of health care, it's delivery and how we are going to pay for it tossed around, someone always comes in with the big third down play that the United States ought to adopt the health care system used by our neighbor Canada.

My doctor friend throws up his hands: "If that is done, then it will cost much, much more, and patients will suffer." (As I wrote in last week's column, I saw some of what he was talking about when I lived on the Canadian border many years ago).

And if you think that adoption of Canada's plan is far fetched, please know that a bill doing just that, has been introduced more than once in the House of Representatives, and at least once in the Senate by Sen. Paul Wellstone, (D) Minnesota.

ONLY YESTERDAY



60 Years Ago - March 20, 1936 AREA SEA SCOUTS HELP FLOOD EVACUEES

Since January when record snow falls blanketed mountains along the Susquehanna watershed, communities beside the river had been waiting for the inevitable rise of the river. Wednesday, March 11, from the level of 12 feet at noon, the river began climbing slowly, spreading over lowlands along its banks and filling cellars in Kingston and Wilkes-Barre. The slow rise continued all night and by dawn the water reached Kingston Corners, filling cellars and forcing hundreds of families to flee from homes. The flood reached its crest Friday, at 3 p.m. and began to recede slowly.

Sea Scouts from Kingston Township were summoned again Wednesday to assist relief forces in patrolling the flooded areas and Wyoming Valley and carrying aid to marooned families.

50 Years Ago - Mar. 22, 1946 STONER TO OPEN DALLAS BLOCK CO.

Paul Stoner, who has been engaged in stone construction since 1919, will start the manufacture of tamped cinder blocks in Dallas about April 1 under the firm name of Dallas Block Co. When the plant gets into operation, it will produce between 600 - 1,000 blocks a day and employ three

Health care reform: what will happen if you get sick?

To be fair, here's how the Canadian system works:

When a Canadian visits his or her doctor, the doctor bills the government. If the patient visits a hospital, the hospital pays for this care out of a lump sum the government gives it each year; the patient does not receive a bill.

The literal bottom line here is that the government pays, in full, for all health care for every citizen.

The other side of that coin finds the average Canadian paying 46 percent of his income in taxes, while the cost of health care there is growing faster than the country's gross national product.

Today the United States has the costliest health system in the world. But critics of adopting the Canadian system say that it would enormously more expensive, while actually reducing the quality of care.

Critics cite overuse of the system in Canada, from visiting emergency rooms with common colds, to roaming around from doctor to doctor seeking prescriptions for drugs. Critics also say patients suffer under the Canadian system because hospitals and doctors have no incentive to provide good service; in fact, service often is mediocre at best. Patients must often wait months for the simplest of procedures, or for access to the most basic diagnostic equipment. The average wait now for a coronary by-pass operation is one year.

But what about those who argue that with the United States

government already paying 42 percent of total health care costs, and heavily subsidizing private health insurance companies through tax breaks, we already have socialized medicine here?

Those who make this argument point out that it's us, the consumer, who is really at fault here. We want the best for ourselves and our loved ones, while preserving what we regard as a right to choose the who, what and where of care, while wishing the payment for same to be someone else's responsibility.

That's why it's so difficult to cut costs. Patients demand more and the system tries to oblige. Likewise, there is no incentive to cut costs here as better than 90 percent of hospital costs are either paid by government or third party insurers; the figure is more than 80 percent for doctor's bills.

Where does that leave the 35 million persons in this country who have no health insurance at all, or the more than 20 million who face the very real danger of losing health care coverage, or those persons who have a catastrophic illness, and whom the U.S. Supreme Court now says can be removed from health insurance plans by employers?

The bottom line here is that, like Pogo, we have met the enemy and he is us...wanting the best and the most without being willing to pay the real cost.

And with that as our illness, no amount of health care, or tinkering with the system, will cure it.

men.
Lehman High School is the only local school planning to enter the Pennsylvania Forensic and Music League competitions this year, following Kingston Township's decision not to compete. The League was founded in 1927 under the sponsorship of the University of Pittsburgh to promote music and speech in schools of Pennsylvania.

Now playing at the Shaver Theatre, "The Dolly Sisters" starring Betty Grable, June Haver and John Payne.

40 Years Ago - Mar. 16, 1956 TEN-WAY SCHOOL IS JOINTURE UNPOPULAR

At their Tuesday meeting, the Lehman-Jackson-Ross school directors put themselves on record as not in favor of a 10-way jointure, seeing nothing to be gained by erasure of the dividing line drawn by Luzerne County School Office, which separates the Back Mountain into two attendance areas. Taxpayers in the sparsely settled rural areas of Jackson, Lehman and Ross Townships would not approve a measure which would inevitably add a financial burden to their yearly rental for the recently constructed school building.

You could get - Chuck roast, 25¢ lb.; center cut pork chops, 59¢ lb.; seedless grapefruits, 5/29¢; Chock Full O'Nuts Coffee \$1.09 lb. can; St. Joseph's Aspirins for Children bottle of 50, 39¢.

30 Years Ago - Mar. 17, 1966 BORO BACKS CROSS-VALLEY HIGHWAY

Responding to a letter from Harveys Lake realtor Thomas P. Garrity, which elicited a unified affirmation of the proposed Cross Valley Expressway from the Back

Mountain, Dallas Borough joined voice with others in approving the project. Council voted to send a letter to the Secretary of Highways Henry Harral voicing approval. Garrity's letter pointed out that a quick way to cross over Wyoming Valley would be advantageous to this area.

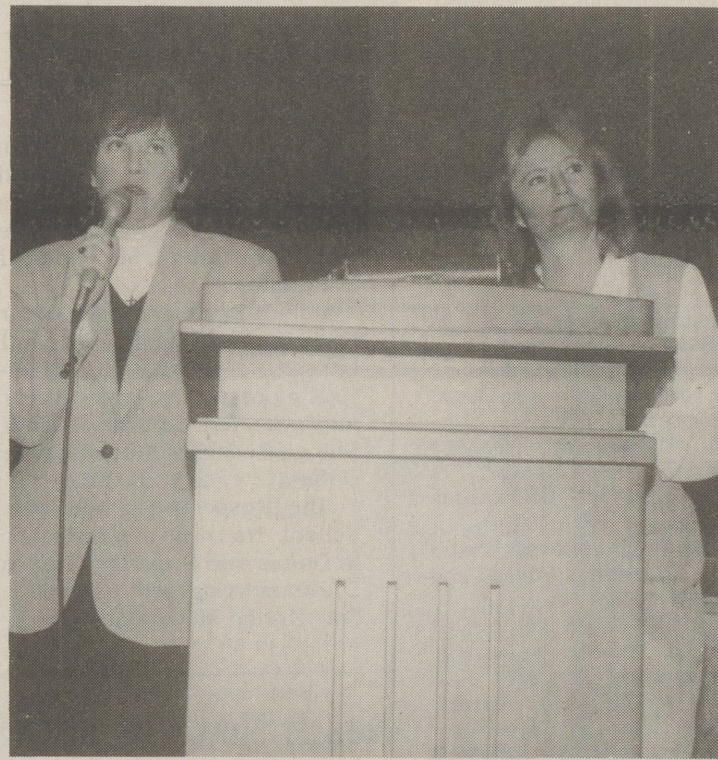
A movement to revive the old Sweet Valley Memorial Day parade, a great Back Mountain institution, is afoot in Ross Township. Fire Chief Loren Cragle Jr. is the head of a committee which has taken steps to restore the event.

Mr. and Mrs. Ellis Swingle, Sterling Farms, Harveys Lake, will observe their 62nd wedding anniversary, March 24. They are the parents of two sons and have four grandchildren.

20 Years Ago - Mar. 18, 1976 HIGHLAND AVE. WILL GET SEWERS INSTALLED

The investment will open up land and give instant revenue said R. Spencer Martin, chairman of DAMA, concerning the sewerage of Highland Avenue in the Trucksville area. Residents of that section presented a petition requesting that sewers be installed. DAMA agreed that installing sewers would be advantageous to both the residents and authority. Additional income would boost the annual income for DAMA and it would also bring the sewer lines to within 12 feet of the controversial Meadowcrest area.

Dr. Craig Aicher, president of board of directors of the Back Mountain Memorial Library, this week announced a chairman and co-chairman for the 30th annual auction scheduled for July 9, 10, and 11. Chairman is Howard Strom and serving as Strom's co-chairman is Kerry Freeman.



POST PHOTOS/JIM PHILLIPS

Talking about health

Female students at Dallas High School attended a special assembly Mar. 5 for a discussion of ovarian cancer. In left photo, Suzanne Youngblood, left, spoke after being introduced by Robyn Jones, health and wellness instructor. At right, Stacey Suda stood to ask a question of the speaker.

If you missed *The Post* - you missed the news!

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