

EDITORIALS

Time to toss out the flower tents

Local florists are up in arms about the "flower tents" that spring up a few days before major holidays, then disappear as quickly as a crocus in May. They feel the transient vendors unfairly cut into their business at peak seasons, when most shops make the bulk of their sales and profits for the year. Unlike the tents, they pay local taxes, provide employment all year long, and are there to serve customers' needs in busy times and slow.

Tom Ansilio, the tent owner, has been quoted saying his sales don't take away from the local shops, because his business is somehow different from theirs. Not having been born yesterday, we think that's hogwash, and Ansilio knows so just as well as we do. The question then becomes, do local towns have a reason to protect resident businesses from competitors who set up shop only when it's easy to skim the top of the market? Dallas Township has already done so, raising the cost of a temporary business permit to \$300, which is so far enough to persuade the flower tents to bypass the town.

There's another side to this argument, of course. Some will say competition from the tents has the effect of keeping prices down, a benefit to consumers. And, what about the land owner who rents space to a tent? Isn't he entitled to whatever income he can gain from his property, as long as the enterprise is legal and safe?

While there may be some thorny aspects to the question, we think towns have a responsibility to discourage transient businesses, because every resident has an interest in encouraging a healthy local business community. Locally-based businesses are a critical force in a town's overall success and quality of life. Not only do they pay taxes and provide jobs, they are frequently the engine of progress in other ways, as they support other institutions with donations of time, money and materials. One example of that important relationship is apparent in the activities of the Back Mountain Business and Professional Association, which just sponsored its first community-wide Easter egg hunt, and is committed to joining the fund raising effort for a new children's wing at the Back Mountain Memorial Library. This organization, along with hundreds of other businesses and individuals, will have a profound effect on our community, because they see the Back Mountain as more than just a place to grab quick profits a couple of times a year, then move on to set up shop somewhere else.

Many local businesses — undoubtedly florists among them — face stiff competition from well-financed giants who can divert profits from other operations to their enterprises here. They shouldn't have to bear the additional burden of seeing potential customers lured by someone whose overhead consists of a few yards of canvas and some benches. As for the perceived savings from the tents and chains, they are often an illusion, more than offset by the taxes and jobs that would be lost should local businesses fail. All Back Mountain towns should raise their fees for temporary businesses to a level that depresses interest from businesses who operate by skimming the cream from our communities, while providing little nourishment in return.

Development proposal shows need for planning

A proposed subdivision that bridges Franklin and Exeter townships offers a lesson in the value of regional planning for the Back Mountain. Bella Mundana is a 25-lot plan with 18 lots in Franklin Township and the balance in Exeter. Because it is not near existing sewer lines, the developer, John Giambra, also proposes to put a sewage treatment plant near Sutton Creek in Exeter Township. Questions have been raised about inconsistencies in the drawings shown to each township, and officials from both towns will meet with Giambra to go over the plan in hope of reaching an agreement satisfactory to all parties.

All this activity is good and necessary to maintaining the integrity of the region's zoning and building requirements, but it could have been eased if adjoining communities — indeed, the entire region — worked together on a master plan of development. No single town in the Back Mountain can accommodate all the land uses needed in a healthy community. Some are too small, others too rural, still others have unique features such as the lake. Only by planning and working together can the Back Mountain take greatest advantage of its abundant attractions while preserving the resources that make living here so enjoyable.

Keep an eye out for public officials and candidates who express their support for greater regional cooperation. They are the ones who can help steer our course to a bright and satisfying future.

Do you agree? Disagree?

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Last gas. Photo by Charlotte Bartizek.

LETTERS

Reporter's professional awards well-deserved

Editor:

What a delight to learn of Grace Dove's recent accomplishments and honors!

Since the first time I ever met Grace Dove, I have been impressed with her abilities, her dedication

and her contributions to our community. Her writing is always concise and complete, informative yet caring. She writes with variety and skill, and I greatly admire her dedication to her craft and to her art of the written word. She is a real professional.

Since it was through *The Dallas Post* that I first met Grace, it is through *The Post* that I would like to send her a huge "bouquet of accolades!"

Sue Hand
Dallas

A Case for conservation



Alene N. Case

A few months ago, I wrote an article for another publication entitled "Variety is the spice of life." Since then, I have been doing a great deal of reading and thinking about the importance of preserving biological diversity and I have come to the conclusion that variety is not the spice of life. Instead, variety is absolutely essential to the maintenance of the biological framework upon which humans and all other life-forms depend. Let's spend a few moments considering several aspects of this subject together.

When the Endangered Species Act was passed, people were mainly concerned about the loss of large animals such as the California condor, bald eagle, blue whale, gray wolf, bison and fisher. These large animals had been hunted and trapped in such numbers that it was highly likely that they would follow the passenger pigeon onto the list of North American "has beens." Strict rules, reintroduction programs and some habitat protection have been generally successful in preventing the extinction of many of these animals.

As time has passed, it has become more and more clear that managing one species at a time cannot be our only conservation strategy. Biological systems are much too complicated for that approach to work in any but the most extreme cases. And, most animals and plants that are in danger of extinction are too tiny to be featured on license plates or

Diversity of species and habitats is very necessary

are not yet known even to biologists. It is fairly easy not to pick a threatened wildflower or shoot an endangered animal. It is much more difficult to avoid wiping out the last ebony sedge or rainbow mussel.

Biodiversity is a very complex concept. It involves at least three distinct scientific disciplines. First, there is genetic diversity. That is, within any one species are genetic differences between individuals and between populations of individuals. These differences are important in many ways: preventing problems of inbreeding, allowing a species to adjust to changing environmental conditions, and eventually leading to the evolution of new species. In order to preserve this kind of diversity it is essential to conserve more than one specimen or population of individuals and it is necessary to provide continuing possibilities for exchange between these populations.

Second, there is species diversity. This is the one that is familiar to most of us. Taxonomists provide long lists of plants or animals that occur in an area and indicate which ones are common, rare, exotic (imported), threatened, etc. In Pennsylvania for example, there were 71 native mammals. Nine of these are no longer found here (gray wolf, mountain lion, lynx, bison, wolverine, fisher, martin and moose) and two others have been introduced (the Norway rat and the house mouse). Fair swap, don't you think!

Third, there is community or ecosystem diversity. The plants and animals that live in an area relate not only to each other but to the structure of the physical surroundings. Many organisms have very specific requirements. Others tend to be adapted to a wide

variety of habitats. We, in Pennsylvania, have an almost unbelievable variety of community and habitat types. This is the result of our geographical position — kind of between north and south, between coast and inland, and along at least three major river systems. We do not simply have forests; we have eight distinct forest types, three of which are rare. We do not simply have caves; we have four different types of caves. We do not simply have barrens; we have five different types of barrens.

A litany of the endangered species of Pennsylvania might not mean much to most of us. It includes obscure amphibians, various bivalves and gastropods (mussels and snails), moths and skippers for which there are no common names, and tiny fish that only live in one or two streams. But, all of these creatures are important parts of the natural environment. We cannot physically protect each species individually — we do not even know their requirements.

However, we can work diligently to preserve all types of habitats and to provide linkages between them to give all these life-forms a chance to live and grow. We can reduce our dependence on individual transportation systems which tend to destroy natural communities and create pollution problems for others. We can try to cultivate native species rather than importing exotic ones that might create problems for the natives. And we can encourage our state government to continue and to expand its efforts toward mapping and cataloging biodiversity within our borders so that we will know better how to live in harmony with the other members of our biological community.

ONLY YESTERDAY



60 Years Ago - Apr. 17, 1936 WPA PROJECT GIVES AREA WOMEN JOBS

A tentative schedule of water rates which would cost local consumers an additional \$750 a year, instead of the \$1,870 which would have been added to the revenue of Dallas Water Co. had the original increase gone into effect Feb. 1 as scheduled, was completed this week. The Business Men's Association will meet Monday evening to discuss the company's proposal and decide if the new schedule will be accepted.

There's a hum of happy activity about the former King home as 15 women busily turn out plain but sturdy sewing work for needy families in this section. The corps of seamstresses made up the newest WPA project in this section - an innovation calculated to bring an addition of \$2,000 in salaries into the Back Mountain each month. When the project is working at capacity, it will have 25 seamstresses.

50 Years Ago - Apr. 19, 1946 LACE MAKER BUYS LAND IN AREA FOR NEW PLANT

Native Lace Works Inc., an affiliate of Native Laces & Textiles, Inc. 261 Fifth Ave., New York City, manufacturers of laces, rayons, cottons, spuns, knits, elastic and hosiery mesh, has purchased 16 acres along the Harveys Lake Highway in Dallas Township owned by the Warden Estate, and will erect there shortly a \$475,000 plant. The announcement follows months of negotiations and indecision, during which the firm at one time was reported to have purchased 10 acres of land on the Welles plot in Forty Fort.

The Back Mountain region will be honored May 10 when the Back Mountain Memorial Library is host to the N.E. District Library meeting at an all day session in Dallas and at Irem Temple Country Club. Librarians and representatives of 54 libraries in Northeast Pennsylvania will attend the meeting, the first since the war.

40 Years Ago - Apr. 13, 1956 SPRING SNOWSTORM DOWNS PHONE LINES

Announcement was made this week that Kunkle Motors, owned by Dan Meeker, has been appointed Ford Tractor & Implement dealer. Since starting in Kunkle in 1940, Meeker's business has continued to expand. He started to sell Austin autos and handles a complete line of imported cars. Dan feels he can be of service to farmers as well as sportscar enthusiasts.

As a result of Saturday night's severe snow storm, 16 Commonwealth Telephone exchanges were isolated and wires to individual subscribers were down throughout the Back Mountain area. Trunk services were re-established by Sunday evening and all subscriber lines were re-established by Wednesday. There were more than 2,000 cases of individual subscriber troubles.

"Left Hand of God" with Humphrey Bogart and Gene Tierney now playing at the Dallas Outdoor Theatre.

30 Years Ago - Apr. 14, 1966 LEHMAN TWP. NEEDS A ZONING OFFICER

Lehman Township's dire need for a Zoning Officer to enforce provisions of its new ordinance highlighted the Board of Supervisors meeting and directly led to further discussion of the controversial matter of trailers at Idetown. A prominent Lehman contractor declined the offer in taking the job temporarily. The board will meet this week to consider appointments.

20 Years Ago - Apr. 15, 1976 MOBILE HOME'S HEAT TAPE CAUSES FIRE

A mobile home was destroyed by fire wiping out the possessions of a Harveys Lake family, Monday at 1 a.m. The Joseph "Bud" Brislin home on the Keefer Plot at the lake was destroyed by fire thought to have originated underneath the mobile home in a defective heating tape. Area officials said the fire was at least the second in which a heating tape was the probable cause within the past three weeks.

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