

A Case for conservation



Alene N. Case

It does not take much political posturing to make me tune out. I've heard enough talk about constitutional amendments that deal with issues that could be better addressed by personal and legislative responsibility. I've heard enough talk about which kind of personality is better suited to leadership. I've heard too much talk about which taxes should be raised (or lowered) to accomplish the necessary budgetary reforms. Instead of hearing all the same old issues and arguments, I would very much like to have all candidates for public office address some of the very real issues facing our nation.

As my husband and I traveled from here to Oregon and back again, we noticed environmental problems that are not being given enough attention in this election year. Let me give you several examples beginning with inaccuracies on the maps of many western states. We began to notice a problem when we drove through the "National Grasslands" in North Dakota. There was no sign of grass! In fact, throughout the states we visited, I never saw grass covering the ground in any of the "grasslands" shown on the map. It was mostly sagebrush and rabbit brush and other desert plants. Small cyclones would pick up the dirt between these plants and carry it about. If there had ever been any ground cover, it had long since been eaten or trampled by the cows we observed still trying to find forage.

We also saw whole mountains that were labeled "National Forest" on which no trees were growing! Whether or not these mountains once had trees on them I do not know. But, I do know that our national forest lands are maintained with money garnered by timber sales and these hills had no timber to sell. I also know that in some of these very dry areas where a few scrawny junipers survive, we saw mills that were processing lots of very small logs. I came to the conclusion that the Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service are not totally to blame for the mismanagement of land under their supervision — the land has simply been misnamed.

Let's make candidates discuss real issues in '96

There are many other land and water use issues that become obvious to the traveler. Our nation should not allow irrigated farming of any sort in exceptionally dry areas where the water must come from deep wells. If and when irrigation is allowed, it should not be of the high spray variety. These sprayers were working during the middle of the day when most of the water simply evaporated before it hit the ground. And, as most home gardeners know, watering plants in the middle of a hot day generally does more harm than good. We did see a few areas along rivers where irrigation was being done in a responsible manner. But, even there, the soil is likely to become saline and the rivers polluted with fertilizers and pesticides if the practice continues.

I would propose that we consider a radical solution to all these problems. Let's return the sagebrush regions to the wildlife that is suited to its use. (Perhaps we could also do some mining or other underground activity in these areas.) In order to abandon agriculture in these regions, we must encourage the farmers in wetter areas of the mid-West that now grow corn and beans almost exclusively to raise the variety of vegetables and fruits that our society demands. And, we must discontinue converting good land into housing developments, roads, and other such uses.

Water concerns should be affecting planning in the West in other ways. Salt Lake City is a case in point. As we drove into Utah, we wondered where a city of that size could find water since the only visible source was the Great Salt Lake itself. Our meteorologist friend, Gene Robl, answered our spoken question — he says that the city is supplied with snow-melt that is stored in reservoirs in the mountains. He also confirmed our suspicion that Salt Lake City is growing rapidly. I find it foolhardy to continue such expansion when the source of water is such highly unpredictable precipitation.

Salt Lake City is also a very industrial city. We saw refineries, a steel mill, and lots of smaller industries. Most of them were spewing noxious fumes into the air, contributing to one of the worst air quality problems we had seen anywhere. Where is the EPA? They are obviously not in Utah or in West Virginia, for that matter.

We noticed that each time we approached a river valley in West Virginia, our eyes and noses began to burn and water. Why is the EPA still allowing such filthy plants to operate?

But, perhaps the most unjust environmental problem of all has to do with the transportation system itself. Not only are trucks still doing the work of trains (why else would one driver travel twice in one week between Nashville and Boston?), but our ever-expanding roadways are not serving the needs of the citizens. Every large city which we approached was notable for the signs announcing road construction ("expect delays"). As one circle around a city becomes too congested, another is built. This does not necessarily mean that the city is more populous; it simply means that the by-pass is no longer a by-pass because of all the services and developments that have been built along it. Many of these roads eat up valuable farmland. In fact, we saw one totally unnecessary four-lane highway being built between Paducah and Bowling Green Kentucky. It was cutting farms in two and eating up the yards of lovely homes. The smaller roadway was entirely adequate unless some huge development were planned.

I have invented a new maxim with regard to major highways and their interchanges — "If you build them they will come." The "they" in this case are not baseball players but fast-food outlets (4-5), gasoline stations with mini-marts (2-5), chain motels (at least two), and perhaps even a shopping mall. Where is the old American value of fair competition here? What about the merchants who have carefully established their businesses in the nearby town or city? Often the restaurants and hotels in the town are not even listed on the highway signs. And, how about the garages that have historically serviced vehicles in addition to dispensing gasoline? No, these interchange businesses not only pave over valuable land, they also unfairly take money away from the towns in exchange for cheap jobs.

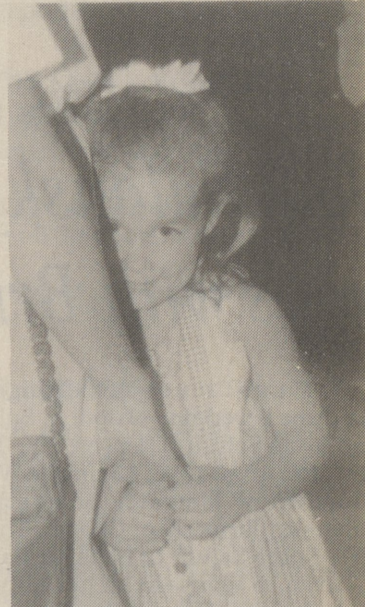
Yes, our nation has many serious issues with which to grapple. We must confront the candidates with our questions and expect thoughtful responses. Otherwise, we are no better than the cattle held in huge Kansas feedlots — unthinking and helpless as we face the future.



MIXED EMOTIONS

Cousins Casey Judge, Dallas, and Erin Crossin, Trucksville, seem pleased at the prospect of entering Gate of Heaven School, top photo. At left, Emily Baut, Shavertown wonders what is going to happen in this class next week. Tara Puffenburger, right, holds fast to mom, Tina at Gate of Heaven Kindergarten orientation Thursday night.

POST PHOTOS: CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK



Run/Walk for Tyler Hospital Sept. 28

Tyler Memorial Hospital, Tunkhannock will hold its annual 5K Run/Walk on September 28, beginning at 10:30 a.m. at the hospital.

The race, partially funded by a grant from the PA. Attorney General's Office, promotes a drug and alcohol-free approach to good health.

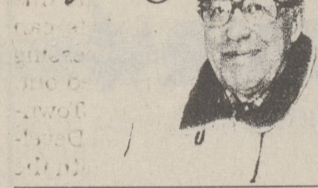
Trophies will be awarded to the top male and female finishers and medals to the first three runners in a number of age groups. All registered entrants receive a T-shirt.

Proceeds benefit Tyler Memorial Hospital's campaign to purchase a new Mobile Intensive Care Unit. Registration is \$10 before race day and \$12 the day of the race. For more information, contact Teena and Garry Thatcher, 836-3850.

Trout will be stocked in Moon Lake and Harveys Creek

The following waters will be stocked for trout Sept. 9: Harveys Creek and Moon Lake. Renovation work at the hatchery caused the schedule change.

As I was saying



Jack Hilsher

I hate to tell you this and possibly spoil your day, but there is no getting around the fact that in only three more months, perhaps even less, you'll be setting your thermostat up for the evening to generate a little heat in the house. How's that for a depressing thought? And have you seen the price of home fuel oil creeping up? Gas will too, I suppose. Coal - don't know - haven't used it in centuries. Guess what I'm nuts about for fuel now, especially since we moved to Dallas from Kingston? Good old wood.

Ain't nothing like a cozy den with a fireplace or a stove. Throw in a good book and a cold brew and you've got your basic heavenly utopia. So for those who have wood heat or those who are only thinking about it, here is a "clip and saver" by the world-famous "Anon." He calls it - "Ode for a Wood Burner..."

"BEECHWOOD fires are bright and clear, if the logs are kept a year. CHESTNUT'S only good they say, if for long it's laid away. BIRCH AND FIR burn too fast, blaze up bright and do not last. ELM wood burns like a churchyard mould, even the flames are very cold. POPLAR gives a bitter

Here's the low-down on the best and worst fire woods

smoke, fills your eyes and makes you choke. APPLE wood will scent your room, with an incense like perfume. OAK and MAPLE, if dry and old, keep away the winter cold. But ASH wood wet, and ash wood dry, a king shall warm his slippers by."

OK. So much for fun and games. Now let's get scientific and look at some heat values for different woods. They will be in Btu's, which is British thermal units, used to figure heating power of any fuel. A Btu is the heat needed to raise the temperature of one pound of water one degree Fahrenheit.

A gallon of fuel oil you use contains about 140,000 Btu's. A cubic foot of natural gas contains about 1,000 Btu's, and a pound of seasoned maple firewood about 7,677 Btu's.

So a log about 6" x 24", weighing about 22 pounds, has more heating power than a gallon of oil or 150 cubic feet of gas. In the right combustion chamber (wood stove or circulating fireplace) that right wood can give the most usable heat for your money, besides providing a warm and cheerful diversion. (Or ambience, if you want to get fancy.)

To give an even better example, a cord of maple logs (standard cords are 4' wide by 4' high and 8' long) has more heat than one ton of anthracite or 200 gallons of oil. And some woods, like white oak, are even better.

If you are following me, class,

here are some Btu's for you to save when you are woodsing, or more likely, buying wood:

Hickory	25.4
Birch	24.7
Oak, White	23.9
Beech	21.8
Maple, Sugar	21.8
Oak, Red	21.7
Ash	20.0

The above are rated the best in Btu content. Second best, with Btu's ranging from 17.5 to 19.1 include Red Maple, Pine, Cherry, White Birch, Silver Maple, White Elm and Grey Birch.

Rate not so hot, each under 15 Btu's, are Hemlock, Red Spruce, Balsam Fir, White Pine and Basswood.

Be grateful you didn't live in ancient Egypt where there was little wood and they had to burn straw. (Or how about the shepherds in ancient times who burned manure!)

Also you can be grateful that we have a resident expert in the Back Mountain who can tell you all about natural convection, retrofit fireplaces and all that neat stuff...he is Leonard DeLeur, Prexy of "Back To Basics Inc."

"Basics" is tucked away just off Rt. 309, toward Tunkhannock, only 3 1/2 miles from Dallas. They have the largest and most interesting stock of wood heating goodies for miles around but be very careful if you go. Lenny might sell you something.

He did me.

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November 1, 2, 3 - November 15, 16, 17 - December 6, 7, 8

Schedule A: Fri: 6:30PM - 8:30PM, Sat: 10:10AM - 12:10PM, Sat: 3:10PM - 5:10PM
Schedule B: Sat: 8:00AM - 10:00AM, Sat: 1:00PM - 3:00PM, Sun: 10:10AM - 12:10PM
Schedule C: Sat: 6:30PM - 8:30PM, Sun: 8:00AM - 10:00AM, Sun: 1:00PM - 3:00PM

Students finishing degree requirements this term must enroll in GRAD 101.

Choose one (1) class only from each schedule.
Classes meet three times per schedule unless otherwise indicated.

SCHEDULE A	SCHEDULE B	SCHEDULE C
Credits	Credits	Credits
ACCT 201 3 Intermediate Accounting I	ex ACCT 105 3 Introductory Accounting I	ACCT 203 3 Federal Taxes I
ex BIOL 110 3 General Biology I	BUSN 105 3 International Business	ART 101 3 Art History Survey I
** CHEM 101 4 General College Chemistry	BUSN 235 3 The Legal Environment of Business	BIOL 107 3 Biological Dimensions of Human Sexuality
DVED 125 2 Keyboarding	COMM 104 3 Interpersonal Communication	BUSN 101 3 Introduction to Business
ECE 216 3 Child, Family and Community	COMM 212 3 Written Communication	BUSN 109 3 Business Mathematics
ECON 101 3 Principles of Economics I	ECE 201/ 4 Curriculum & Program Planning/	BUSN 216 3 Retail Management
ENGL 101 3 Freshman English I	2231 Field Experience	COMM 107 3 Speech Communication
ENGL 102 3 Freshman English II	EDUC 201/ 4 Foundations of Education/	MATH 111 3 College Mathematics I
ENGL 220 3 Introduction to Poetry	202 Field Studies in Education	MATH 120 3 Techniques of Calculus I
sp HOSP 102 3 Culinary Arts II - Food Preparation II	ENGL 101 3 Freshman English I	MCS 105 3 PC Office Applications
MCS 210 3 Electronic Spreadsheets	ENGR 101 3 Introduction to Engineering	MCS 215 3 Operation Environments
+ PHED 111 2 Health Education	ex MATH 101 3 Basic Algebra	PHIL 101 3 Introduction to Philosophy
** PHYS 103 4 General Physics I	MCS 220 3 Trouble Shooting	PSYC 210 3 Exceptional Children
PSYC 101 3 General Psychology	PHSC 109 3 Energy & The Environment	SOCI 101 3 Introduction to Sociology
SOCI 205 3 The Family	PHSC 202 3 Adolescence & Adulthood	

** indicates class meets A & B schedule
+ indicates class meets on Saturday only
sp indicates class meets special hours - Fri. 6-10PM, Sat 8AM-12PM, Sat. 1PM-5PM, Sat. 6PM-10PM
ex indicates class meets extra hours: Schedule A - Fri. 8:30 to 10:30PM, Schedule B - Sun. 3:10 to 5:10PM, Schedule C - Sat. 8:00 to 10:00 PM

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