

KEEP ON TRUCKIN'

Mike Serafin of Trucksville relaxed in front of his '95 Ford pickup at last weekend's car show held at A&A Auto Parts in Dallas. At left, Brian and Alison and Derby of Sweet Valley checked under the hood of one of the entries.

POST PHOTOS/JIM PHILLIPS

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(continued from page 1)

Which isn't bad news for Jim Drury, owner of Drury's Deli and Restaurant. Although no new site has been confirmed, the vacant store space next to the restaurant is being considered. Drury says the space is being considered because there is no other space available.

Although Drury admits that it will be less convenient for the residents of Shawanese, he believes the proposed site would make access to the post office "a whole lot better and easier." Drury is also aware that increased traffic would increase his business.

But not if Isabel Youngblood and some 200 other lake residents who have signed a petition opposing the move have anything to say about it. Spend a few minutes in either the post office or DiVeronica's store next door and you'll be sure to hear some mention of it. Nick DiVeronica, store owner and current landlord for the post office, leaves a petition on his counter that he hopes will keep the post office on "this side of the bridge."

Most signers cite two reasons for wanting the post office to stay in its present location, where it has been since 1945. The post office contains 108 P.O. boxes and handles 35 general delivery customers. The people it serves do not receive mail at their homes. It is simply more convenient to walk or drive down a hill than down a hill and across the bridge.

The post office was originally supposed to move into a 20' by 40' modular building. A move to a permanent site would violate that agreement. DiVeronica says the store does get business from the post office, but doesn't need it to survive, adding that it is "a nice bonus."

DiVeronica also wonders about the service the post office will get from its future landlord. "We've cleaned the snow out before they open for 17 years. I don't know if they move if they will get that kind of service."

When asked how he would handle the petition, Dale Ferguson said, "We don't ignore these things, but if the building doesn't work, it just doesn't work."

The other most commonly cited reason is tradition. The post office has been near the Old Lake Road entrance to the lake for all of its 102 years. Prior to 1945, it was housed in a building across the street, one door down, recalled Eleanor Puterbaugh, postmaster for 26 years.

Ms. Puterbaugh's family is



Shawanese Post Office hosted dignitaries for a 100th birthday celebration in Jan., 1994. In attendance, from left, Harveys Lake mayor Richard Boice, former postmaster Eleanor Puterbaugh, postmaster Nancy Smith and Bill Brady, Wilkes-Barre postmaster.

"We've cleaned the snow out before they open for 17 years."

Nick DiVeronica
Current post office landlord

And that's exactly why one little corner post office has charmed so many people. John Fletcher receives his mail in his box at home, but still patronizes the Shawanese Post Office, citing it as one of few post offices that "enjoys historical status."

Fletcher says, "It's like mailing from your kitchen. You know the people. Moving it would take it into a commercial area and it would lose its small area charm."

Nick DiVeronica has more reason to see it stay. For \$249 a month, he provides the post office with a building, parking, trash removal, bathrooms, and snow removal. He says that the post office is violating its original agreement.

deeply involved in the history of the post office. Her father, Walter Puterbaugh, was the postmaster responsible for buying the wooden fixtures that now fill the tiny office. Ms. Puterbaugh says they were purchased from the Laketon Post Office at Sunset Beach because, at that time, they were considered too outdated for that office.

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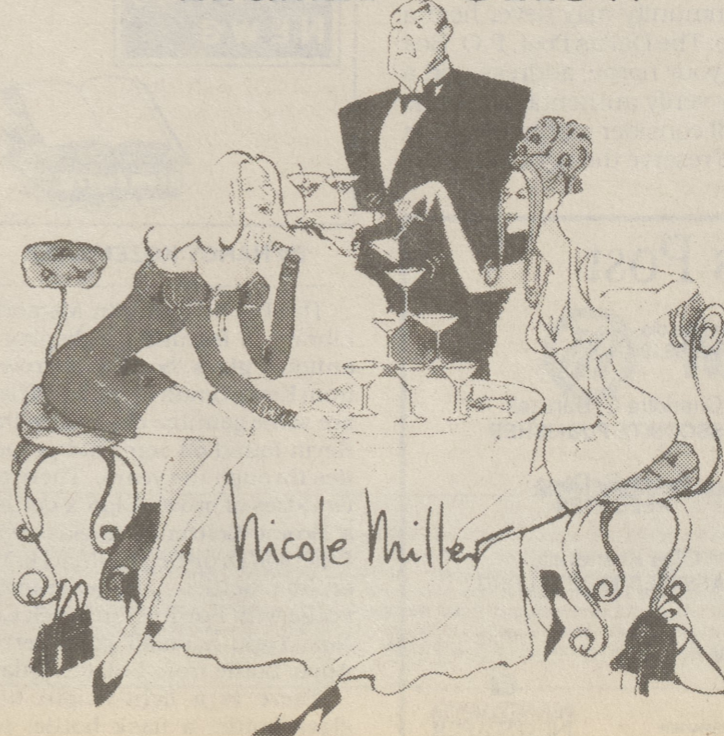
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