

EDITORIALS

Your generosity will alleviate hunger

Congratulations, you did it! Only a week after an article about the slim stock at the Back Mountain Food Bank this holiday season, readers responded with enough generosity to fill the storage area to the brim, and more.

The food bank is an entirely local affair, stocked by and available to people in the Back Mountain as an emergency food source. But, like all institutions, the food bank can be taken for granted, and that appeared to be happening this year. When Post writer Jack Hilsher and photographer Charlotte Bartizek visited a couple of weeks ago, the shelves were mostly bare. "Our nearly empty shelves could easily compete with Mother Hubbard's cupboard," remarked Rev. Charles Naugle, whose Trucksville United Methodist Church administers the facility. Little did they — or we — know how fast and wide would be the response to the food bank's plight.

Leading the charge were the students at Dallas High School. A parent called the school Monday morning, Nov. 25 to ask what the school was doing to help the food bank this year. An announcement went out over the intercom, and student leaders sprang into action. Spurred by the student council's offer to serve breakfast to each top donating class, by Wednesday the school was bringing a truckload of food and \$855 to the food bank. That, combined with other donations including 200 pounds of food dropped off at the office of The Dallas Post, quickly filled the shelves to overflowing. And just in time, too.

Rev. Naugle reports that a Back Mountain man who owns a business elsewhere called to ask how he could see that needy families had a decent Thanksgiving dinner. That's not the food bank's normal function; it serves as an emergency food source year round. But the church helped identify 50 families who each received a turkey and all the trimmings, packaged by food bank volunteers, in time for the holiday. But there's more. When word got around to other families that their holiday might be a little brighter, the food bank was able to respond and supply them with a nutritious meal as well.

We want to extend thanks to all the people who helped out when the need was great. And we would urge anyone who could have assisted this cause but didn't to look for other opportunities to show the spirit of neighborliness demonstrated by those who took the lead this time, in the holiday season and all year long.

We think DEP doth protest too much

In a letter to the editor, the state Department of Environmental Protection objects strenuously to the Post's contention that the department was overly cautious in handling a mercury spill at Dallas High School, to the point of doing more harm than good by closing the school for more than a week. In the letter, Mark Carmon, the agency's Community Relations Coordinator, defends the use of a strict standard for mercury vapor in the air, on the basis that young students (and teachers) might have been exposed to harmful levels of the substance for six or seven hours per day. That could be true if they all stayed in the most affected rooms all day long, at least in the first day or two after the spill. But that doesn't happen, and even if it did, existing federal recommendations for exposure are for someone who works in a mercury-contaminated environment eight hours a day, every day, for years.

We don't want to suggest caution should have been thrown to the wind. Many people had their children tested for mercury poisoning, just to be safe, and they aren't to be condemned for being careful parents. (It should be noted that no one showed any evidence of harmful levels of the substance.) But we have yet to speak to a single knowledgeable person who thinks DEP and other agencies acted reasonably in their response to the spill. Closing the school for a day or two until all areas could be surveyed would have been sensible; having men walking around in moon suits for a week was not.

The most obvious lesson taught by this exercise seems to have been picked up by students at other schools. They learned that if they want to get off school for a few days, all they need do is spill a little mercury in the hallway, and wait for the reaction. Maybe they have something to teach their elders.

Publisher's notebook

Ron Bartizek



I can't help comparing the hysteria over mercury to the sci-fi movie spoof, "Attack of the Killer Tomatoes." Maybe we could make one titled "Assault of the Murderous Mercury." In the latest overreaction to spills of this relatively harmless substance, schools have been removing potentially dangerous material from science labs. As one student remarked, "How are we supposed to learn without the materials we need?"



Fair weather for fowl. Photo by Charlotte Bartizek.

LETTERS

DEP defends high standards on mercury

Editor:
It's hard to decide where to start with objections to your November 20th editorial. The only thing that was correct was the list of agencies involved.

The state Department of Health ATSDR and CDC established a safe level for exposure to mercury vapors based on the eight-hour OSHA standard for adult worker exposure. The level was lowered from 5 parts per billion (ppb) to 3 ppb to reflect the students' age and heightened vulnerability.

The threat of exposure was very real, especially because students, staff and faculty spend six or seven hours a day, five days a week in the school. More than 50 separate locations over the 3 ppb limit were identified by the numerous vapor meter scans throughout the high school.

Exposure to mercury vapor can cause short and long term health problems. That's why the agencies involved tested and re-tested. There was nothing extreme in the testing protocols and precautions.

EPA, ATSDR and CDC have used the method and levels successfully in similar cases in Kansas and Florida.

We recognized that school activities would be disrupted, but we would have been negligent if we had not followed all of the procedures recommended by federal and state health agencies to handle the situation.

Mark R. Carmon
Community Relations
Coordinator
Northeast Regional Office

Hunting at Francis Slocum deemed cruel

Editor:
The proposed deer slaughter at Francis Slocum State Park on December 16 and 17 should be stopped. The park's deer are familiar with humans and overall unwary. This "hunt" was scheduled last year, but canceled due to public outcry.

Manually operated shotguns or muzzle loading firearms are cruel and primitive hunting methods which should be banned. Because of the lengthy time it takes to reload there is a high incidence of crippling (50%) and if the animal is fatally wounded, it may linger 60 to 70 minutes.

Killing deer to protect certain vegetation does not stop the surviving deer from eating the same

plants. A better idea would be to charge a minimal admission fee to replenish brush and greenery, as used in New York State.

The deer contraceptive dart "porzine zona pellucida" is a viable option. When injected into the female deer it stops reproduction for one to two years. It is being used in Washington, D.C. and the state of New York with a 95% success rate. Relocation is another alternative.

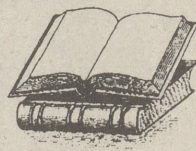
In truth, hunters and wildlife agencies are not concerned with reducing deer herds, but only increasing and maintaining the number of targets and potential hunting license dollars. Did you know that propagators are hired

and paid by the Game Commission to breed, raise and release white tail deer in Pennsylvania's woods. Hunters have written numerous letters to local newspapers for years complaining "there's not enough game".

If you agree that deer are creatures - not crops, please call Justice for Animals via help line 829-1341 or you can make your opposition known by calling the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources at 472-3011. The Game Commission at 675-1143 and the Park Office at 696-3525.

Melinda Dugan
Justice for Animals
Shavertown

LIBRARY NEWS



By NANCY KOZEMCHAK

The Back Mountain Memorial Library is featuring another collage of library photographs in the reference room of the library.

This group of photos relates to the volunteers and events of the library through the years. Volunteers have been the backbone of the library since the inception in 1945.

From the beginning, citizens of the Back Mountain community have given of their time and talents for the library's benefit.

Different events held over the years include an Oktoberfest and farmer's market, a biathlon race, horse shows, luncheons, cook-

Collage honors volunteers

book sales and, of course, the library auction which has been held each summer since 1947.

There is a picture of the 1975 Board of Directors which includes: Granville Miller, Homer Moyer, Alice Howell, Craig Aicher, Patricia Broida, Ralph Lewis, Florence Crump, Howard Strom, Kerry Freeman Robert Miller, Nancy Eckert, Glenn Eyer, Ruth Schooley, Merton Jones, Lester Jordan and Dorothea McCutcheon. Members of the 1952 Auction committee, Melania Hellersperk, Joane Dettmore, Jennie Hill, Rachel Van Horn; 1959 committee includes Nancy Bessmer, Pauline Roth, Marge Brown, Clair Owens, and Marge Culp.

In 1984, the board purchased the Dallas Borough School building and raised \$300,000 to renovate the facility for the new library. Pictured are Homer Moyer, Ernie Ashbridge, board president; Nancy Eckert, and Polly Wielage,

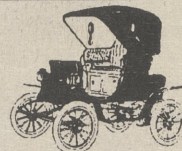
who presented a memorial gift to the library.

The Friends of the Library was organized in 1948 and in 1988, held their first luncheon. Members of the 1990 luncheon committee are pictured: Beth Gager, Liz Lloyd, Nancy Kozemchak, Shirley Forney and Pauline Kutz.

In 1993, Ellen Casey, wife of the governor, visited the library in celebration of the library's cookbook, "Chefs and Artists". The cookbook raised over \$3,000 for the library. Pictured is Carol King, Susan Frey, Ellen Casey, Florence Crump, the first children's library; and Nancy Kozemchak.

The Book Club of the library met on Mon. Nov. 18 with Mary Lou Swingle presiding. The annual Book Club Christmas Tea will be held on Mon., Dec. 16 at 1:30 p.m. in the community room. Christmas music, stories and poems will be prepared for the program. Guests are welcome to attend.

ONLY YESTERDAY



60 Years Ago - Dec. 11, 1936 HIGH SCHOOLS CONSIDER DROPPING GOOTBALL

Officially noting recent suggestions that local high schools drop football and substitute soccer, as the Fall sport, Dallas Borough School officials this week were seriously considering promoting the new sport here next year. The suggestion came originally from sports fans who resent the humble position of local scholastic events when contrasted to the fast and impressive fast ball played in Wyoming Valley.

The 11-room home of Mr. and Mrs. William Heath at Harvey's between Alderson and Warden Place was destroyed by flames on Monday morning bringing a loss estimated at \$20,000 for the property and its contents. A valuable police dog which was in the cellar perished.

50 Years Ago - Dec. 13, 1946 DALE DODSON ON BOARD SHIP TO ANTARCTICA

Aboard Seaplane Tender Pine Island that left Norfolk, VA a week ago on the Navy's expedition to Antarctica is Dale Dodson former Kingston Township High School boy, son of Mr. and Mrs. George Dodson of Shavertown. Four thousand men all under Rear Admiral Richard E. Byrd of previous polar expedition fame, make up the amphibious expedition.

The Glee Club under direction of Robert Henderson will present a special Christmas program at the Dallas Borough PTA in the high school auditorium. Jack Morris, soloist at Bennett Presbyterian Church, Wilkes-Barre, will be soloist.

40 Years Ago - Dec. 7, 1956 BURGLARS HIT DALLAS JEWELRY STORE AGAIN

Striking for the second time in seven years, thieves stole \$1,500 worth of diamonds from Henry's Jewelry Store, Main Street, Dallas. Investigating the robbery are Chief Honeywell and State Police. They are without clues.

Two local boys were at Hickam Field when the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor set the world on fire Dec. 7, 1941. Sgt. Lewis Reese and John Garbutt, airplane mechanic, both of Dallas were slightly wounded with shrapnel. Reese is now a carrier for Dallas R.R. and Garbutt is an instructor in jet engines at Amarillo, TX.

30 Years Ago - Dec. 8, 1966 COMMUNITY LANDFILL STUDIED FOR REGION

Back Mountain Supervisors who have organized into a combined body met Friday at Lehman Fire Hall to discuss the landfill needed in the area. Representatives of State Health Department showed motion pictures of various successfully operating landfills in other communities throughout the Commonwealth and told supervisors that these could be run economically. The group decided to check on possible sites for a community landfill throughout the Back Mountain.

The North District of Lake Township was created a Borough this week according to a decision handed down by the Luerne County Court In Banc headed by President Judge Frank L. Pinola and in agreement with Judges Bernard Brominski and Jacob Schiffman.

20 Years Ago - Dec. 9, 1976 BACK MOUNTAIN'S UNEMPLOYMENT AT 14.9%

Kingston Township zoning board moved that the former Shavertown Elementary School property is zoned properly for plans submitted by Burger King at the zoning board meeting Tuesday evening. The board also gave the company a temporary go ahead on a building permit until John Dana, building inspection who has been ill can issue a formal permit.

The last three months census share report indicated that 1,208 persons were unemployed in a seven community area of the Back Mountain for an unemployment percentage of 14.9 or 4.2 percent above Luzerne County's 10.7. The high rate of unemployment in the Back Mountain, however, cannot be attributed to local companies. A survey of some of the larger companies showed that their employment rate had been steady with few if any layoffs.

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