

EDITORIALS

Take time now to explain school plans

Dallas school board president Ernest Ashbridge closed the last meeting by saying it may be April before the panel selects a site for the new Westmoreland Elementary School, a comment that drew catcalls from the overflow audience. The reaction was understandable in the context of a disappointing meeting, but stepping back from the question for a few weeks may not be such a bad idea.

No matter what the final outcome, building a new school is an important issue to the district's students, parents and taxpayers, and should be approached in a deliberate manner that makes it easy for people to share their concerns while providing a forum for administrators to explain the reasoning behind their recommendations. That really hasn't happened to the degree it might, but now there is time to do so.

We urge the school board and administration to schedule a series of public information sessions at which they can explain the educational, financial and administrative grounds for each potential site. These should be well-publicized in advance, and comment from the community should be given equal weight with the administration's presentation. Varying the times and locations will assure that the greatest number of interested people may attend.

Sessions like these would give anyone with a genuine interest in this issue a clear description of the advantages and drawbacks of each site, and might help school directors settle in their own minds the best location for the school. The sooner these sessions are held, the better it will be for everyone.

Ridge is right; state should not be in liquor business

Hooray for Gov. Tom Ridge's support of plans to turn state liquor stores over to private owners. Despite the overheated and inaccurate rhetoric coming from supporters of state stores, there is no defensible reason for the state to be in the business of selling liquor. We know all the scare tactics that warn of private stores willing to sell booze to children just to make a buck, but we don't buy them. The state's proper role is to regulate sales and enforce laws relating to alcoholic beverages, not to sell them.

The plan must be more than just a ploy to let a privileged few in on this lucrative trade, though. It must include the opportunity for entrepreneurs to open new stores, particularly in areas now ignored by the state system. More stores would mean heightened competition, and that would bring greater selection and better prices for consumers.

It's a safe bet that whatever profit the state now makes on liquor sales would be more than offset by additional sales, business and employment taxes paid by privately-owned stores, especially near the state's borders. Even more important, Pennsylvania would no longer be in the inappropriate position of excluding private industry from a legitimate enterprise, on the shaky ground that the state is saving us from our own evil instincts.

Publisher's notebook

Ron Bartizek

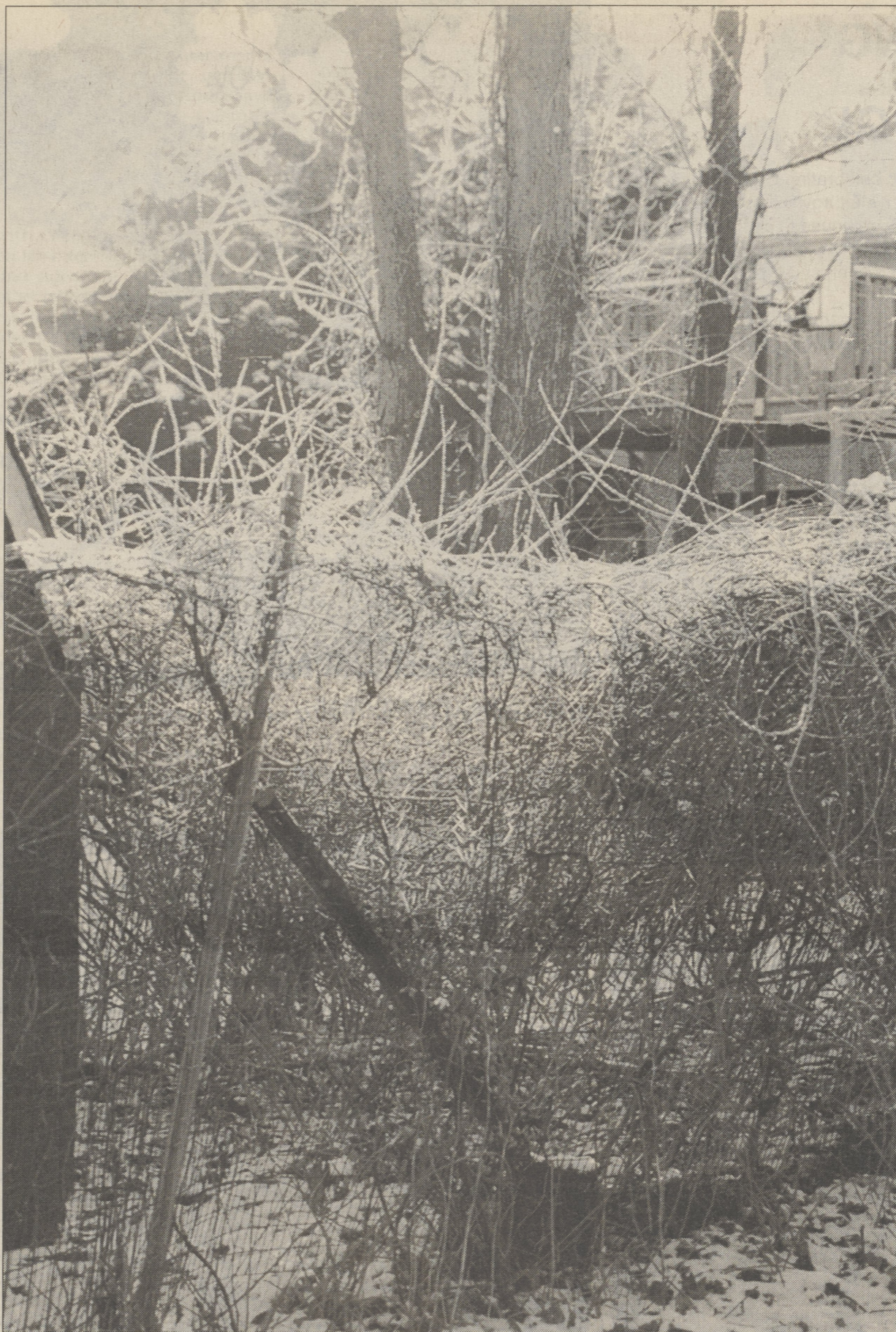


A good cup of coffee is one of life's great pleasures, but it's not easy to come by. I've noticed that most restaurants, at least affordable ones, have cheapened their coffee over the years, and even the few that use decent beans make the brew so weak the flavor is barely discernible. On the other hand, it seems you're less likely to get a cup that has been in the pot for hours than in the past, or maybe those new thermos-type devices are in wide use.

Larger cities have been overrun with coffee bars since they spread from their base in Seattle a few years ago. We haven't been so lucky, although a cappuccino machine is no longer an oddity, even in some convenience stores like Orloski's. I like cappuccino, without all the odd flavorings, just a little shaved chocolate on top, but my favorite cup of joe comes from Big Apple Bagels. Their dark roast would probably send anyone used to ordinary restaurant coffee into shock; I love it.

Of course, like most early Baby Boomers, I can't drink the high test after noon anymore, unless I'm planning a late night out. There must be some change that takes place in our cells about age 40 to make us more sensitive to caffeine. Maybe it's tied to the ones that control eyesight. Time was, I could drink regular from morning 'til night, and not lose a minute's sleep. Now, one modest cup of dark roast is the highlight of the day, and maybe that's made it seem even tastier.

Your letters are welcome at The Dallas Post. Our office is open 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. Or mail your letter to us at 607 Main Rd., Dallas, PA 18612, or fax to (717) 675-3650.



Tarigle. Photo by Charlotte Bartizek.

A Case for conservation



Alene N. Case

I thought I had seen it all; but then, at Christmastime this year, my husband discovered that our grocery store had a most unusual display - they were selling fake "seedlings." He even spent the \$1.74 to bring one home as proof. On the card, sure enough, it said "seedlings" in big bold letters (see accompanying photograph). Then, when I turned the card over, it read "Made in China." I kid you not!

The old expression "Waste not; want not" keeps going through my head as I contemplate the nonsense of buying a fake seedling. Of course, this is not the only example of Yuletide items that are basically useless. There are pet rocks, pottery that grows and tiny jars of jelly or mustard that hold 1.5 ounces. But, when we tire of those, at least we know that they can be reused or recycled in some way. What, pray tell, do you do with a seedling that is made of metal wire and plastic? Except for the small square of burlap and the pretty bow, the thing will no doubt wind up in the landfill.

Now, I am not saying that all gifts must be useful. But, I am saying that if they are not useful they should at least be beautiful or interesting. That vase holding

Waste not; want not

the real hemlock sprig in the picture is an excellent example. It would be priceless to me if I never used it for anything. It is the most gorgeous crystal vase I have ever seen, and it was a gift from a dear friend who is no longer living.

Many people argue that Americans will never take conservation seriously because it will require a drastic change in lifestyle. Does it really require such a drastic change to think twice before buying a fake seedling? According to that popular sage, Arthur C. Clarke, "Solid wastes are only raw materials we're too stupid to use." And, I might add, "stupid" enough to import from China in the first place.

Let's consider for a moment some statements found in an article entitled "Reducing waste, saving materials," by John E. Young. "...people do not need materials but the services they provide." (What services are provided by this "seedling?") "...the economic health of nations has often been equated with the amount of raw materials consumed." (Do we really want the economic health of the United States or China to be gauged by the amount of iron or oil used in the manufacture and transport of this "seedling?") "In the long run, selective purchasing by informed buyers might be the strongest incentive for manufacturers to pro-

duce low-waste, safer items." (I can only hope that my husband was the only person who had a reason to purchase one of those "seedlings.")

It seems to me that Americans - you and I - can do a great deal to conserve resources without drastic changes in lifestyle. We just have to take the creator of 2001: A Space Odyssey seriously and not be "stupid." Is it really that difficult to think before we buy? We don't have to know all there is to



know about where the iron ore was mined or how much oil it took to make the plastic needles or how cheap the labor was overseas to realize that buying a "seedling" made in China is unnecessary at best and foolish at worst.

All we have to do is think a little bit and use our common sense. If we begin applying this same common sense to other purchases, we will easily avoid items that are over-packaged, unrepairable, or unnecessary. And, we will find ways to use items we already have to substitute for items we might buy new.

As one author has pointed out, the most difficult decision to quantify is the decision not to buy. Let's start putting those economists to the test.

And now, if you will pardon me, I must take my "seedling" out to the garbage - it is shedding "needles" on the carpet.

ONLY YESTERDAY



60 Years Ago - Feb. 2, 1937

BACK MOUNTAIN HELPS MIDWEST FLOOD VICTIMS

Extending a helping hand across 1,000 miles to flood-stricken families of the Ohio and Mississippi Valleys, Dallas and its vicinity this week had raised more than \$250 to swell the Red Cross relief fund. In addition, many people dispatched contributions of clothing.

A \$26,000 bond issue to finance erection of the annex to Kingston Township High School was bought by First National Bank of Dallas at a meeting of township school directors on Monday evening. Federal grant which is interested in the project because the Public Works Administration has set aside a grant of more than \$21,000 for labor on the job, was also a bidder but withdrew.

50 Years Ago - Feb. 7, 1947

PETITION ASKS FOR STREET LIGHTS IN SWEET VALLEY

Residents of Sweet Valley have petitioned the supervisors of Ross Township to have street lights installed along the main thoroughfare in that community from Torrance Naugle's Corners to the Junior Mechanics Hall. Seventeen lights will be installed over a distance of one and 2/10ths miles.

Pupils of grades, 3, 5, 7, 9, and 11 of Lehman Schools were given health and dental exams beginning last Wednesday and continuing throughout the remainder of the week. The examinations, of which extensive records will be kept, are part of a state program to locate and recommend treatments for physical ailments among High School students.

40 Years Ago - Feb. 1, 1957

NO LEADS IN JEWELRY STORE THEFT

Lt. Richard B. Collett, 24, son of Orphans Court Reporter and Mrs. Bartholomew Collett, Harris Hill, Rd. was instantly killed Wednesday afternoon when the plane in which he was flying with another officer and enlisted man, crashed into a wooded area, two miles from Fort Devens, MA. An investigation into causes of the failure of the single engine Beaver L20 plane is still underway.

It has been nearly two months since Henry Mastalski, Dallas jeweler lost \$1,500 in diamond rings, a loss partially covered by insurance. State Police are working on the problem, in conjunction with Chief of Police Russell Honeywell, but there has been no lead.

30 Years Ago - Feb. 2, 1967

LONGMORE MEMORIAL DEDICATION HELD

The Thomas Longmore Memorial Dedication Ceremony will be held in the Lake-Lehman High School gymnasium Feb. 3. The ceremony is being held in memory of Tom Longmore in recognition of his leadership and outstanding service as a teacher, friend, and coach to the students of Lake-Lehman.

Kingston Township supervisors met Tuesday evening in a special session and named Berkheimer Agency to collect its 1% earned income tax joining with Dallas Borough, Dallas Township and Franklin Township in having a central collection agency. All municipalities are in the Dallas School District.

20 Years Ago - Feb. 3, 1977

COLD, OIL SHOCK CLOSE SCHOOLS, BUSINESSES

Record cold and the energy crisis has not hit the local area as severely as it has in some parts of Pennsylvania and the country, but it has hit hard enough to cover the closing of schools, cutbacks in some businesses, cancellations, of events and confusion in high school sports schedules. After being closed for five days, students returned to school for one day last week before Gov. Milton S. Shapp, ordered all schools to close because of the shortage of natural gas.

Harveys Lake code enforcement committee agreed at their meeting last week to submit a list of properties recommended for inclusion in the demolition of derelict buildings project to the borough planning commission at their next meeting. Property pictures, code numbers and other details will be submitted to the commission.

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