

## EDITORIALS

## Woronko and White the best in our youth

The Killer Bees Athletic Club picked a couple of killer W's as their first student-athlete award winners. Mike Woronko and Debbie White, both seniors at Lake-Lehman High School, walked off with the honors last weekend, and both are richly deserving of the distinction. The club also deserves a pat on the back, for adding this award to its list of annual honors. It is important to recognize that the first priority for athletes at the high school and college levels is achievement in the classroom, not on the playing field.

A slim minority of young men and women will ever be able to earn a living playing the games they excel at in school. The brightest local stars can appear ordinary when matched against top talent from across the nation, and few have made it even to the reserve list of a professional team. There are exceptions, of course, such as John Oliver and Brian Kelly, and they are to be congratulated for their accomplishments.

But the path for most student athletes leads to a career off the field, where the rigors of practice and requirements for great success are stringent, but considerably more opportunities await those who have prepared for them. Mike Woronko and Debbie White are tremendous role models for their peers and those who will follow in their footsteps. They, along with all the young men and women who were considered for this award, are to be congratulated for keeping their priorities in order, and for demonstrating that excellence on the field goes hand-in-hand with achievement in class, and later in life.

## High interest in school's a good sign for region

Judging by attendance at recent school board meetings and the response to the unofficial ballot published in last week's issue of the Post, the question of where to put a replacement for Westmoreland Elementary School is one of the hottest topics in the Back Mountain in recent years. So it should be. Schools are more than bricks and mortar, and the quality of education we provide will come back to reward or haunt us in years to come.

No matter what the final decision, we are heartened that so many people care enough about this issue to break from busy schedules to participate in the process. The concern they demonstrate shows that public education is valued in our communities, and it will be kept strong by the involvement of parents and others who are willing to step forward and get involved when important decisions must be made. That's another reason why the school board and administration should take the time to fully explain all the options before selecting a site.

### Publisher's notebook

Ron Bartizek



By now you've probably read that the Walt Disney Company is putting the publishing properties it purchased in 1994 up for sale. Included in the mix is *The Times Leader*, which was purchased by Capital Cities Broadcasting in 1978. The move was expected by nearly everyone in the industry. Disney, like CapCities, is not a newspaper company, and the TL and its other papers and magazines are more of a distraction to management than they are worth. You only needed to read Disney's 1996 annual report to get a sense of how little these businesses mean to the big Mouse. In dozens of pages, perhaps two sentences mentioned that the company owned any publishing operations.

No one can predict what changes a sale will bring to the TL, but any new owner is likely to run the paper in a more businesslike manner, and less with an eye toward eliminating competitors at any cost. As for the issue of local ownership, forget it, unless someone with exceedingly deep pockets steps forward to snatch the paper from another national chain. Don't hold your breath on that possibility.

### Do you agree? Disagree?

Editorials are the opinion of the management of The Dallas Post, and are written by the editor unless otherwise indicated. We welcome your opinion on contemporary issues in the form of letters to the editor. If you don't write, the community may never hear a contrasting point of view. Send letters to: The Dallas Post, P.O. Box 366, Dallas, PA 18612. Please include your name, address and a daytime phone number so that we may verify authenticity. We do not publish anonymous letters, but will consider withholding the name in exceptional circumstances. We reserve the right to edit for length and grammar.



Still standing, still used, in Lehman. Photo by Charlotte Bartizek.

## LETTERS

## Wyoming Valley Red Cross thanks all who helped over holiday

Editor:

Now that the holiday rush has passed and everyone is waiting for the first signs of spring, I just wanted to take a few moments and reflect on the kindness of people during the holiday season.

We, at the Wyoming Valley Chapter of the American Red Cross, are twice blessed to be a part of this great valley. The blood service department in conjunction with various businesses, schools, hospitals and community groups sponsored several blood drives over the holiday period. The response to these blood drives was overwhelming.

From Temple B'nai B'rith, who opened their doors to donors on Christmas Eve, the merchants who donated prizes and surprises,

business that contributed refreshments to volunteers who took time from their own families to help during the drives, we say "Thank You".

I want to make special mention about the students from Wyoming Valley West and Wyoming Area High Schools, who helped staff the Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve blood drives. They brought with them the enthusiasm of their youth.

Not only did both schools run very successful drives in the month of December, but they also volunteered to help with these special drives. Our hats go off to these young people, a fine example of many of the young people in our local high schools.

Also a special mention about America's Pride of Wyoming Val-

ley, a group of young people involved in drug education programs for their peers. We appreciate the many hours you have volunteered for the blood donor program.

But the most important part of any successful blood drive is the donors. We can't say "Thank You" enough to those who took the time, away from family and festivities, to make sure that our hospitals would have a sufficient supply of blood during the holidays. We couldn't have done it without you.

Now that the holidays are over, most people just want to hibernate till spring, but the needs of the Red Cross can't be put on hold till the spring. Surgery is still scheduled, accidents still happen and the need for blood and blood products continues. There is also

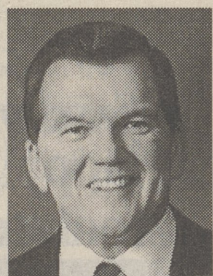
a special need for donors with type O blood. So please bundle up and come out to a blood drive.

If you are at least 17 years of age, weigh 105 pounds and are in good health, please take the time to donate blood. For more information or to schedule an appointment, please call the Wyoming Valley chapter at 832-7161, Ext. 33.

Again, thank you to each and every person who made our holiday drives very successful. But please do not forget that our need for blood continues each and every day. Remember you can help us every 56 days, so please donate blood on a regular basis. It is one habit that you don't want to break.

Maureen Jordan  
Blood Service Director

### Guest Column



Gov. Tom Ridge

Almost every state in the nation got out of the liquor business a long time ago. Only Pennsylvania and Utah continue to control the retail sale of wine and spirits. And even Utah doesn't use the antiquated state-store system employed in Pennsylvania.

Government is here to serve the people, not to serve them alcohol. Government should concentrate, instead, on vigorously regulating the distribution of alcohol and cracking down on those who misuse it, especially minors and those who drink and drive. A government that devotes its energies to enforcement, compliance and education - rather than selling alcohol - benefits everyone.

Since day one of my Administration, I've taken a strong stance on enforcement issues. Last year, I signed a "zero tolerance" law to suspend the drivers' license of minors found to be driving with blood-alcohol levels of .02 - well below the .10 legally drunken-driving threshold.

In addition, I called for and signed a law that allows law-enforcement officers to conduct blood-alcohol tests on suspected drunken drivers for up to three

## State must serve people, not alcohol

hours after they are stopped by police. This measure restored the strength of Pennsylvania's drunken-driving law after it had been weakened by a court ruling that created a dangerous loophole.

I've also appointed Pennsylvania's first-ever Physician General, to give Pennsylvania a new voice on health and safety issues, and created the Governor's Community Partnership for Safe Children, which supports community efforts to reduce drinking and drug abuse among children.

And just this past week, I joined with the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board and Pennsylvania Underage Drinking Coalition to announce an important new four-year, \$4 million statewide program to combat underage drinking.

With such strong laws and programs in place, and a commitment to seek still other ways to improve oversight and enforcement, I propose that Pennsylvania privatize its state-store system. It is, in fact, my top legislative priority for the new legislative session. I am convinced that we can privatize our system in a way that produces customer-friendly advantages and new revenues for the Commonwealth - without making alcohol overly accessible or compromising the safety of our communities and children.

As the privatization debate unfolds, we should be guided by five basic principles:

- Increase Consumer Friendliness. Provide better service, selection, and pricing (but without making alcohol available "on every street corner");

- Preserver LCB Regulation and Licensing. Maintain the Liquor Control Board to provide strong regulation and licensing of the distribution of alcohol in the Commonwealth;

- Improve Enforcement and Education. Increase police enforcement of underage drinking and DUI, and improve alcohol abuse prevention and education programs.

- Enhance Value to the Commonwealth. Privatization must enhance the total value of the state currently derives from taxes, fees, transfers and services.

- Fair Treatment of Employees. State-store employees are guaranteed timely notice of their furlough by their current contract. The state will ensure they all receive reasonable assistance in locating other jobs, both inside and outside of state government.

By following these principles of common sense and fairness, Pennsylvania can develop a private, pro-consumer system which is appropriately and strongly regulated by the state.

As pointed out earlier, only Pennsylvania and Utah still control the retail sales of wine and spirits. Thirty-two states have completely private systems (both retail and wholesale operations are privatized) and 16 states have

semi-private systems (retail is privatized). With Utah progressively moving forward, Pennsylvania is the only state in the country that maintains a Prohibition-era system. And it isn't working.

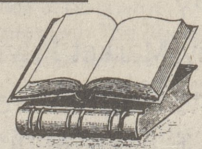
Consider: A number of states with completely private systems consistently report fewer instances of DUI, underage drinking and alcohol diseases than Pennsylvania. In fact, of the four states that scored best in MADD's national rankings, three have been completely private systems and one is semi-private. Pennsylvania, the strictest of the 50 states, lagged behind in the ratings - further reaffirming that improved enforcement and education will serve us better than merely clinging to our antiquated state-store system.

What's more, statewide polls repeatedly show that the majority of Pennsylvanians support privatization.

By allowing the marketplace to appropriately handle the sale of alcohol, and refocusing the state's efforts on strengthened regulation of those sales, we can provide value to consumers and taxpayers, while increasing the protection of our children and families.

I look forward to working with the Legislature to determine exactly how we should privatize our state-store system and how we can best use the proceeds. In the meantime, I encourage our state legislators, and all Pennsylvanians to consider the guiding principles I have presented here.

### LIBRARY NEWS



By NANCY KOZEMCHAK

The Book Club of the Back Mountain Memorial Library is presently collecting membership dues for 1997. Membership is \$10 for single and \$15 for a double membership.

In 1996, 231 members joined the Book Club with a total collected of \$2,085. This money is used to purchase books for the

## Book Club collecting dues for 1997

special book club shelf in the library. These books are restricted to book club members only for the first six months. The library itself purchases many of the same titles, so there usually are two copies of current titles. After six months the book club books are added to the regular library shelves.

The Book Club holds a social meeting on the third Monday of the month except for January and February, in the community room. The program consists of book discussions, show and tell items, and current topics for discussion. It has become one of the highlights of the many library oriented activities.

We had the rare opportunity of celebrating the 90th birthday of June McCloskey in June. A special curio cabinet was purchased in memory of Miriam Lathrop, the library's first librarian, and was added to the furnishings in the community room. A very lovely, but sad, luncheon was held in honor of Marge McGivern, a loyal book club and library member, who will be moving to her new residence in Virginia. She has been a dedicated library person and a loyal book club member and she will be missed. The next meeting of the Book Club will be held March 17 at 1:30 in the community room at the library.

**New books:** "Little Boy Blue" has at its center an airport gone bad. A young baggage handler has been gunned down. Detective Joe and his partner, Anthony, sense something 'kinky' about the killing of young Johnny Boy Counihan, who wore an old NYPD overcoat to his death.

"Hornet's Nest" by Patricia Cornwell is a knowing and wry novel of big-city crime, and the ironic intersections of everyday lives. It's a city of ambition and pride, a city long ago dubbed, 'the hornet's nest of America'. A swarming symbol dominates the badge of the police department that protects it.

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