

EDITORIALS

Teachers had gain, must share pain at Lake-Lehman

There is no justification for the Lake-Lehman Education Association, the teachers' union, not to accept a salary freeze until the district can pull itself back from the brink of fiscal disaster. Teachers should join with the administration in offering to accept no pay hikes for at least two years so that Lake-Lehman can begin the long process of rehabilitating its finances.

It has taken several years for the district to sink into the fiscal mire of near bankruptcy. It will take more time, and greater cooperation from all parties, if it is ever to climb out.

After a series of hefty raises for teachers, the district came up dry in 1992 — passing a budget that used all reserves to cover operating expenses — and has never recovered. Now, not only is the district without a reserve, it owes several million dollars in debt for past projects while facing a building project of \$8 million to \$12 million, made imperative by the poor condition of the middle school.

The situation hasn't been helped by a revolving door in the superintendent's office. Both the present superintendent, Dr. William Price, and his predecessor Nancy Davis stepped into a district that has made improvements in education quality but lacked fiscal resources to prepare for future needs. Despite that constraint, Lake-Lehman has a school spirit that many districts envy, with students, teachers and administrators working together to raise learning standards and prepare students for life beyond high school.

Assessing blame and hurling insults will do nothing to solve the financial crisis; taxpayers, parents, teachers and administrators — even students — must cooperate if Lake-Lehman is to secure its future. And it is only fair that the people who have benefitted the most from the district's largesse should now volunteer to help the hand that has fed them. If Lake-Lehman's teachers refuse to help the district through this crisis, they will have earned all the scorn that is sure to be heaped on them.

Publisher's notebook

Ron Bartizek



Memo to President William J. Clinton, the White House:

Please, Mr. President, don't apologize for slavery 130 years after it ended. Please don't furrow your brow, bite your lower lip and — voice trembling — make it sound like what happened two centuries ago was my fault, or that of anyone living today. And don't say that, even though it wasn't my fault, I owe an apology for an abhorrent action no right-thinking contemporary person took part in or condones.

Slavery is a stain on our nation's proud history, and its legacy lingers to this day. Your continued support of the good features of affirmative action and other measures intended to ameliorate the harm slavery caused may make a difference in the lives of slave ancestors and other people of color. An apology may just make you and other people feel better about themselves, with no measurable effect on the problems.

Frankly, Mr. President, your penchant to apologize for every perceived inequity under the sun is getting under my skin. Instead of running around saying you're sorry, why don't you do something concrete to improve the lot of people — black, white, yellow or purple — who haven't had the opportunity to share equally in the American Dream. You could start by talking frankly about how the budget plan you and Congress are hatching holds a lot more promise for the wealthy than the poor, and does little to fend off a looming fiscal disaster when baby boomers begin to collect Social Security — and you're long since out of office.

It's about as likely you'll do this as it was that slave holders would free their captives without violence.

In a popular movie from 20 years ago, love meant never having to say you're sorry. That movie was as full of pop-psychology babble as many of your public statements, so I'm wondering if you feel unloved, despite high popularity ratings. But that's irrelevant; just leave me out of your free-floating guilt trips.

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 or bring letters to: The Dallas Post, 607 Main Rd., 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.

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Lazy, hazy summer day at Harveys Lake. Photo by Charlotte Bartizek.

A Case for conservation



Alene N. Case

I have written about yards and lawns in a wide variety of contexts over the years. But, the discussions at Harveys Lake regarding the ban on phosphate fertilizers in the borough led me to conclude that it was time to revisit the subject this week. However, the comic strip "Stone Soup" in last Sunday's paper beat me to it. Daughter asks Mother, "What are you doing?" Mother answers, "Fertilizing, so the grass will grow." Daughter dramatically points out, "But then you'll have to mow it! It makes no sense. You spread chemicals that pollute the ground water to make something grow that you are then obligated to cut down using a noisy machine that spews pollution into the atmosphere... and what for? You can't eat it, or sell it. And it takes up your precious weekend time! But hey, if that's your idea of fun, go for it." The last frame shows a very puzzled neighbor peering over the fence asking, "You dug up your entire lawn?" and the mother replies, "Let me know when the gravel truck gets here."

Now, before you run out and dig up your lawn and order gravel, let me point out that there are many other options that provide interesting landscapes without all those chemicals, energy, and (often) time. The options begin with simply changing the way your grass is mowed. In our climate, it is best to mow to 2 1/2 inches in the spring and fall and to 3 1/2 inches in the summer. The people at the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay (717-236-8825) insist that using that mowing regimen will

Lawn care as if the Earth really matters

decrease weeds in your lawn by 50 per cent. And, that means you will not need to apply herbicides if you can be patient for a couple of years and manually remove large dandelions in the spring each year.

Most lawns do not need fertilizer. In fact, fertilizers applied in the incorrect amounts or at the wrong time of year can actually lead to lawns that are more susceptible to disease or insect damage. Get your soil tested before applying any fertilizer. This testing should be done by someone who is not in the business of selling lawn care supplies (contact the Penn State Extension Service for advice). If the soil needs nitrogen, consider overseeding the lawn with white clover which will fix nitrogen as it grows.

If you absolutely must apply nitrogen fertilizer, do it only in the fall of the year — never in the spring. If the soil needs phosphorus, use a slow release natural fertilizer such as bone meal that will not wash off into neighboring waterways and will provide all its nutrients in a form available to your plants. This also should be done in the autumn so that the roots are strengthened.

It is likely that the soil in your lawn only needs some lime (ground limestone) to maintain a neutral pH in spite of the acid deposition in our region. Lime will also help grasses recover after leaves have remained on the lawn too long. Acid conditions can create a situation in which grass is replaced by moss. Some people like moss (it is pretty and green and does not require mowing), but others find it offensive especially in high traffic areas of the lawn.

Monoculture is one of the most common sources of problems in lawns. Simply planting or

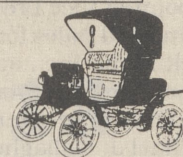
overseeding a variety of grass and clover types will give your lawn the resiliency it needs to fend off diseases, insects, and the effects of drought. Choices in our area include perennial ryegrass, fine fescue and turf-type tall fescue as well as newly developed hybrids and ornamental grasses.

Once your grass is planted, you also need to water it properly. Water only when your footprints do not rapidly disappear when you walk across your lawn. That indicates that the grass is too dry. Water thoroughly in the morning or late afternoon. Light watering causes roots to be too near the surface, making the plants more susceptible to drought stress. Night watering can lead to disease. Daytime watering causes unnecessary evaporation and possible wilting of the grass.

Using a mulching mower or mowing often enough to leave the clippings on the lawn is the best way to maintain the nutrient health of your lawn. If you constantly remove all the grass clippings, of course your lawn will slowly lose necessary nutrients. Then, you will get into the cycle of fertilizing and cutting that the cartoon described. But, as I hope you have learned, the solution is not to replace your lawn with gravel. You might want to consider maintaining less lawn by slowly converting some of it to other forms of groundcover such as vines, shrubs, wildflowers and gardens. The wildlife (birds, butterflies, small mammals, etc.) will make your yard a place to visit and live. And, you will be treated to a wide variety of colors and textures at all seasons of the year.

But hey, if grass is your thing, you can "go for it" in ways that are less destructive of our environment. Happy mowing!

ONLY
YESTERDAY



60 Years Ago - July 9, 1937

PRINCIPAL MARTIN WINS NEW CONTRACT

Following instructions of the court, Kingston Township School Board on Wednesday evening awarded a year's contract to James A. Martin, supervising principal. Upon advice of attorneys the directors decided not to appeal from decision of Judge William S. McLean, who ruled the township board had violated the new Mundy Teacher Tenure Bill when it refused to reappoint Mr. Martin.

An examination of the finances of Dallas Borough School District at the end of the fiscal year shows that the much disputed 1936/37 budget, which was the storm center for a series of legal disputes a year ago carried the district safely through the year and leaves it with a balance of \$150.36 in the general fund and \$154.80 in the sinking fund.

50 Years Ago - July 7, 1947

ONE-MAN RAILROAD TO BECOME SCRAP

The miniature one-man railroad which the late Fred Kirkendall Jr. operated over a mile of track at his home on Machell Avenue, has been sold to Louis Cohen & Son, scrap iron dealers. Twelve men using two trailer trucks and a crane truck removed the two locomotives and cars this week.

Given a hearing yesterday afternoon before Alderman Miles Barber of Wilkes-Barre, A.L. Weinberg, agent for the Ladies PA. Slovak Union, pleaded guilty to charges of maintaining an overflowing cesspool on Huntsville Road next door to Dallas Borough Schools.

You could get - Hamburg, 42¢ lb.; chuck roast, 45¢ lb.; green beans, 2 lbs., 19¢; home grown beets, 2 lg. bchs. 9¢; Kellogg's Corn Flakes, 8 oz. pkg. 11¢.

40 Years Ago - July 12, 1957

MRS. ELIZABETH DIEHL TURNS 102 YRS. OLD

Mrs. Elizabeth Diehl Knell, Fernbrook, celebrated her 102nd birthday on Tuesday, receiving many cards and gifts. Born in a log cabin in Beechwood, NY, she moved from her former home in Kingston to the Back Mountain in 1930. She now makes her home with her daughter, Mrs. Lillian Trudgen on Overbrook Road.

Monroe Township school directors made it abundantly clear at the Dallas Area School Board meeting that they wanted to withdraw from the present jointure in Luzerne County and return to the Wyoming County school system as soon as possible.

Now playing at the Himmler Theatre, "Spirit of St. Louis" with James Stewart and Murray Coburn.

30 Years Ago - July 6, 1967

MISS FRANCES DORRANCE TURNS 90 AT AUCTION

Miss Frances Dorrance's 90th birthday coincides with the coming of age of the Library Auction which was her brainchild 21 years ago. The entire history of the Back Mountain Memorial Library is bound up with Miss Dorrance. She was instrumental in its founding, a one-time president of the Library Association and a staunch supporter of its activities. When a group of women of the Book Club weighed possibilities of raising money to help the infant library it was Dorrance who sparked the idea of an auction.

20 Years Ago - July 7, 1977

STORM BLOWS THROUGH BACK MOUNTAIN

A severe electrical storm with heavy straight-line winds resembling tornado winds hit the Back Mountain area shortly after noon Tuesday and caused serious damage, uprooting trees, flooding yards and causing at least one house fire.

Dallas Township Supervisors will crack down on future "Rock Gatherings" by passing an ordinance which will make it mandatory for such affairs to have special permits. Following many complaints about rock concerts on Lower Demunds Road area, the board felt that something must be done to prevent or at least keep rein on such gatherings.

Your news is welcome

The Dallas Post welcomes submissions about Back Mountain people and events. In order to plan each issue, we must adhere to self-imposed deadlines, as well as those of our printer. To have the greatest likelihood of publication, items should be received at our office by 4 p.m. the Friday prior to each issue. Items will be accepted until 4 p.m. Mondays, although much of the paper is already assembled by that time. Send or bring items to: The Dallas Post, 607 Main Road, P.O. Box 366, Dallas, PA 18612. Our normal business hours are 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. A deposit box is located at the front of the building for after-hours submissions.