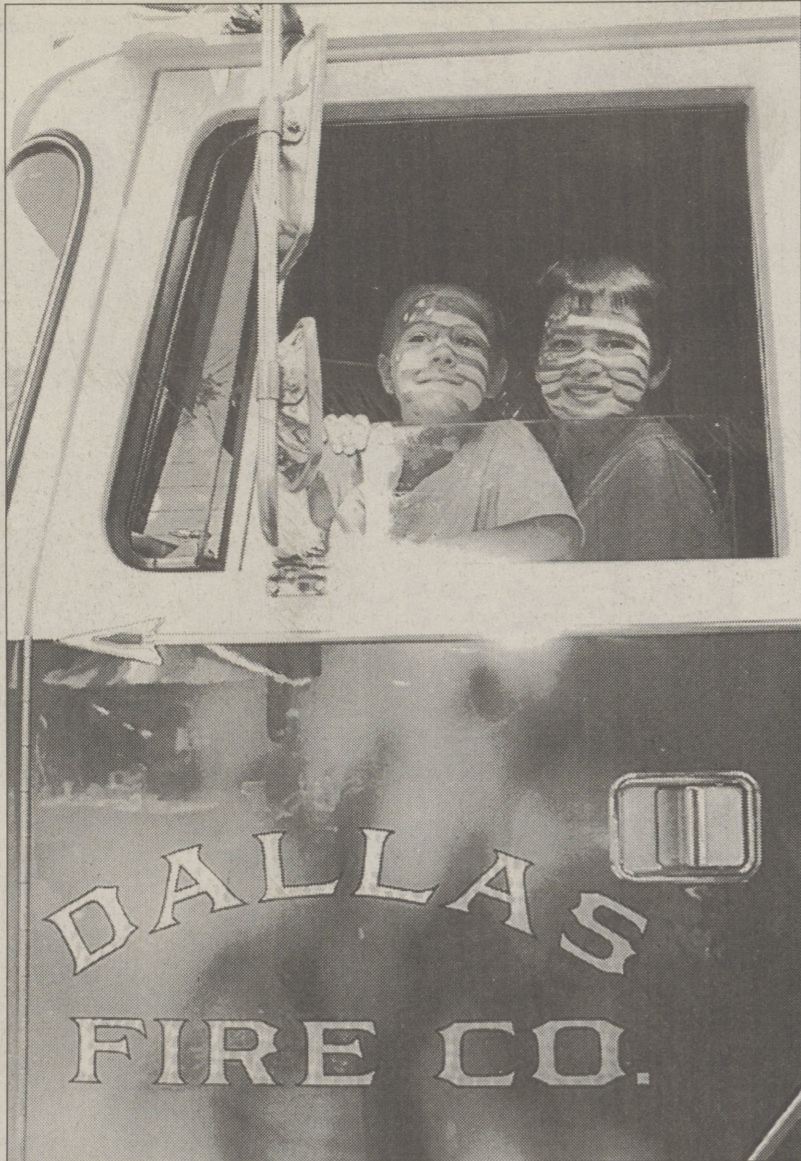


PARTY FOR A CAUSE

The second annual Claude Street Block Party raised \$410 that will be donated to the children's wing campaign of the Back Mountain Memorial Library. The event, which will be held annually, will aid Dallas Fire and Ambulance next year. Enjoying the day, clockwise from top right: Marty Moore and Dan Elston took a ride in the fire truck; Aaron Cusma, Chris Monce and Sally Ann Cusma fished for prizes; "Nothing in Common" provided entertainment, from left, Al Racht, Phil Brown, Scott Griffith and Ray Patsko; Genevieve Blanc showed some fancy steps.

POST PHOTOS/CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK



Developers

(continued from page 1)

that's the way it should've been. But, now we have sewers and lots don't have to be that large in size," said Halbing. "It's made homeownership out of reach for a lot of people because the lots are larger. It has turned many people off. We're losing people who were born here to the valley because they can buy a house for a lot less there."

Tony Garbush, who developed Meadowcrest in Chase, agrees it's getting more difficult for the average person to purchase land and build a house in the Back Mountain. "(Many municipalities) are requiring more acreage per house and that makes it more expensive for the consumer," he said.

Communities such as Jackson Twp. and Kingston Twp. do not want a lot of concentrated areas, he said. "The average lot is two acres in some cases," said Garbush. "The end result is people have to spend most of their money trying to buy a lot and have to put a cheap house on it (because they run out of money)."

Fitch agrees zoning can be discriminate because if the lot sizes are set too large, many people cannot afford them.

While developers agree zoning has influence on where they choose to build, they also look for available quality land that doesn't require too much extra expense.

"When choosing land I look for what will need the least on-site improvements," said Garbush. On-site improvement include leveling or removing ledges and cliffs, which might entail blasting at extra cost. When the expense is high for the developer, one can bet it will be that much higher for the consumer, he said.

Garbush said it can be balancing act trying to find quality land, in a zone that makes it worth the trouble and in an area where people will want to live. "Prime land is getting more and more



Ernie Slocum, Lehman, working for Lehman Homes, dug the cellar for a new home in Meadowcrest, Jackson Twp.

"You look at two different zones and deal with it. Municipalities are very reluctant to do it."

John Halbing
Develops in Dallas Twp.

scarce," he said.

One problem developers may run into when purchasing land, is dealing with a tract of land that runs across municipal boundaries and is zoned different ways.

All the developers agree that municipalities are not keen to make zoning changes. "Generally, you have to buy land under the contingency it will be rezoned. But, people are not for zone change," said Fitch. "It's a fine line call that doesn't happen of-

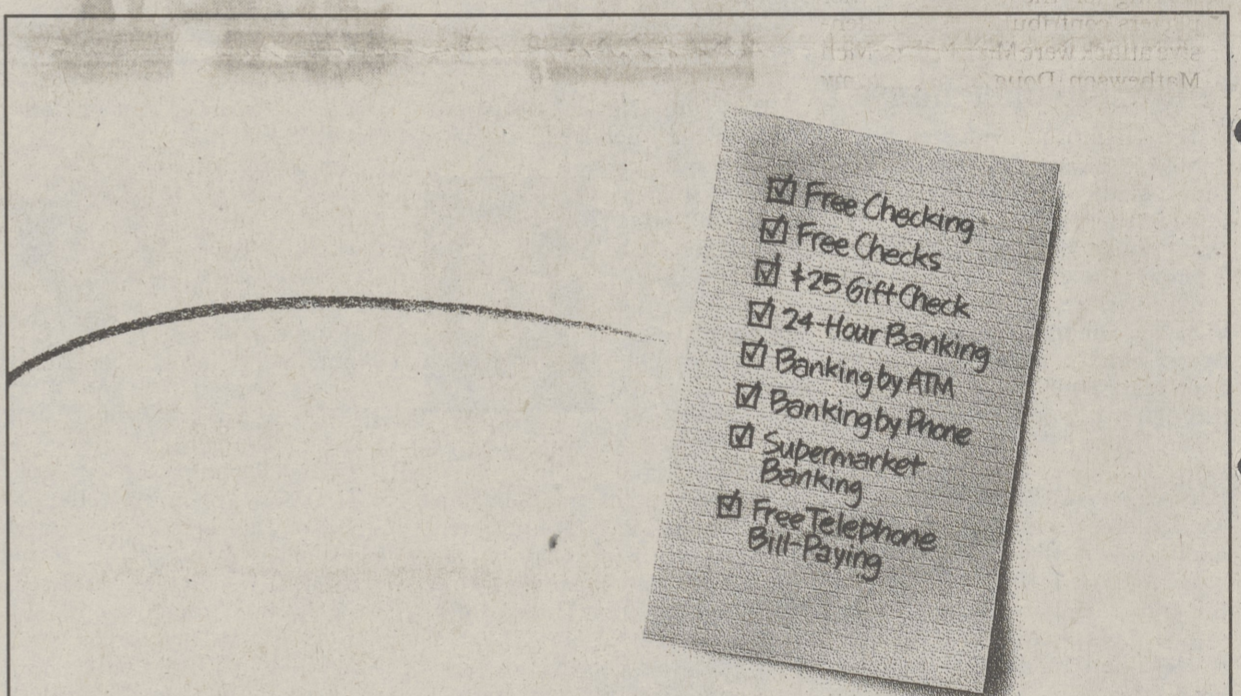
ten."

Halbing, who has never tried to get a zone change, said he thinks variety in a development is important. "You look at two different zones and deal with it. Municipalities are very reluctant to do it," he said. Halbing said Northwoods is a mixture of both large and small lots.

The developers said they do not expect municipalities will ever change their zones at the borders to accommodate the developers. "I don't see that ever happening. I think it should be up to the individual communities," said Halbing. "I respect and would rather see the municipalities be in control of their own destiny."

Charles Bartlett, Lehman Twp. zoning officer, said he could never see any consolidation of ordinances. "No one wants to forfeit power over their own municipality," he said. "The local government has a good feel for what the geographic areas require."

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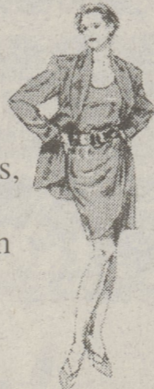
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