

EDITORIALS

Lehman school majority must learn to govern

For many years, members of the Lake-Lehman Taxpayers Association were on the outside looking in, so it was easy to challenge each expenditure and second guess every decision made by the school board. All that changed last November when association members gained a majority on the board. Now their task is much more difficult.

If the way the resignation of the superintendent of schools was handled is any indication, the new board has a long way to go before it makes the transition from outside agitators to competent stewards of the schools. Some board members contend Dr. William Price wasn't straightforward with them when he asked for a five-year contract, which is a typical arrangement, and a perfectly understandable request in the volatile world that school administrators occupy. Others have long and loudly held the opinion that Price, other administrators and teachers are paid too much, and can easily be replaced with lower priced help. Now they'll find out if they've been correct.

The meeting at which Price announced his resignation was raucous and out of control. Some observers suspect this was because the unruly audience was made up mostly of taxpayer association supporters, who were given free rein to voice their opinions by a board that is beholden to them. We hope this isn't true — that instead board members understand they represent all the people in the district and the board's leaders will provide direction and decorum at public sessions as they strive to meet increasing challenges in the district.

Lake-Lehman is at a crucial turning point in many ways. Its budget is barely adequate to maintain operations, a new middle school is on the drawing board and a teachers' contract is expiring. Despite all the obstacles, students in the district have been showing improved skills and higher test scores. Those results are a tribute to how clearly the administration, teachers, parents and students have seen the mission of the public schools and how well they have worked together to fulfill that mission. It is up to the school board to provide an atmosphere in which progress can continue, not simply to pinch pennies.

Publisher's notebook

Ron Bartizek



I'm not sure how it came to this, but I think an overly large and lazy Washington press corps is one reason Clinton/Lewinsky has overshadowed other stories in recent weeks. It's a lot easier to write a titillating story about White House sex than it is to trace the path of bundles of foreign campaign contributions. It's even easier when you publish or broadcast rumors, some of which inevitably turn out to be false. The spectacle of *The Wall Street Journal*, of all papers, retracting a story about a White House steward seeing Clinton and Lewinsky in a "compromising" position takes the cake, as far as I'm concerned. It also illustrates the void that exists in many editor's chairs at this moment.

Why is the *Journal*, a newspaper devoted primarily to business, sending reporters out to dredge up unconfirmed gossip anyway? Do its editors think WSJ readers count on the *Journal* to report the President's extra-curricular affairs? I don't think that's the case; instead it may simply be that White House scandal is more fun to cover than mergers and zillionaires, whose sex life is never the subject of the evening news. There's really no excuse for a news organization of that size and quality running with every wisp of hearsay. Editors blame "competition," for the frenzy, which apparently is the journalistic equivalent to "the devil made me do it."

I suspect the once "legitimate" press will come out of this episode more damaged than the President, even if the allegations prove true, because the public — unlike the press — is able to separate the President's job from his personal life, no matter how sordid the latter may be.

I thought the question raised by Casey Martin, the disabled golfer, was one of the most thought-provoking in recent years. Martin, you may recall, wanted the right to use a golf cart in competitive play because a congenital condition makes it impossible for him to walk the course four days in a row. The Professional Golfers' Association argued that walking is an essential part of the sport.

Martin is an incredibly sympathetic figure, since it's clear he excels at the game despite living with a serious physical disability, and has said he dislikes asking for special treatment, though not enough to have let the matter drop. In contrast, the PGA looked like an obstinate old uncle, too set in his ways to brook any compromise. Still, I think it's a mistake to bend the rules for Martin.

The PGA is, after all, a private organization. While the association's most ardent supporters probably feel uneasy opposing Martin, the PGA should have the right to set its own rules. Tour officials no doubt fear that every golfer with a hangover can now ask to ride and they will be powerless to deny them. And it won't stop at carts. Since a cart is a mechanical aid for someone with a physical disability, how long will it be before golfers start wearing (and endorsing) braces and other gadgets?

Another thing that bugs me about this case is the comment that it was a public relations disaster for the PGA and golf in general. In our entertainment culture, apparently nothing is worse than bad press, even if it comes because you are standing up for principle. And no sin is worse than suggesting that not everyone can do anything they like, on their terms.



Even they get cold feet this time of year. Photo by Charlotte Bartizek.

A Case for conservation



Alene N. Case

A couple who are friends of ours are working for a year at an international school in the Himalayan foothills of India. They report that the work is rewarding, the people are wonderful, the scenery is gorgeous, and there are lots of interesting things to do. But, in spite of the fact that they took along water filtration equipment, one of them has already come down with a nasty case of amoebic dysentery.

Closer to home, several Dallas families continue to struggle with a water supplier which seems quite content to take their money and provide very little service in return. A large water company builds huge filtration plants while continuing to develop the land around its reservoirs.

Many water companies take great pains to treat the water as it comes from the ground or lake and then run it through ancient pipes to our homes and businesses. They then express surprise when their customers complain that they must filter the water or buy bottled water because it is not fit to drink.

I have come to the conclusion that Americans are guilty of the rather insensitive attitude we find amusing in the royal statement that the commoners should eat cake when they cannot afford bread. In our case, it might be paraphrased "Let them use a Brita." But, what are the costs of this attitude? Let's examine this further.

Each year in the United States, waterborne infectious diseases cost almost \$10 billion. And, that

Let them use a Brita

is in a country that prides itself on the regulations and procedures for the protection of human health. Around the world, 25 million people die each year from diseases carried by contaminated water. At least three million of these are children who die from various kinds of diarrhea. According to the 1996 "State of the World," more than one billion people are still without safe drinking water in spite of a concerted effort by the United Nations in the 1980s to provide clean water to a much greater proportion of the world's population.

Besides the obvious problems of expecting everyone to purchase bottled water (lack of money) or to install filters (lack of faucets and money) to clean the water they are supplied, there are much more insidious problems with the "Let them use a Brita" attitude. It tends to lead to laziness and injustice. If we believe that all problems can be solved by filtration, we are then tempted to continue or revert to practices that will dirty the water supplies.

These practices include building homes and other buildings on watershed lands, stripping tree cover from the sides of streams and lakes, allowing intensive agriculture or construction to proceed without sufficient erosion controls, discharging effluent from manufacturing plants before it is treated sufficiently, and not providing money to replace water distribution pipes on a reasonable schedule.

This attitude is even more problematic when we consider our activities in countries other than our own. If we continue to allow American (or multinational) companies to mine, farm, and manufacture in other countries without adhering to the same environmental standards which would be required in the USA, then we are guilty of economic imperialism. Along the Mexican border with

Texas, there are many industries that are owned by American firms. The ditches and streams into which these plants discharge effluent are so polluted that sludges of a variety of colors are obvious to the casual observer. When people go to these villages and ask the people what they need, they ask if it is safe to drink from these same ditches and streams.

The United States is prosperous enough to help other nations treat the sewage from their cities. That would go a long way toward solving the waterborne disease problem. In fact, 1.7 billion people still discharge their sewage into local waterways with no treatment at all. Often, the treatment facilities are in place but there is no money for the necessary pumps and other gadgetry needed to operate the equipment. The Three Gorges Dam in China may well become a giant cesspool because none of the cities along its banks have adequate sewage treatment. Impounding this water could lead to even greater disease problems because the water will no longer be well aerated naturally before it is consumed by downstream cities.

If we continue to take clean water for granted, we will continue to have all the global problems associated with dirty water. People will continue to have too many babies because they know that many of their children will die young. Fruits and vegetables imported from other areas of the world will continue to make people sick. Red tides will continue to affect seafood. Travel will continue to be hazardous to one's health. And, worst of all, many people in developing countries will not reach their full potential because of totally preventable diseases.

Fresh water is our most precious resource. Let us act on that knowledge.

Library news



Nancy Kozemchak

The Back Mountain Memorial Library circulated 5,683 books during the month of January; adult fiction, 2,544; juvenile fiction 1,420; adult non-fiction 1,692; juvenile non-fiction 27. Reference questions answered 263; Book Club books circulated 173; Interlibrary loan transactions 10; CDs 71, audio tapes 325; and video: 248. New books added to the collection 115; 92 adult and 23 juvenile; adult books withdrawn 148. New borrowers, adult 50; juvenile 47; Re-registrations adult 141, juvenile 137. Total

Nearly 6,000 items circulated

active borrowers as of January 31, 10,697.

The new children's room opened on Mon., Feb. 16 at 9:30. A warm thank you is extended to the board members, staff, volunteers and general public who gave their assistance in setting up the room itself and then shelving the children's books on their respective shelves. This room should serve the children of the Back Mountain area for all their needs and wants for many years to come; thanks to the wonderful contributors who made it happen!

New books at the library: "The Young Savages" by Fred Mustard Stewart continues the story of the dynamic hero, Justin Savage, who fled to sea to escape his murderous half brother. His adventures on the seas, steamy romances and his triumph in reclaiming his heritage make for a riveting historical epic.

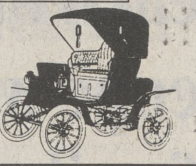
"The Last Hostage" by John J. Nance asks you to be prepared to

be held hostage to the nail-biting suspense of a world-class thriller. A routine airline flight becomes a midair standoff as 130 passengers listen to their captain relate the unprecedented demands of an unseen hijacker; a threat to blow up the plane.

"The Street Lawyer" by John Grisham begins with: Michael was in a hurry. He was scrambling up the ladder at Drake & Sweeney, a giant D.C. firm with 800 lawyers. The money was good and getting better; a partnership was three years away. No time for conscience. A violent encounter stopped him cold.

"The Upstart" by Catherine Cookson is a wonderful and panoramic new historical novel set amidst the rolling social currents of rural England at the turn of the century. Samuel Fairbrother, a shrewd manufacturer has decided he deserves a more imposing residence. With a clash of wills, he encounters a disadvantage.

ONLY YESTERDAY



60 Years Ago - Feb. 25, 1938.

PRINTER'S DEVIL RECALLS FIRST DALLAS POST

The Post heard this week from a man who helped to print the first issue. Joseph Bulford of Trucksill operated the hand press upon which issue No. 1, Vol. 1 of The Dallas Post was printed in 1889. Bulford does not recall many details of that auspicious occasion except that the printing shop was located on Huntsville Street where Paul Shaver's home now is. Bulford was 14, he says when he helped print Dallas's first newspaper. He is 63 now.

You could get - Del Monte peaches, 2 #2 1/2 cans 33¢; sandwich bread, lg. wrapped loaf, 9¢; Ovaltine, 14-oz. jar, 63¢; tuna fish, white meat, #2 1/2 can 19¢; Asco Coffee, 19¢ lb.; Ivory Soap, 2 lg. cakes, 19¢.

50 Years Ago - Feb. 27, 1948

LAKE TWP. CONSIDERS AMUSEMENT TAX

The possibility of an amusement tax in Lake Township to supplement school revenues is being considered by Lake Township School Board and will be discussed at its next meeting Friday evening. Such a tax by school boards was made possible under Act 800 passed by the recent session of the Legislature.

In one of the biggest upsets of the current basketball season, Dallas Borough League-leading cagers went down in defeat last Friday before an aggressive Kingston Township quintet on the latter's floor and a sweet victory for Kingston Township who has been jinxed all season. The final score 36-32. To make the triumph more complete and add to the humiliation, Kingston Township girls duplicated the boys' performance and pounded out a 23-19 win over the Dallas girls.

40 Years Ago - Feb. 21, 1958

THIRD KEY SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR DIES

Back Mountain residents stayed off the highway in droves on Sunday heeding the warning of State Police and Wyoming Valley Motor Club that roads were almost impassable in this area and completely blocked in other sections.

With the passing of Charles James, secondary school administrator, Dallas Area School Jointure has lost a third key man. Raymond Kuhnert, Area Principal died July 27; Harry Ohlman, president of joint board died three weeks later at a time when Mr. James was desperately ill at Johns Hopkins Hospital.

30 Years Ago - Feb. 29, 1968

FIRE AT TANNERY REKINDLES MEMORIES

Fifty one years ago the Noxen Tannery burned to the ground hurling burning embers high in the air and threatening the whole community of Noxen. When the sirens blew at 8:30 Tuesday evening, and fire apparatus converged upon Noxen from all points of the compass the rumor was that the Noxen Tannery was doomed again and that history was repeating itself. Fire centered in the engine room where salvage operations had been going forward to remove the old machines. The tannery has not operated since 1961 when it was closed throwing a reduced force of 100 men out of work.

Leap Year birthdays are slow in being reported, but they are trickling in. To date the list includes John Engler Jr., Trucksill. Kevin Kreidler born in 1964 is looking forward to his first birthday. He was the only Leap Year baby in the Back Mountain that year; Richard Brown, Meadowcrest, a six year old is a strapping 24-year old cheated out of his annual birthday, except in Leap Year. It's a great occasion.

20 Years Ago - Feb. 23, 1978

BOROUGH MULLS MASTER DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Dallas Borough will be formulating a master plan for development and will shortly be soliciting proposals for drawing up the plan; it was learned Tuesday at the meeting of Dallas Borough Council. Members of the Council will meet Tuesday to lay the ground work for establishment of such a plan, which is necessary in order to qualify for many federal grants. Hiring of a consultant will be taken up at that time.

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