

EDITORIALS

Lake-Lehman budget inadequate to meet needs

These days, when we're told the American economy is in its best shape since World War II, you wouldn't think it would be difficult to balance the interests of taxpayers and public school students. In boom times, incomes rise so steeply that a few extra mills taxation to support the schools is hardly noticed. But this economic expansion is markedly different from the 1950's, because gains are distributed less evenly. That is quite apparent than in the two school districts in the Back Mountain, Dallas and Lake-Lehman.

As home building and incomes outpaced surrounding areas, the Dallas school tax rate remained stable at 158 mills from 1991 until this year, when it was raised 12 mills, mostly to support construction of a new elementary school. In the same time period, the rate in Lake-Lehman grew by more than 40 percent, to 221 mills. While Dallas mails about 6 percent more property tax bills, it collects a third more property tax revenue. The disparity is even larger in the amount of earned income tax collected, with Dallas bringing in half again as much as Lake-Lehman. Yet the districts serve a similar number of students.

While some of Lake-Lehman's financial woes can be blamed on past school boards that were too generous with teachers, that is far from the whole story. Cutbacks in federal and state subsidies have hit smaller, poorer districts especially hard, a situation that was slightly improved in this year's Pennsylvania budget. Failure to reassess property has meant towns and school districts with higher rates of home building have more revenue, while those with lower growth lag behind. And, fundamentally, the disturbing trend of the well off claiming a greater share of prosperity may more than offset other attempts to provide adequate funding to all schools, no matter where they are.

There's no question that Lake-Lehman cannot tax its way out of the current fiscal crisis. With its coffers empty and the middle level building falling apart at the seams, the district needs the cooperation of everyone involved to hold the line on spending. But even with that, the recently passed no-tax-increase budget is likely to leave the district in debt at the end of the year.

The 1990's fixation on local control and responsibility hasn't served Lake-Lehman well. A return to a larger state presence may be the only thing that will keep the district out of bankruptcy.

Publisher's notebook

Ron Bartizek



Call me a modern-day Luddite if you will, but I am mightily resisting the latest technological intrusions on life. Don't try to call me on the car phone or page me on the beeper, I don't have them, thank you. It's not that I'm opposed to technology; the computer this is written on probably has more power than a typical mainframe did 20 years ago. But some of the stuff, particularly the ones that can interrupt a meal or a daydream, seem not to be worth their cost, at least in my line of work.

I have a sneaking suspicion some of us walk around with these gadgets not out of necessity, but for status. "I'm so important, I have to be in touch at every moment of the day," they seem to say, whether hanging off a doctor or a painter. I know this is true for some people, while for others taking or making a call in the car can mean money in the bank, but I wonder if the effect is exaggerated. It's amazing how many urgent problems can wait a few hours to be solved, or are even forgotten by the end of the day, at least around my household.

Not that there aren't times when I yearn for the security of a car phone, such as when driving on I-84 in the middle of a blizzard. It's just that the tradeoff — being able once in awhile to get away from demands on my time and attention — hasn't been worth the cost, at least so far.

If you agree, or not, you can send me an e-mail. Now that's a technology I can appreciate ... and control.

Clinton in China, and the livin' is easy. Count me as a skeptic that the President's public statements about human rights will have any impact on the Chinese government's policies. True to his baby boomer credentials, Clinton seems to believe that talking about a problem is tantamount to solving it, but I think the Chinese missed that bit of 60's enlightenment. Of course, this comes from the same guy who thinks foreplay with an intern isn't really adultery.

My guess is that Jiang got a lot more out of allowing Clinton to mildly express his belief in freedom than we did, and nothing will change for Chinese dissidents as a result. It would have been better if the President had insisted that the reporters denied entrance visas be allowed along on the trip, or it would be cancelled. That would have been a more powerful statemtn.

Do you agree? Disagree?

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Tents and bargain hunters at last week's Market on the Pond cast a pleasing reflection. Photo by Charlotte Bartizek.

The economic viewpoint



Howard Grossman

Have you ever wondered what is happening in parts of Northeastern Pennsylvania to which you may have never traveled, even though some of these areas are only one hour distance? For example, Tobyhanna Army Depot in Monroe County, the largest employer in Northeastern Pennsylvania, will be receiving 825 new jobs as a result of the transfer of jobs from McClellan Air Force Base in Sacramento, California to Tobyhanna over the next three years. Monroe County will have a referendum on the May 1998 ballot asking for a \$25 million open space bond issue. Monroe County is undergoing an extensive visioning process which is designed to help guide the county into the

Treasures of Northeastern Pennsylvania

next century. Pike County has received funding for the development of a new business park. Pike County is the fastest growing county in Pennsylvania. A feasibility study was recently released concerning the opportunity to establish a major performing arts center in that county, which would be equivalent to the legendary Tanglewood in Massachusetts.

Wayne County, which contains the communities of Honesdale and Hawley, has one of the finest land preservation sanctuaries on the East Coast, Lacawac Sanctuary. It also contains the Dorflinger Sanctuary, which holds summer-time concerts and is a cultural mecca of great substance.

The Lackawanna Valley Industrial Highway, a 17 mile, \$461 million project, should be completed sometime in 1999 and will connect Scranton with Carbondale and open up new land areas for development in Lackawanna and Wayne Counties.

A proposal based upon a major study has advocated the restoration of rail passenger service be-

tween Scranton and New York City, traversing Lackawanna and Monroe counties in Northeastern Pennsylvania.

Grey Towers, the former home of Gifford Pinchot, a 1930's Governor of Pennsylvania and nationally known conservationist and forester, is an outstanding facility which attracts tourism as well as special workshops with benefits of national significance.

Lake Wallenpaupack is the largest man-made lake in Pennsylvania with a 52 mile lake front.

The Lake Wallenpaupack Area Management District is model lake protection program including Pike and Wayne Counties, eight municipalities and a small part of two other counties.

The Nature Conservancy believes that sections of the Pocono Plateau in Monroe County represent "one of the last great places" in the nation, has an office in Monroe County, and is working on the preservation of thousands of acres in the Pocono Mountains.

The Stourbridge rail line is an excellent excursion rail system in Wayne County which connects

Honesdale to the former home of author Zane Grey.

The Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area in Pike and Monroe counties is the 10th most used national park facility in the nation. The Upper Delaware Wild and Scenic River facility is a national asset which impacts Pike and Wayne Counties.

The region is blessed with outstanding facilities and assets which may not be widely known to Wilkes-Barre/Scranton/Hazleton Metropolitan Area residents, but which are part of the Northeastern Pennsylvania experience. Those who want to know more about these and many other facilities within the Pocono Northeast may contact the Economic Development Council of Northeastern Pennsylvania (EDCNP) at 1151 Oak Street, Pittston, Pa 18640 to find out more about the heritage, current activities, and the 21st Century future of one of the great regions of the world.

Howard Grossman is Executive Director of the Economic Development Council of Northeastern Pennsylvania. He lives in Dallas.

Library news



Nancy Kozemchak

"Click on Adventure at the Library" is the theme of the 1998 state summer reading program. It is a commitment on the part of Pennsylvania libraries and librarians to pursue the goals of the first state summer reading program to improve and maintain children's success as life-long learners; to foster a love of reading through

Reading program has medieval theme

participation in a statewide summer reading program; and to increase awareness of public libraries through a statewide summer reading program.

As a theme, Click on Adventure! explores on many levels the many adventures open to young readers in the library.

The theme acknowledges the increasing presence of technology in our homes, schools, businesses and libraries. Certainly the vast resources of the World Wide Web add a new dimension to the resources available in the library. At the same time, the adventures are not limited to Internet access—they have been a part of the library all along.

The 'click' in the theme isn't restricted to the click of a mouse on a computer icon, it represents the 'click' of a light bulb going on for a good idea, or the 'click' when the right book connects with the right reader.

Each child will receive a game board with a reading log with 12 different windows to click on. Click on a window and begin your adventure. Next visit, report the completed window and get it stamped and then choose another window. To complete the summer reading adventure, each child must 'click' on at least eight windows and complete them.

Some of the subjects in the windows include poetry, history,

planets, cooking, music, art, sports, magic, riddles, plays, native Americans, holidays, fairy tales and dinosaurs.

Special programs will include Kings and Queens Day, 1:30-3, stories, games, crafts and snacks at the library—limit 30 children. Register the week of Wednesday, July 15, 10:30-11:30, Rand Whipple at Saxton Pavilion, Kingston. All are welcome. Tuesday, July 28, 1:30-3, Knights and Ladies Day at the library-30 children limit. Register week of July 21. Fri., Aug. 14, 1:30-3, Medieval Party Day.

Certificates, prizes, refreshments. Held at the library. Please RSVP.

ONLY YESTERDAY

60 Years Ago - July 8, 1938 POST TYPESETTER SAYS DALLAS IS FRIENDLY

Although there have been amazing changes in the town of Dallas since the beginning of the century, people are as friendly and hospitable as ever according to Mrs. Jennie Bross Howland of Binghamton, who set type on The Dallas Post 39 years ago and who came back for a brief visit. Mrs. Howland was 16 years old and a pupil at Dallas High School when she began to work for W.H. Capwell who had founded The Post in 1889.

Earl G. Weidner, Pioneer Avenue, Dallas has been appointed local distributor for products of J.R. Watkins Co. Weidner's line will include food products, medicinal preparations, toilet articles, soaps, cleansers and other items manufactured by the famous firm.

50 Years Ago - July 9, 1948 TRUCKS NEEDED TO PICK UP ITEMS FOR AUCTION

A dozen trucks running far behind schedule called throughout the Back Mountain Area and Wyoming Valley picking up thousands of items secured by more than 100 volunteers working for the Back Mountain Memorial Library Auction, to be held July 9 at Howard Risley's Barnyard on Lehman Ave., Dallas. As the articles poured into the barn, Howard Risley chairman of the auction committee said, "This will be the biggest auction ever held in Dallas and several times the size of last year's sale held in the Barnyard."

You could get - Porterhouse steaks, 89¢ lb.; gr. hamburger, 59¢ lb.; Supreme Bread, lg. loaf, 13¢; Ideal Coffee, 49¢ lb. can; peaches, 2 lbs., 25¢; new cabbage, 2 lbs, 7¢.

40 Years Ago - July 4, 1958 ESTHER WILLIAMS POOL TO GO OVER AUCTION BLOCK

One of the highlights of this year's Library Auction will be the sale on Saturday night, auction of a \$5,895 Esther Williams swimming pool. The pool has the high-

est value of any item offered at the auction. Among other valuable items to be sold the same night will be a chest of Reed & Barton silver with service for eight, the gift of Frank Clark.

Earl McCarty, linotype operator for the Dallas Post, broke his leg while working on his machine Monday morning. The heroic linotyper reached down and unscrewed the leg at the ankle, inspected the detached foot and reached for the telephone. "What will it cost to replace this bolt?" he inquired of the prosthetic appliance mechanic. Earl is limping around with a crutch until his wooden leg comes back from the repair shop.

30 Years Ago - July 11, 1968 NEW POST OFFICE TO BE BUILT IN LEHMAN

Postmaster General W. Marvin Watson announced that a contract has been awarded to build and lease the new post office at Lehman. The building will be owned by E.C. Wideman III, Wilkes-Barre who will lease it to the Post Office Department for five years with renewal options running through 15 years. Because the building will be privately

owned, the land will stay on local tax rolls.

Two Bloomsburg State College students from this area have been chosen to work with film star Mercedes McCambridge in "The Glass Menagerie" to be presented at the college, July 18 19 and 20. Students Bruce Hopkins and Sam Zachary have both received assistantships in theatre from the Pennsylvania State Work-Study Program.

20 Years Ago - July 6, 1978 HARVEYS LAKE PREPARES TO PREVENT ICE FREEZE

Lakefront property owners in Harveys Lake Borough have been asked to cooperate with borough and the state in an effort to prevent another ice buildup along Lake Drive next winter. Council President Robert DeRemer asks that driveways be modified so as to permit water to run off through ditch areas to culverts. He also asked residents to install pipes running underneath the highway and to clean out existing pipes to permit free flow of water.

You could get - Rump roast, \$1.99 lb.; London Broil, \$2.19 lb.; Joy Liquid, 23 oz. bot. 89¢; lettuce, 49¢ hd.; nectarines, 69¢ lb.