

EDITORIALS

## Make way for teachers who know, love their subjects

It's good to know that in Pennsylvania, teachers must pass a competency test in order to receive certification. Since the pass/fail point is determined by a sliding scale based on average scores, it's even better to know that Gov. Tom Ridge wants to raise the bar, although it would be more meaningful if the requirements were ratcheted up faster and higher than seems to be the case.

Tests for teachers have been in the headlines since the interim commissioner of education in Massachusetts proposed lowering the passing score for that state's exams after 60 percent of test takers had passed, and the state Board of Education agreed. The suggestion raised a firestorm or protest, leading the board to reverse course and opt for the higher standard.

Massachusetts is the 44th state to adopt exams for new teachers. Pennsylvania wasn't exactly in the vanguard of the movement, testing only since 1986, and no one suggests that a passing grade on the test automatically assures that someone will be a good teacher. But it's a start.

A review of the percentage of test takers who passed in Pennsylvania in 1997 is instructive. Only in English and mathematics did more than 90 percent of applicants for teaching certificates exceed the minimum score, but more than 9 out of 10 passed all the "teaching" subjects. Most of the sciences lagged behind, with only 64 percent passing in Earth and Space Science. Social Studies pulled up the rear at 63 percent.

The problem those low scores indicate could become an opportunity if people with expertise in the subject could more easily gain teacher certification. It's nice that 96 percent of would-be teachers can beat the minimum score in "Professional Knowledge," but troubling that only 68 percent who expect to teach chemistry can do the same.

If — as Lake-Lehman superintendent Dr. William Price hopes — school districts are allowed to hire people with demonstrated credentials in science, math and other subjects, they may add new spark to classrooms.

## Roadway shoulders tell tale of care, neglect

What a difference turning control over most of Pioneer Ave. to Kingston Township has made. The state handed responsibility for the busy road to the township, because the state Department of Transportation realized that a local government eager to take care of its property would do a better job than the state. Since the change, the road has received a new coat of pavement, and the township road crew is now putting the finishing touches on paved drainage ditches along the roadside.

Not that every township is so meticulous about caring for public property. A drive around the Back Mountain makes it clear that just about every other municipality could stand to improve on this score. In some places it seems a canyon parallels the road surface, waiting to swallow any motorist who inadvertently wavers from the narrow paved surface. That's not to mention the inhospitable reception bicyclists or joggers get, especially if they happen to be at the same point as two oncoming cars.

The township code book places a high priority on road maintenance, but it's often difficult to see that some officials are taking their responsibilities seriously. It's not just a matter of esthetics: foot-deep dropoffs at the edge of the pavement are dangerous, and will undoubtedly lead to a serious accident one day, at which point whatever money has been saved by neglecting the shoulders will be more than matched by the liability claim.

**Publisher's notebook**

Ron Bartizek

So, if Secret Service agents testify they saw President Clinton and Monica in a "compromising position," I guess we'll all be heartbroken. I mean, we'll have to accept the news that our President just doesn't tell the truth all the time, which of course will be a devastating revelation. I don't know about you, but I've been charting Bill's performance weekly, and this will be the first time he's been caught — er, proven — to be lying. So what if half his cabinet is under investigation, and Asian donors to the party are being rounded up like cattle, that doesn't mean Bill's guilty of anything. Do you blame the parents when a child gets in trouble? Of course not, this is America, where we're all freelancers and none of us are responsible for anything until a jury says so.

Frankly, I'm tired of the media hounding this magnificent President. Why, look at his accomplishments. Neither India nor Pakistan has landed a nuclear weapon anywhere near our shores, yet. He spent nine days in China and didn't throw up once. And he has singlehandedly turned the U.S. economy around from, in his own words, "the worst in 50 years," to "the best in 50 years." Why the turnaround started even before he took office, for crying out loud.

So, if you're a pal to that Ken Starr guy, buzz off. If it wasn't for him, they'd probably be chiseling Bill Clinton's mug on Mount Rushmore by now, or at least be planning a monument on the Washington mall. That's a monument, not a tombstone.



Old stones form an arch over a lazy stream at Hillside Farms. Photo by Charlotte Bartizek.

LETTERS

## Blood donors met the challenge, continued support needed

Editor,  
People helping people. This is what American Red Cross Blood Services of Northeastern Pennsylvania is all about.

Our lifesaving mission is to collect enough blood every day of help the patients in the hospitals we service. To do this, we depend on the generosity and goodness of the people in this area to realize the need of these patients and to donate blood.

Recently, our blood collections slowed, and our inventory of units of blood products dropped to low

levels. We had less than a half day's supply of some blood types.

We issued an appeal to our neighbors here in Northeastern Pennsylvania, including your readers. We let the public know our patients needed their help. And, once again, these wonderful people responded. Bloodmobile after bloodmobile collected their target for the day. In fact, response was so wonderful to our plea, many of these blood drives went over their target.

Our emergency situation has lessened. Our shelves are fuller.

And we here at Northeastern Pennsylvania Blood Services wish to say "thank you" to all who helped. Thank you for the donation of your time and for a gift of life.

Historically, summer can spell disaster for blood collections. People get caught up in enjoying summer, and our bloodmobiles slow down. But the need for blood knows no season.

Please help us avoid another emergency. When you see the American Red Cross bloodmobile is coming to your area, please come and give blood. Our pa-

tients — your family, friends, neighbors — are counting on you.

Anyone who is at least 17 years old, weighs at least 105 lbs., and is in general good health can give blood. You can donate blood every 56 days. Please help.

Again, thank you for your help. If you have any questions about donating blood or want to know when we will be in your area, please call toll free 1-800-432-8045.

Chris Rodgers  
Chief Executive Officer

**ONLY  
YESTERDAY**

### 60 Years Ago - July 22, 1938 ENGINEERS SURVEY COURSE AT HARVEYS LAKE

Luzerne County engineers have nearly completed the survey of the three mile course between the picnic grounds and Sandy Beach, Harveys Lake that will be the scene of the Wyoming Valley Swimming Association and WPA Recreation's open championship A.A.U. swim for men and women July 31. The course is planned so that anyone may view the races anywhere on the shore between Sandy Beach and Alderson. Trophies will be awarded.

Kingston Township School Board will meet next Monday evening to open bids for construction of the new grade school which will be built to replace the structure which burned early this year.

**Library news**

**Nancy Kozemchak**

The Back Mountain Memorial Library circulated 9,506 books during the month of June. Adult fiction 3,203, juvenile fiction 3,622, adult non-fiction 1,312, juvenile non-fiction 1,369. Reference questions totaled 355; Book Club books circulated 261; Inter-library loan transactions 24; CDs 60; audio tapes 538; and videos 401. New books added to the

### 50 Years Ago - July 23, 1948 WATER RATES WILL GO UP IN BACK MOUNTAIN

Water rates for consumers in the Back Mountain Area served by Dallas and Shavertown Water Companies will be increased approximately 25% on Oct. 1, if a new rate scheduled filed this week with Public Utility Commission at Harrisburg is approved. New rates will help to offset increased costs of operation and give the companies a fair return on their investment the owners contend. Last year the Shavertown Co. operated at a \$440.32 loss.

Howard L. Hendricks for the past five years supervising principal of Lehman Township Schools has resigned to accept a similar position in Millersburg schools. "My heart would tell me to stay at Lehman," Hendricks said "but my head tells me that for my future professional success and the well-being of my family, I must move on."

### 40 Years Ago - July 18, 1958 HUNTSVILLE ROAD GETS WIDENED AND IMPROVED

Huntsville Road, which is a

county highway, is being widened and improved between Huntsville Corners and Dallas Borough. A force of 15 men has been at work for the past week, covering dangerous ditches and in some places widening the road as much as three feet.

When Crown Imperial management announced weekly high scores Saturday night, Evelyn Roberts, took the limelight with a high for the ladies of 221. Men's score was rolled by George Shupp with a high game of 246.

### 30 Years Ago - July 25, 1968 KUNKLE FIRE DEPT. FIGHTS FIRES SET BY A FIREBUG

A firebug in Kunkle kept the local fire company running over the weekend setting a barn afire on the Sgarlat Lake Road two times and an abandoned home on Tunkhannock Highway once. Firemen were called at at 3:15 a.m., to quell a blaze which burned up a roof and part of a side of a barn belonging to Kay and Elizabeth Warden of Shavertown. The same afternoon the firemen were called again when the bug set the other end of the building ablaze. Kunkle Chief Fred Dodson reports

the identity of the firebug is not yet certain.

The third annual Jonathan R. Davis Fire Co. Horse Show coming up for the weekend of Aug. 3 and 4, has all the ear-marks of being a great show for exhibitors and spectators. Fifty one classes are listed for the two day event and entrees are pouring in from a wide area.

### 20 Years Ago - July 20, 1978 LAKE-LEHMAN SCHOOL EMPLOYEES GET RAISES

Lake-Lehman School District approved salary increments for five of the district's nine administrators with motions to raise the salaries of three others failing to pass in the absence of the affirmative vote of all the school directors. It is expected that the question of salary increments for the administrators denied increases will be brought up again at the board meeting in August.

Consumers of the Dallas and Noxen Water Companies will be paying higher rates for their water service in the near future. Both companies received approval in their rates by the Public Utility Commission.

## Summer reading program draws 178

collection, adult 176, juvenile 63, books withdrawn, adult 206, juvenile 39. New borrowers, adult 57, juvenile 84; re-registrations, adult 29, juvenile 33. Total active borrowers as of June 30, 1998 - 11,318.

As of June 1, 178 children had signed up for "Click on Adventure," the summer reading program. A total of 80 children have registered for the four summer story hours. The special program for the summer readers, "Kings and Queens" was held on June 30. The decision was made to have the adventure take them to medieval times.

Games, refreshments, and books were selected to illustrate the period. A puppet show, "The

Princess and the Pea" was presented by two middle school students, Christopher Young and Elizabeth Eby. Puppets were made by Millie Zarambo of the library staff. The children were thrilled!

The children from the Dallas Recreation Center are making bi-monthly visits to the library. Little People Day Care School are making their regular visits each week for the summer.

**New children's books at the library:** "An Extraordinary Life", the story of a Monarch butterfly by Laurence Pringle with paintings by Bob Marstall is a gripping narrative with glorious full-color paintings which captures the amazing story of one monarch butterfly's migration across a continent.

"Word Wizard" by Cathryn Falwell is an anagram adventure! With her magic spoon, Anna makes letters tumble and scramble as she and young Zack set out to discover the amazing power of words! Early one morning, Anna was eating her breakfast. She dipped her spoon into the bowl.

The letters spelled, "DAWN." "The Paper Dragon" by Marguerite W. Davol is a story of Mi Fei, a humble painter of scrolls. Between each day's sunrise and sunset, he paints scenes of the gods and their festivals, portraits of heroes and their deeds. His scrolls bring him fame, however he is content to live in his village.

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**Senator Arlen Specter (R)**  
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**State Officials**  
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22 Dallas Shopping Ctr., Memorial Hwy., Dallas PA 18612-1231  
Lemmond's district includes the Back Mountain.  
**State Rep. George Hasay (R)**  
287-7505 or 477-3752

144 North Mountain Boulevard, Mountaintop PA 18707  
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Dallas Borough, Dallas Township except for the north voting district, and Kingston Township.

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**OFFICE MANAGER**