

EDITORIALS

Perfect attendance is important for officials, too

If you think the growing cynicism Americans feel about their government is driven only by Congress and the President, think again. There are good and bad examples of public stewardship at all levels of government, just as there are in every private business. Still, because elected officials have solicited our votes based in large part on their professed commitment to one policy or another, we should expect them to at least perform basic functions relatively flawlessly.

One of those fundamental items is attending meetings of the body to which they've been elected. Most members of the Dallas and Lake-Lehman school boards meet the test, missing just one or two meetings in the course of a year. Some are without fault in their attendance. But others, by failing to place the office to which they were elected high enough on their list of priorities, may be signaling voters that they were more interested in being elected (or preventing someone else from winning) than in actually serving.

The chief offender has been Ron Payne at Lake-Lehman, who missed six school board meetings in 1998, out of the total of 24. Some of his absences were from "work sessions," which he says don't really count. Perhaps he feels the committee working on a new labor agreement with the teachers doesn't matter much, either, since he was unceremoniously dropped from that group for poor attendance.

Our schools are both the greatest source of pride and controversy in our communities, so it's hard to see how anyone could seek election to the school board and then dismiss his responsibilities so casually. Work sessions don't count? Tell that to the faithful members who take time from their families and businesses so they can come to the "regular" board meeting fully informed. Tell that to parents whose children's educational opportunities hinge on decisions made by the nine elected members of each school board.

We can't end this piece without commending the directors who did not miss a meeting in 1998: John Litz at Dallas and Ed Kern, Lois Kopcha, Moderno Rossi and Karen Whipple at Lake-Lehman. Whether or not you agree with their politics, they deserve praise for their dedication to the office to which you elected them.

Publisher's notebook



Ron Bartizek

You might assume that, as a local community paper, we don't have to deal with the same kind of issues faced by larger media outlets, but in fact we do. We also try to uphold the same high standards that large newspapers, television networks and magazines subscribe to... at least they did until recently. One of those principles, which we still hold dear, was challenged last week.

Someone wrote a letter picking apart the subject of a recent story, who shall remain unnamed. The author felt so strongly about our failure to delve into items he claimed knowledge of that he (or she) ended up with three typewritten pages of vile charges about our subject's personal and professional life, some of which we were aware of but felt were irrelevant to the story. But what a waste of time it was, since the letter writer was too cowardly to include his (her) name, address or telephone number. We are left to guess at the writer's purpose. Was it simply to spread rumors about someone they don't like? If so, this was the wrong place to send unsubstantiated scandal — perhaps they were thinking of another newspaper. Was it to warn the community of the rascal in their midst? Then why not step up and identify yourself as a credible witness. Or, was it simply to try to make himself (herself) feel like a crusader of righteousness? Sorry, to earn that title, you have to be brave, not chickenhearted.

There are very good reasons why we don't publish anonymous letters except in the most extreme cases. Foremost among them is the importance of public discussion of issues that is critical to maintaining a civil democracy. Whispered gossip, no matter if true, simply can't be taken seriously, since one must assume there's a reason the accuser won't step out of the shadows. Besides, it is very easy to dismiss the concerns of faceless critics. There's nothing that pleases crooked politicians and businesspeople more than to be confronted by cowards, who will hide and whine rather than take action.

We don't want to help either of them.

Do you agree? Disagree?

Editorials are the opinion of the management of The Dallas Post. 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 letters to: The Dallas Post, P.O. Box 366, Dallas, PA 18612, fax them to (570) 675-3650 or send them by e-mail to dalpost@aol.com. 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.



Ducks take flight from a semi-frozen Shadyside Lake in Dallas Township. Photo by Charlotte Bartizek.

LETTERS

Library volunteer asks that stolen sign be returned

An Open Letter to the Parents of a Local Vandal:

You just flunked. Your beloved child just ripped off a piece of property, which didn't belong to him/her, which couldn't possibly benefit him/her, and the act dam-

aged a community service which is manned, cared for, and nurtured by people who care: the Library.

Your kid is a vandal. It is your fault. If he/she is hiding a metal sign, with blue vinyl lettering and a red arrow, reading "TO

BOOKSHOP" under the bed, or has had the gall to hang it up in the bedroom, you had best check your credentials as a proper parent. That sign was fastened to a steel railing, with four cable ties. Your kid cut them, to get the sign off. So don't think it just fell

down, and got picked up.

We'd like to have the sign back. How you handle it with the vandal, is your affair.

I hope you do better in the future. I hope your kid does, too.

Paul M. Rodda
Shavertown, Library Volunteer

Post article told well the story of Rosetti art contest

Editor: We would like to thank the Dallas Post for the wonderful article about the story behind the Rossetti art contest. Kylie Shafferkoetter's writing and Charlotte Bartizek's photo certainly captured the "mystique" of Rossetti.

It has been a great honor for us

to sponsor the Suzanne Maria Rossetti Memorial Juried Art Show for the past 18 years. The students of this area are incredibly talented, and it is exciting to see their talents honored. Without the teachers and parents and their encouragement, the art show would not be as extensive as it is. The artists of the community who

serve as judges spend many intense hours making decisions. Numerous monetary and gift certificate awards come from private and commercial donors in the community and from as far away as Massachusetts and North Carolina to honor the young artists. Many volunteers spend hours hanging the show and College

Misericordia graciously provides exhibit space and gallery support.

Without the support of the community, this incredible show would not be possible. The Dallas Post honored all of us involved in "Rossetti" by last week's article.

Joe & Sue Hand
Heather Hand Madeira

ONLY YESTERDAY

70 Years Ago - Feb. 2, 1929
HIGHWAY TRAFFIC A CONCERN IN TRUCKSVILLE

Trucksville Community Association members have been discussing means of having traffic directed on the new Harveys Lake Highway where it intersects with important side roads. The Association heads received a report from the light committee that 14 additional lights are to be installed shortly at points in Trucksville.

William Alfred Valentine was formally inducted into the office of judge of Luzerne County courts Monday in the presence of all of the other members of the bench, and a majority of members of the bar. Judge Valentine is the 31st judge to be commissioned for Luzerne County.

60 Years Ago - Feb. 3, 1939
DALLAS BOROUGH COUNCIL PASSES TAX LEVY

A tax levy of 15 1/2 mills - 14 from the general fund and one and a half mills for the sinking fund was adopted on Wednesday by Dallas Borough Council. Clyde Lapp who directed a drive for funds

for Henry M. Laing Fire Co. recently addressed Council urging that they adopt a mill levy to finance the volunteer company. Council named a committee to confer with supervisors of Dallas Township which also is given protection by the fire department.

You could get - Legs of lamb, 25¢ lb.; gr. beef, 2 lbs., 35¢; Lima beans, 2 lbs., 15¢; yellow onions, 5 lb. bag, 15¢; Florida oranges, 20/25¢; sauerkraut, big can 5¢.

50 Years Ago - Feb. 4, 1949
DALLAS METHODIST GETS NEW CHURCH WINDOWS

Eighteen new ornamental art glass windows recently ordered by the Dallas Methodist Church are in the final stage of construction and will be ready for installation within the next two weeks. These windows which are being donated by a former member of the Dallas church, will replace all of the windows in the main body of the church.

Dallas Township Supervisors at their meeting voted to employ the Government Consulting Service endowed by the Samuel Fels Foundation and administered by the University of Pa. to make a survey of the township and prepare recommendations for enactment of a zoning ordinance. Because of the cooperative spirit of Supervisors and their solicitor Atty. Donald Coughlin, Dallas Township is apt to be one of the first townships in Northeast PA. to have a scientifically planned

and zoned township.

40 Years Ago - Jan. 30, 1959
DALLAS POST CHANGES PUBLISHING DAY

Beginning next week, this 70 year-old newspaper will be published every Thursday morning instead of Friday. We believe this change of publication date will work to the advantage of our advertisers, correspondents and readers. The change will make it possible for copies of the Post to be delivered to subscribers living along the Eastern seaboard before the weekend.

Fire believed to have originated near a refrigerator completely destroyed the trailer home of Mr. and Mrs. Howard Smith of Beaumont and left the family of three with nothing except the clothing they were wearing. Kunkle and Harveys Lake Fire Companies responded to the alarm immediately but were unable to do more than save the home of Smith's father Arthur Smith near which the trailer was parked not far from Hilbert's Hatchery.

30 Years Ago - Feb. 6, 1969
DALLAS HIGH SPORTS OFF TO GOOD START

Whether Lake Borough residents have been pleased with progress made by their officials following creation of their own government will be determined in the forthcoming primaries to be held in May. Up for election are

three council posts, office of Mayor and tax collector.

Dallas Senior High School had a good weekend in the sports department. The Mounts started off with girls defeating Coughlin 33-30, Friday on Coughlin's floor. Later in the evening, Dallas Boys Jr. Varsity cagers downed Coughlin on the Dallas Senior High boards 83-81. Following the junior varsity contest, Dallas varsity took on the Crusaders and won 75-58. On Saturday, on the Dallas mat, Dallas grapplers defeated Abington Heights in an exhibition contest 31-18.

20 Years Ago - Feb. 1, 1979
NEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TO BE AT LAKE

In a 6-3 vote, the Lake-Lehman School directors agreed to proceed with the next step in plans for a new elementary school at Harveys Lake, following announcement by architect Douglas Trumbower that the Department of Education had accepted Section D of the proposed plan. Voting against the motion were Directors Don Jones, Ed Mark and Angelo DeCesaris. The new school has been criticized by local taxpayer associations.

You could get - Rock Cornish hens 89¢ lb.; beef liver, 79¢ lb.; chicken breasts, 89¢ lb.; Morton chicken, beef or turkey pot pies, 3 8-oz. pkgs. 89¢; Jif peanut butter, 18-oz. jar 99¢; 10-lb. bag potatoes, 79¢; Miracle Whip qt. jar, \$1.09.

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State Senator Charles D. Lemmond (Republican) (717) 675-3931 e-mail: smurphy@pasen.gov 22 Dallas Shopping Ctr., Memorial Hwy., Dallas PA 18612-1231 State Representative George Hasay (Republican) 287-7505 or 542-7345 or 474-2276 or 477-3752 144 North Mountain Boulevard, Mountaintop PA 18707 Hasay's district encompasses: Harveys

Lake, Lehman Township, Jackson Township, Lake Township, Franklin Township, Ross Township, and Dallas Township's north voting district. State Representative Phyllis Mundy (Democrat) 283-9622 or 655-3375 Suite 113, 400 Third Avenue, Kingston PA 18704 Mundy's district encompasses: Dallas Borough, Dallas Township except for the north voting district, and Kingston Township.

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