

EDITORIALS

## Board, union get credit for Lake-Lehman agreement

It's been said that a labor contract that fully satisfies neither party is a pretty good one. If that's true, the new agreement between the Lake-Lehman School District and its teachers probably passes the test. While neither side is jumping for joy, they aren't screaming bloody murder either. Even the taxpayers association, which is not known for moderation, seems to accept that a much better deal was unlikely.

Certainly, teachers at Lake-Lehman — or in any other public school system in Pennsylvania — have little to complain about. Even with a one-year wage freeze, their pay is among the best in the region, and they enjoy a benefit package that is the envy of almost everyone in the private sector. On the taxpayers' side, Lake-Lehman is one of only a few districts that have been able to make a dent in the benefit program, if only a small one, by requiring that new hires be covered by an HMO program at a cost about half that of Blue Cross/Blue Shield. The new contract also cuts out the ridiculous requirement that the district pay separately for each of two spouses who work in the district, though at the cost of a \$100 per month payoff to each of the 12 teachers who will now have to be covered under their spouse's insurance.

Labor relations have historically been more civil at Lake-Lehman than in many other districts, and the latest contract negotiations fit that pattern. Students and the public were spared the sniping and threats that have marked relations in Abington Heights and Weatherly, for bad examples. While there have been complaints in the past that the teachers got sweetheart deals because the school board was afraid to confront them, this agreement seems to have a little something for everyone, but not too much for either party. If that's the case, and the excellent cooperation that has characterized the Lake-Lehman school community is preserved, it's probably as good as it was going to get.



Norm Darling Jr. freshened up plants in preparation for the spring season.

Photo by Charlotte Bartizek

## Publisher's notebook

Ron Bartizek



I don't know what all the ruckus is about over Major League Baseball wanting to sell spaces on players' uniforms to advertisers. Baseball long ago ceased to be The Great American Game, replaced by the stock market, so what could be more patriotic than trying to squeeze a few extra bucks value out of overpaid shortstops. The precedent was set long ago anyway, at the amateur level; if Little Leaguers run around with an ad for Joe's Plumbing on their backs, why shouldn't Kitty Litter sew a logo on Randy Johnson's sleeve? Even high school basketball teams have contracts with sneaker companies, assuring that no one is spared a few extra exposures to the Swoosh.

Actually, a few ad patches might be an improvement in style for some teams, which look like they've been dressed by a schizophrenic designer who can't shake an image of the 1940's ballplayer while trying to make the boys of summer look with it for the '90's. Perhaps the same person advises Payne Stewart, the golfer, on his wardrobe.

Here are my suggestions for MLB, to help them get the most dough for each space:

- On the cap, Tylenol, of course. Or maybe Rogaine, depending on the player.
- On the sleeve, Ben-Gay (is this still around?).
- On the chest, the American Heart Association.
- On the backside, Ex-Lax or Immodium — take your pick.
- On the shoes, Dr. Scholl's.

And let's not forget the potential for political ads, a bonanza waiting to happen next year. Can't you imagine the demand for Roger "The Rocket" Clemens, legendary diamond tough guy? I'll bet George W. Bush has already talked to him. As for Albert Belle, I doubt he'll be in much demand.

This may all sound facetious to you right now, but no more so than the prospect of a pitcher getting a \$100 million contract did just a few years ago. Put this column away for a while, and you may be surprised how accurate it is when you pull it out again.

### 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 letter 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. 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.

## LETTERS

### Family touched by comments about 'Mayor of Main Street'

Editor,  
The book of Proverbs says, "A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches..." Over the years you have written many articles about Paul LaBar, and all of them, especially the last two have shown that. Paul LaBar meant a

lot of things to a lot of people, as was evidenced by the eulogies at his funeral service on Thursday, and the wonderful things people had to say about Paul in the two articles in last week's paper. We want to thank *The Dallas*

Post and the community for helping us remember and honor Paul for all he meant to us as a family, and all he meant to the community as well. Even though Paul is gone, the words said about him by everyone will long be remem-

bered and treasured by all of us. We will certainly miss our friend, our family member, the Mayor of Main Street.

Millicent (Hand) LaBar  
Joe & Sue Hand  
Tim & Heather Madeira

### A Case for conservation



Alene N. Case

It is no accident that the Greek root of the words ecology and economics is the same — *Oikos*, which means house. Ecology is literally the study of our house or home. Economics is literally the management of a household or state. Not so long ago, both ecologists and economists laughed at the idea that they would ever have anything in common. However, in the 1990s it has dawned on people who are trying to study or manage planet Earth (our home) that considerable cooperation is necessary in order for humankind to keep its house in order.

Construction is one of the most materials-intensive industries in the world. But, new ways of doing things or of using recycled products in new construction are often discouraged by outdated building codes or by tax structures that encourage the use of new materials. Codes should be written to prescribe the performance criteria of the material — not the specific material — required for a certain use.

## Delivering the goods, saving the ecosystem

Denmark has recently increased its landfill taxes so much that debris reuse has risen from 12 to 82 percent in eight years! The USA reuses only about 4 percent of construction debris. The rest ends up in our landfills. It is projected that, at the present rate of discard, construction wastes will fill as much landfill space during the first 20 years of the twenty-first century as the entire nation used in the 100 years of the twentieth century. Obviously, that is an untenable situation.

Another way to reduce the amount of waste discarded is to recycle and reuse packaging of all kinds. Germany passed a law in 1991 which attempted to just that. The International Fruit Container Organization has now become the leading manufacturer and lessor of reusable shipping crates which hold 75 percent of all of the fresh produce that moves throughout Germany. Other countries have programs for reuse of shipping pallets, packing peanuts, etc.

Regional resource exchanges are another way to provide creative solutions to the waste problem. Canberra, Australia, and Matamoros, Mexico, may not seem very similar to each other. However, they could both teach the rest of us a great deal about organizing waste exchanges among industries. Using computers and the Internet, these cities match

the materials requirements of local industries with the wastes produced in those same industries. One person's waste literally becomes another person's treasure.

A gradual switch is on to a service-providing economy instead of the product-providing economy. Xerox was one of the pioneers in this new enterprise. They lease their copiers to customers instead of selling them. When the machine is broken they fix it. When it needs to be replaced, they give the customer a "new" one and take the "old" one away. But, the "new" one may contain 84 percent remanufactured (reused) parts and up to 97 percent recycled materials. This has been extremely successful for the company as well as helpful to the clients and to the environment. The manufacturer has incentives to make the product last a long time and to make it easily repaired, and at least 30,000 tons of materials stay out of landfills in one year.

Following this example, we could envision companies who would provide diaper service (that's an old idea whose time has come again), lawnmowers and other tools, batteries or electronics, etc. An industry which is concerned with the product from the beginning to the end will be more careful at all stages of the manufacture, marketing, repair, and ultimate disposal of the product.

Therefore, far from decreasing consumer satisfaction, these changes should actually increase our standards of living without further damage to fragile ecosystems. Since more people would be employed in such an economy (mining requires surprisingly few workers), it would also contribute to individual job security.

Materials in machines such as automobiles which are likely to remain personal purchases should be engineered to come apart in as logical a manner as possible. By this I mean that plastic should not be attached to metal. One kind of plastic part should remain separate from other kinds of plastic. When such a vehicle is disassembled, its parts can be recycled or reused in the most efficient ways. Engineers are working hard to create this kind of system and they should be given every opportunity to continue their work.

It should be obvious by now that economics and ecology cannot be disconnected any longer. Our house — planet Earth — cannot sustain humans unless we stop being ruled by greed and begin thinking creatively about how our activities relate to the other systems and organisms with which we share the globe. This will require new civic regulations, insightful economic analyses, keen ecological research, creative engineering, and smart consumerism.

## Library news



Nancy Kozemchak

The Back Mountain Memorial Library Book Club will meet in the community room of the library on Monday, April 19 at 12, beginning with lunch. Dessert and coffee will be provided by Mary Lou Swingle and Gene Wert.

Elin Northrup resigned as treasurer and Mary Panaway was elected to the position. Several of the members reported on books

## Donations welcome for '99 auction

they had read during the month. Vi Gommer was welcomed as a visitor to the meeting. The book club membership to date for 1999 stands at 183. Book Club members and visitors are welcome to attend the meeting.

John and Susan Oswald are joint chairs for the 53rd annual library auction to be held July 8, 9, 10 and 11, Thursday through Sunday. Donations for the auction will be accepted at the library during regular library hours. Odds and ends; books, antiques, new goods, nearly old, children's items and plants will be accepted.

**New books:** "A Thousand Suns" by Dominique Lapierre is a witness to history. This premier journalist has traveled to the four corners of the globe, witnessed

worldshaking events, and met extraordinary people from all walks of life. He shares his adventures and encounters in a book that aptly reflects a favorite proverb from India: that beyond the clouds there are always... "A Thousand Suns". He captures personal involvements with many kinds of heroes.

"Circle of Stones" by Anna Lee Waldo begins when Brenda arrives at the Gwynedd castle of Prince Owain in 12th-century Wales. She is still a young girl, full of wonder and naivete about the court life that surrounds her. It does not take long for her to negotiate the intrigues, both among warring men and bickering women, and gain the attention of the prince. Brenda is

clever and thoughtful, and not afraid to speak her mind — attributes that bring her closer to Owain.

"Bedford Square" by Anne Perry is another Victorian mystery with scandals and secret corruption that sometimes lay concealed behind the elegant facades of the haughty mansions in London. Most Londoners believed these great houses were inscrutable bastions of privilege and power. All the more shocking was the freshly dead body sprawled on the doorstep of General Brandon Balantyne — an affront to every respectable sensibility. The general denies all knowledge of the death.

The bookstore has received a supply of comic paperbacks.

## The Dallas Post

Published Weekly By Bartsen Media, Inc.  
P.O. Box 366, Dallas PA 18612  
717-675-5211

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