

**EDITORIALS**

**Kudos all around for improvement in lake water**

The good news is that the water in Harveys Lake appears to be cleaner than it has been in past years. Even better, much of the credit for the improvement can be given to concerned citizens who have heeded calls to refrain from feeding ducks and geese, and others who have stopped using phosphorous based fertilizers. As a result, the waterfowl population over the winter declined dramatically, and the level of nutrients in lake water seems to be lower.

Harveys Lake, like other large bodies of water with limited outflow, is a haven for nutrients that build up over the years, with the result that large amounts of algae "bloom," spoiling not only bathers' summer weekends, but the habitat for fish and other aquatic creatures. While it is too soon to declare victory over excess nutrients, the trend is in the right direction. The borough council deserves credit for pointing the lake that way with an ordinance that prohibits the use of traditional lawn fertilizers that add as much green to the water as they do to grass. Home owners who follow the rule even though enforcement is problematic also get a pat on the back.

Then there are the ducks and geese, which take the path of least resistance when it comes to food, and will congregate wherever people throw handouts. Many of us have enjoyed taking a few slices of stale bread out to the lake and watching the birds scramble for crumbs; unless they were so full from other people's food they didn't care. But everything that goes into a duck must come out, and a lot of it ends up in areas of the shoreline where the birds gather, leading to unacceptable levels of bacteria. That's what happened before last year's Wilkes-Barre Triathlon, when bacteria levels just offshore at Sandy Beach forced cancellation of the swim portion of the race. Aside from the embarrassment of sending world-class athletes home with a bad impression of the area, the bacteria meant unhealthy conditions for people who like to swim in that area of the lake.

We're happy to report that things look better this year, but want to pass on a cautionary note from members of the Environmental Advisory Committee; the improvements will last only as long as people continue to follow the sensible rules that have brought water quality this far. If we continue on that path, today's good news will only get better in the years ahead.

**Publisher's notebook**

Ron Bartizek



I've had the opportunity in recent weeks to be present for several renditions of our national anthem, *The Star Spangled Banner*. Hearing the song so often, I'm ready to join the chorus of those who say it's time for a change in our national song.

The SSB has too many shortcomings to remain the tune by which we signify our Americanness. For one thing, it's nearly impossible for mere mortals to sing, with a death-defying range of notes that eludes even some performers. Then there's the whole message of battle and destruction, with rockets' red glare, bombs bursting in air and all that. If a new arrival from Mars tried to judge earth's nations by their songs, what would he, she or it make of ours? Perhaps that we are a nation obsessed with violence, battles, guns and war. Hey, that may not be too far from the truth, but it's still not a very good image for the place where democracy takes precedence over brute force, at least on our home ground.

Listen to other anthems, and you hear about beautiful mountains, shimmering waves, common values — that sort of thing — not battles that took place two centuries in the past. The closest popular song we have to that is *America the Beautiful*, which is a pretty nice song, easier to sing and more focused on humane values. Heck, I'd rather sing *This Land is Your Land* before a ball game than the SSB; it's a lot more fun and positive. Actually, that is my personal favorite.

There have been a few attempts to change our anthem, but none of them got very far. I think it would be a good exercise for the nation if we had a contest to write a new anthem, and then could choose among the top three or four, including the SSB and *America the Beautiful*, in a referendum. Maybe the whole process would give people an excuse to sit down and think about what kind of nation we are and want to be, something I don't think enough of us have been doing lately.

**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.

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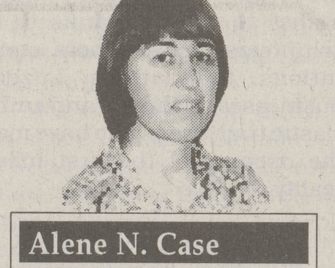
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Evening light gave this tree a ghostly glow. Photo by Charlotte Bartizek.

**A Case for conservation**



Alene N. Case

Spring is truly my favorite time of year. Our rather oddly shaped suburban yard is transformed into a colorful wonderland. At this moment, there are blooms of all shapes and sizes. The snow-white Star of Bethlehem surrounds the base of taller stalks of columbine - blue, pink, red, etc. The wild cherry and dogwood are still showing their white while the red and purple rhododendrons burst into bloom.

At the pool, the yellow flag and wild blue flag irises stand sentinel as a variety of green ferns mature. One large flame azalea provides contrast with its bright orange blossoms.

My son, recently returned from Oregon, has a wondrous variety of vegetables and herbs growing in our gardens. We are already enjoying green onions, asparagus, spinach, lettuce, and tender kale thinnings. The fruit trees have set as many fruits as their dwarf limbs will bear. No late frosts this year to hurt the peach or apple.

So, as my thoughts and activities flit from one thing to another around our yard, let me share with you some snippets of information that should be either useful or interesting to you.

**MULCH** - One of the real perks of living in a residential area like the Back Mountain is that our local governments help us with many of the chores that people in rural areas generally have to do

**Snippets from spring**

themselves. One of those things is disposal of our Christmas trees and other yard trimmings. But, it doesn't stop there. If you go to the township or borough maintenance shed, you will likely find chips from those selfsame trees and branches being given away as mulch. We spread a generous layer on a path under the trees near our house. It covers an area where nothing seems to grow, providing erosion control and a marvelous "cedar" odor.

**FLASHES OF BLUE OR SILVER** - Birds make spring as exciting as blossoms do. I have especially savored the glimpses of bright blue as bluebirds fly across my path. The last time this happened was after the last rain-delay at the qualifying round of the U.S. Open at the Huntsville Golf Club. We had retreated to an old barn where swallows of many kinds were flying in and out during the storm. Some of those birds were also blue. However, when the sun returned and the "all clear" sounded, my husband and I decided to walk on ahead of the group we had been following.

As we approached a walled-in spring near the 13th hole, we saw a bluebird sitting on a tall plant. It took flight, and the blue was so bright that we both gasped. Who needs a rainbow?

Then, there were the flashes of minnows just before they got eaten by a very efficient green-backed heron. We watched for 15 minutes in the late afternoon on Mother's Day as this small heron never missed. The minnows didn't even seem to know they were in danger. The heron stood so still beside the pool near the Susquehanna River and struck so quickly that the fish had no chance to escape. Meanwhile, the minnows were

doing some hunting of their own: they would jump out of the water in unison to try to catch insects. They looked like miniature starburst fireworks. We have talked with several people who also enjoy the out-of-doors and no one else seems to have witnessed such coordinated feeding activity.

**REWARDS FOR HARD WORK** - The National Arbor Day Foundation gives annual awards to individuals and groups who have made important contributions to conservation and tree planting activities. This year they honored 21 projects in 14 states (PA was not among them). Mayor Richard Daley of Chicago won the prestigious J. Sterling Morton Award for leading the effort to restore his city's urban forest and for providing a model for others to follow.

Several groups won awards for action after disasters: The Wilshire Center Streetscape Project was recognized for transforming an area of Los Angeles that was destroyed by the 1992 riots. The Omaha World-Herald Branching Out Program was honored for its leadership in rapid replacement of trees destroyed in the 1997 snow and ice storm and promoting similar work in the Northeast and other areas that suffered similar damage. Health Communications, Inc. of Deerfield Beach, Florida, was instrumental in the effort to replant the forests of that state after the severe fires in the summer of 1998.

In addition, awards were given to schools, film-makers, musicians, forest product companies, Parks and Recreation Departments of cities or states, civic organizations, and individuals. The complete list can be viewed at the Foundation's website: <http://www.arborday.org/>. Happy spring to all of us.

**ONLY YESTERDAY**



70 Years Ago - June 1, 1929

**ROTARY HONORS TOP RANKING DALLAS STUDENT**

Dallas Borough schools will close for the year with a special program Tuesday evening in the high school auditorium. One of the features of the evening will be the presentation of the Rotary Cup to the highest ranking student in the high school. L.A. McHenry will make the presentation.

Now playing at Himmler Theatre, "The Wind" with Lillian Gish.

60 Years Ago - June 2, 1939

**GRADS CELEBRATE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF DALLAS**

Commencement exercises for Dallas Borough High School graduating class of 21 students last night at the high school auditorium commemorated the 60th anniversary of the founding of Dallas. All speaking was done by the members of the class. J. George Ayre, President of the school board awarded the diplomas.

Construction on 3.42 miles of concrete road between Evans Falls and Lutes Corners in Monroe Township will start within a week according to officials of Joseph Banks Construction Co. of Wilkes-Barre, who were awarded the contract last Friday with a low bid of \$213,082.

50 Years Ago - June 3, 1949

**METHODIST CHURCH PLANS WEEK-LONG CELEBRATION**

The 60th anniversary of the dedication of Dallas Methodist Church will be observed with a week of special activities from June 5 - 12. The Rev. Roswell W. Lyon, superintendent of the Wilkes-Barre District of the Methodist Church will be guest preacher at the morning worship service this Sunday.

The Dallas Borough Honor Roll presented a pleasing appearance on Memorial Day. The new flag on the staff was purchased by Dallas Borough Council. Former Burgess H.A. Smith, who has been actively interested in the Honor Roll since its inception provided the paint and labor to refinish the memorial.

40 Years Ago - May 28, 1959

**SCALE MODEL OF NEW HIGH SCHOOL WILL BE DISPLAYED**

The scale model of the new Dallas School District high school will be on display in central Dallas as soon as a transparent plastic protection can be devised for it. A suggested location for its showing is the Dallas Branch, Miners National Bank.

Henry Holak, Wilkes-Barre, has purchased Earl's Drug Store; Trucksville from Earl Henwood and will henceforth operate the business under the firm name of Trucksville Pharmacy. Mr. and Mrs. Henwood who have successfully operated the business since May 1946 until its purchase last week will retire after 59 years of association with the drug business.

30 Years Ago - June 5, 1969

**MEETING HELD TO DISCUSS KT WATER QUALITY**

Concern of Kingston Township Water Commission prompted action at a special meeting Monday evening. Majority of Commission members present approved the sending of a letter to the Water Company with a copy to PUC stating that the unqualified commitment made as to the June 1 repairs had not been completed, that pipes were not operable, water service was curtailed, pumps are not here installed and a large portion of the consumers are without water.

You could get - Chicken breast quarters, 33¢ lb.; veal cutlets, \$1.59 lb.; Scott Towels, 3 lg. rolls, 69¢; whole watermelons \$1.09; carrots, 2-1 lb. bags 25¢.

20 Years Ago - May 31, 1979

**PROPOSED BUDGET WOULD INCREASE TAXES 6 MILLS**

A tentative budget of \$6,529,117 for the 1979/80 school year was proposed by Dallas School Board last Thursday. The total budget is increased by \$578,505 over the 1978/79 budget. Real Estate taxes were proposed at 96 mills, and additional six mills over last year's 90 mills; \$10 per capita tax and 1% earned income tax.

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