

EDITORIALS

Is Lake-Lehman penny wise or pound foolish?

As they debated a budget for the coming year, members of the Lake-Lehman school board were also trying to decide if it's worth a savings of \$500 to replace Peter Savage, the board's long-time solicitor. That's the amount of money Moderno Rossi, the board president, suggested could be saved if a new solicitor came on board, and he seems to think that's a big enough figure to make the switch worthwhile.

Only the elected members of the board can decide whether this is a penny wise move or vice versa. We hope they take more than a few hundred dollars into account when making the call. Some board members think kicking Savage out wouldn't save a nickel, since he retains an "institutional memory" of issues in the district, and the time a new solicitor would spend getting up to speed would more than eat up the \$500 savings.

In the end, it would seem quite pound foolish to choose a solicitor based on the low bidder, since there are so many variables, even in the charges he or she would bill over the course of the first year.

Rather than react each year to the particular preferences or annoyances of board members, Lake-Lehman might consider a policy of regularly reviewing all contracts. Such a policy, say every five years, could assure that the school district is getting its money's worth from all vendors, not just the ones that happen to catch someone's eye, or ire.

You, too, can help the 53rd annual library auction

Ed Crafts has the spirit. The 14-year Shavertown resident and craftsman has built a beautiful wooden workbench that he will donate to this year's Back Mountain Memorial Library Auction. While he doesn't know exactly how much time he spent on the piece, it's obvious to anyone looking at the finished product that more than time went into it — it's truly a labor of love.

If it is better to give than to receive, Ed should feel pretty good the second week in July, when his creation will be sold over the block, with every nickel of the bid going to support the library, the Back Mountain's most universal institution.

Ed is not alone, of course, in his generosity. Each year, individuals and businesses donate items that help raise about a quarter of the library's operating budget when they are sold at the auction. If you aren't among them, look around the garage or basement, or in the company storeroom; you'll probably find new or good used items that someone else could make better use of than you do, with the library as the ultimate beneficiary of your largesse.

To donate, just call the library at 675-1182, and someone will help you out. They'll even send someone to pick up your items, if that will help close the deal. Then, come out to the auction, and bask in the glow of philanthropy, while also having a good time.

Publisher's notebook

Ron Bartizek



Along with the hundreds of other useless pieces of mail we receive each week came a press release from SOPAKCO Packaging of Mullins, South Carolina. This company may not be a household name yet, but who knows, with their product line they could become as important as IBM or GM in the next few months.

The company, you see, makes MRE's, those inviting Meals, Ready-to-Eat so loved by members of the military. In the release, which was written as blandly as the meals taste except for the headline — SOPAKCO Reports Civilian MRE Meal Case Sales are Up 500-800% Due to Y2K Buying — we learn that MRE's are not dehydrated or freeze dried, so may be eaten right out of the pouch. The flyer also says that while MRE's may be eaten cold - yuck! - most people prefer to warm their food when possible. Warming directions follow, including a warning not to apply a flame directly to the plastic pouch. I guess doing so would spoil the flavor.

For those of you wondering how to warm food when the power is out, which some folks think will be the case at midnight of the new year, they offer these handy hints:

"Lay the pouch in direct sunlight, allowing it to warm." This may work somewhere else, but I doubt you'll find the method satisfactory in January Pennsylvania.

"The unopened pouch may be placed inside your shirt, allowing your body temperature to help warm the food inside." Sharing this duty sounds like fun.

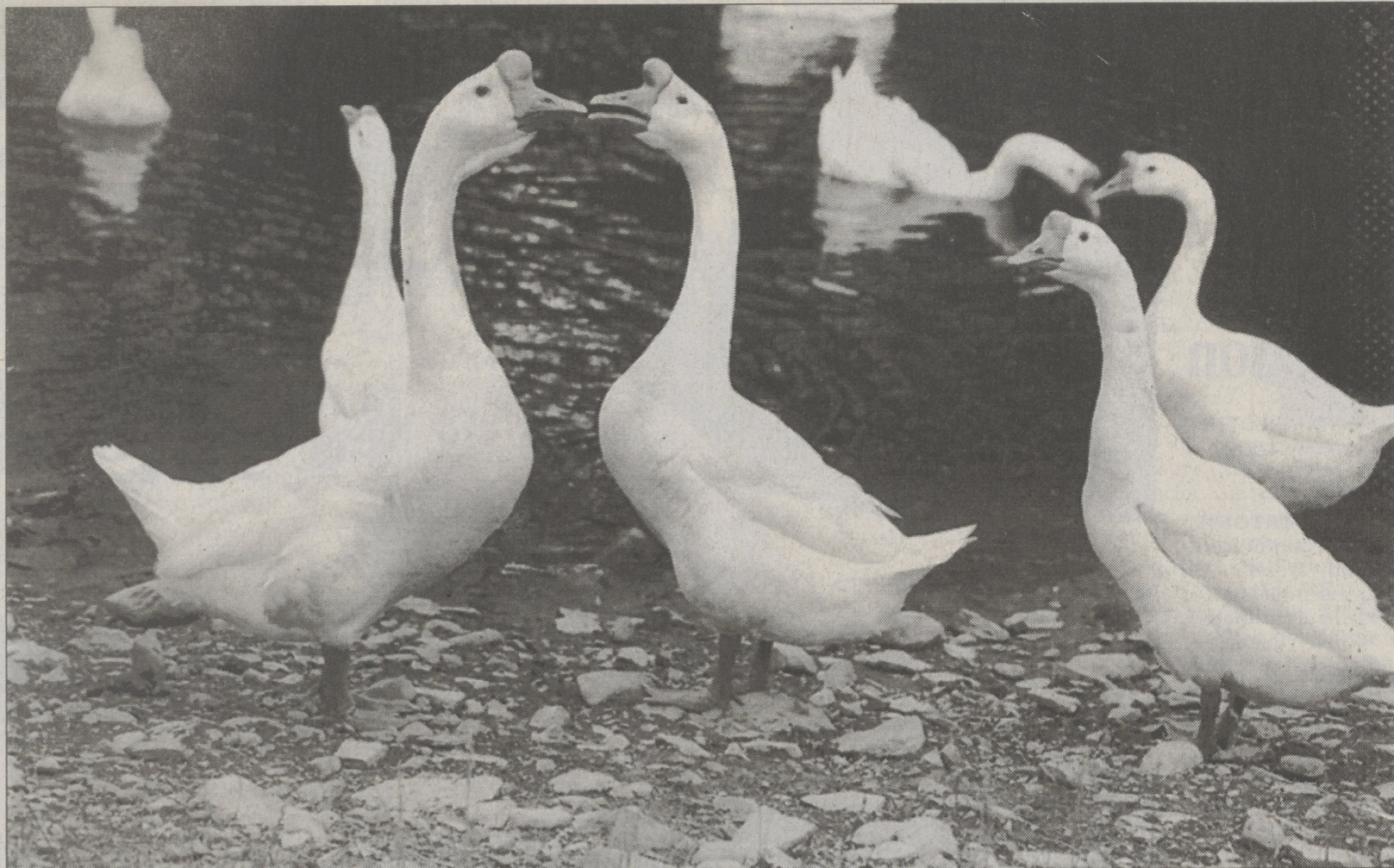
And just in case you think the power will never come on, the banks will close, the government will come to take your kids and you'll never see a Seinfeld rerun again, SOPAKCO offers this encouraging note: MRE's retain "acceptable taste" for seven to 10 years if stored at 70° to 75°.

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"You silly goose, they don't bring out the sand chairs until July." Photo by Charlotte Bartizek.

The economic viewpoint



Howard Grossman

New initiatives have been announced by President Clinton which involve proposals for the fiscal year 2000 budget beginning October 1, 1999. These initiatives are labeled as a livability agenda and include a wide range of activities to promote community development, economic growth, recreation and open space preservation, and other types of programs to encourage livability across the nation.

Some of these programs would enhance the American Heritage River initiative with the Upper Susquehanna Lackawanna Watershed being the only such designation in Northeastern Pennsylvania. Others would use existing programs which had been available for many years, or would supplement these programs with new ways to encourage federal assistance for the betterment of communities.

To guarantee that the livability agenda lives up to its name, Con-

Federal, state programs for 'livability'

gress needs to appropriate the funds suggested in this agenda and to allocate resources which would make large, small, urban and rural communities use these financial tools for community betterment.

An appropriate partnering mechanism should be instituted to blend the federal program with state initiatives such as the Growing Greener Agenda built into Pennsylvania Governor Tom Ridge's budget for fiscal year 2000. In so doing a maximum amount of partner funding would be available for the close to one million residents of Northeastern Pennsylvania.

The goals intended by the livability agenda include:

- Preserve green spaces that promote clean air and clear water, sustain wildlife, and provide families with places to walk, play and relax.
- Ease traffic congestion by improving road planning, strengthening existing transportation systems, and expanding use of alternative transportation.
- Restore a sense of community by fostering citizen and private sector involvement in local planning, including the placement of schools and other public facilities.
- Promote collaboration among

neighboring communities - cities, suburbs, or rural areas - to develop growth strategies and to address common issues like crime.

• Enhance economic competitiveness by nurturing a high quality of life that attracts well-trained workers and cutting-edge industries.

Some of the initiatives include:

- Regional Connections initiative is designed to promote regional "smart growth" strategies. The Department of Housing and Urban Development will provide \$50 million as matching funds for local partnerships to design and pursue smarter growth strategies across jurisdictional lines. Strategies will include compact development incentives, coordinated reinvestment in existing infrastructure, and ways to manage and reinforce the region's overall development strategy.
- Community center schools including a new \$10 million grant program to encourage school districts to involve the community in planning and designing new schools.
- Community-federal information partnership, which includes a new \$40 million program to provide communities with grants for easy-to-use information tools to help develop strategies for future growth.

• Regional crime data sharing including a \$50 million program to expand programs to help communities share information to improve public safety.

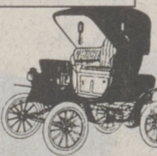
• The Better America Bonds Program would help communities reconnect with their land and water, preserve green space for future generations, and provide attractive settings for economic development. A new financing tool generating \$9.5 billion in bond authority for investments by state, local and tribal governments would be initiated. The President's budget will propose tax credits totaling more than \$700 million over five years.

• The proposed U.S. Department of Transportation Budget for fiscal year 2000 will include a record \$6.1 billion for public transit and \$2.2 billion—a total 16% increase over fiscal year 1999.

While all these initiatives may not be undertaken, they set a tone for the new millennium. Any one desiring additional information can contact the Economic Development Council of Northeastern Pennsylvania at 1151 Oak Street, Pittston, PA 18640-3795.

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

ONLY YESTERDAY



70 Years Ago - June 22, 1929 BMT WATER CO. EXPANDING

Following negotiations covering several months, Henry Sipple, secretary/treasurer of Dallas-Shavertown water companies, announced yesterday afternoon the purchase of two companies by Inland Utilities Inc. of Delaware. Other companies in this territory purchased by Inland Utilities at the same time were those at Tunkhannock and Mahanoy City. Sipple's announcement somewhat as a surprise since it was generally believed that the Federal Water Service Co. which supplies Wyoming Valley would purchase the holdings of the local water companies.

60 Years Ago - June 23, 1939 GOVERNOR JONES' HOME SUFFERS FIRE DAMAGE

The roof of Governor Arthur H. Jones' summer cottage at Point

Breeze, Harveys Lake was damaged to the extent of \$50 Monday afternoon as the result of a fire caused by an overheated chimney and the Harveys Lake Fire Co. Engine was damaged to the extent of \$25 when it rammed into the rear of a truck and partially caved in the radiator while responding to the alarm.

You could get - Legs lamb, 25¢ lb.; pork butts, 19¢ ea.; new #1 potatoes, 15 lbs full peck, 31¢; Corn Kix cereal, 2 pkgs., 23¢; iceberg lettuce, 2 hds., 15¢; cabbage, 3¢ lb.; cantaloupes, 2/25¢; A & P raisin bread, 2 lvs., 15¢.

50 Years Ago - June 24, 1949 BMT LUMBER & COAL OPENS MODERN STORE

Thursday, June 30 makes the opening of the new store building of the rapidly expanding Back Mountain Lumber and Coal Co., Shavertown, one of the most modern establishments ever projected for the area. Huge store building, in conjunction with the mill working shop, the tremendous storage shed for lumber and the coal pockets, offer for the residents of the Back Mountain region a one-stop service fully equipped to satisfy every hardware need.

Now playing at Himmler Theatre, "So Dear to My Heart", a

Walt Disney feature in technicolor starring Bobby Driscoll.

40 Years Ago - June 18, 1959 STREET GRADING IN 'HEIGHTS' SECTION

Borough Street Dept. employees using a grader rented from Luzerne County Road and Bridge Dept. were busy last week clearing ditches along Elizabeth, Park, Jackson and Joseph streets on the Heights. Although some property owners objected because they had allowed their lawns to grow out to the blacktop, Street Commissioner Alvin Shaffer found, in a check on Saturday after the heavy rain that runoff was 90% improved.

Just two weeks ago, the initial audit was completed and acceptance of The Dallas Post, as a member of ABC, is now official. This membership symbolized by the ABC seal issues advertisers and readers that the circulation claimed by The Dallas Post is authenticated.

30 Years Ago - June 26, 1969 SEWER PROJECT DELAYED

The Back Mountain Municipal Authority thwarted by public resistance to its avowed task of establishing a sewer system in

the Back Mountain community and was spurned by would be investors because of its name, has run headlong into still another wall. A ceiling imposed by the State legislature in the amount any municipality can pay on bonds it sells has been cited as the cause of the delay in the \$3.5 million sewer project by R. Spencer Martin, Authority chairman. Ceiling set at 6% discourages investors from purchasing bonds because they can and do receive as high as 8 1/2% interest for their money on similar projects in other states.

20 Years Ago - June 21, 1979 SUBSIDIZED HOUSING SOON TO BE AVAILABLE IN DALLAS

Dallas Township is going to be the site of a subsidized housing development. At the Planning Commission meeting, Joseph Schroeder contractor and owner of Brookfield Apts. requested a letter stating that there is a need for rental housing in Dallas Township. The letter is to be forwarded to the FHA who will help finance the project. Proposed site is north of the present Brookfield complex on Rte. 309. Units will rent for \$225 and \$275 with subsidized allotments. Schroeder hopes to rent to middle income young people and senior citizens.

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