

EDITORIALS

Letters matter less than what's behind them

It may sound like alphabet soup, but discussions about parent-teacher groups at Dallas Elementary School may have important repercussions for students, which could be negative or positive, depending on how the adults go about their business. Some parents want to organize a Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) because they feel the present Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) and Parents Advisory Council (PAC) haven't adequately addressed some issues, such as school security and playground safety.

Whether or not you believe those concerns are legitimate, it's important that cooperation be the most-common theme among members of organizations representing students. This doesn't mean groups or individuals can't have differing priorities; varied individual talents and interests are a positive force in any effective organization. But when all is said and done, everyone must be working for the good of the students and the school community.

We hope and trust the movement to start a PTA will have positive effects, and the end result will be even stronger advocacy for the Dallas school community and its purpose, preparing young people to grasp the future with enthusiasm and confidence. That goal supersedes any letters that follow a parent's name.

Again, triathlon's a showcase

When dozens of world-class triathletes arrive in the Back Mountain this week, they'll find a small army of volunteers eager to make them feel at home so they can perform their best in Sunday's race. Actually, many of the racers already have firm connections with local families, since this race is one of the most enjoyable in a sometimes grueling season.

Yes, they'll be able to race through beautiful scenery, and some will win prize money and earn points toward a hoped-for 2000 Olympics berth, but they'll also be surrounded by people who appreciate the hard work that goes into training, and who are experienced — if unpaid — at putting on a first-class event.

There's more to this race than the pros, and the many local competitors deserve equal plaudits for their efforts, which stem from the desire to perform their best, with or without the chance of taking home prizes. Congratulations in advance to all the competitors and organizers for making the Wilkes-Barre Triathlon a premier showcase for athletic performance and volunteer support.



Gone fishin' during Boy Scout camp at Moon Lake last week. Photo by Charlotte Bartizek.

LETTERS

The good far outweighed the bad at Woodstock '99

Editor,
I didn't go to the original Woodstock. I was only 14 at the time and a little too young to just pick up and leave. So, this past Easter my brother-in-law suggested we go to Woodstock '99. I looked at my boys, Cory and Adam, and they said, "Sure." Next I looked at my wife, and she said, "I don't care." So last Thursday we loaded up the Nova and headed north to Rome, New York.

I have to admit I felt a little silly doing this, but I did recognize some of the bands on the lineup, Los Lobos, Metallica and a few others. I've always been a perpetual kid, and hoped I wouldn't stand out. My fears were misplaced.

What we found was 250,000 people, all playing nice together. Most of them were young, but a good many representatives of the gray hair generation (mine in-

cluded) were there.

It was well-run, and well-thought-out. The police and security were very good, and the residents of Rome were welcoming. Yes, the food was expensive and the line for the ATM was a little long, but once everyone got more relaxed a spirit of togetherness prevailed.

Oh, nudity and sex were going on, and riots and looting took place at the end of the program,

but I think some important things need to be said. Gray hairs and youth got along great; it was well-run; the riots and problems were started by a few people, maybe 100 out of 250,000. You do the math.

I feel parents could be proud of the youth of today. I got to spend some time with a whole bunch, and I think the future will be in good hands.

Michael Pajka
Shavertown

Publisher's notebook

Ron Bartizek



I know it was tasteless, but I couldn't help it. When a stock salesperson called last week to make his pitch, I offered to make a deal. "If you won't call me any more," I said, "I won't come to your office with a gun." You can imagine the reception that remark got. But, like so many of these pitchmen, he persisted with a standard reply when I told him I don't deal in investments over the phone. "Oh, so your broker drives out to your office when he wants to talk," he asked facetiously. Having been taught to be reasonably polite with people on the telephone, I've found that resistance beyond that point usually brings sarcastic — sometimes abusive — comments about how foolish I am for not buying his (they're always men, you know) snake oil.

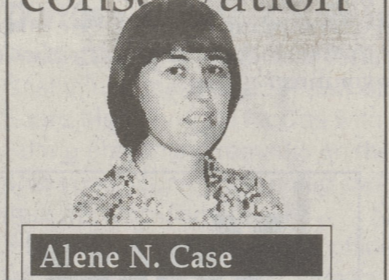
A former employee had a different tactic, which was amusing but probably no more effective. He would ask callers for their home telephone numbers, explaining that he was too busy to talk at the moment, but would call them back later in the evening.

As many of you know, people call for a subscription to this and other newspapers, and I don't relish their calls any more than you do. But we have to make a business decision about these kinds of things, and telemarketing still works quite well, so we suffer the inevitable complaints, usually about rudeness or multiple calls. Rudeness is a too-common human trait, but the firm we contract with is supposed to have a sophisticated computer system that schedules calls, so you shouldn't have to say "no" more than once. Saying "yes" works even better.

We want to hear about it if you have complaints about callers for the Post, so improper conduct can be corrected. Please call us at 675-5211 if you feel you've been treated poorly. We will need to have your phone number to forward to the telemarketing company, since they track everything that way.

Now, if you really want to avoid calls for a subscription to the Post, sign up on your own, and get your friends and neighbors on board, too. Then we'll have no need to call you, except to say thanks!

A Case for conservation



Alene N. Case

If there is one thing that the study of ecology can teach a person, it is that everything is connected. The famous quote from John Donne "No man is an island, entire of itself..." could just as well have been written by E. O. Wilson referring to ants or by Jane Goodall referring to large primates in Africa. Continuity among people, between people and the natural world, and among the various components of that natural world is to be respected.

This insight came to me as I floated down the Ohio River on a luncheon cruise in Pittsburgh last week. There is nothing like the flow of a large river to give one the sense of timelessness. The Ohio had plenty of water in it in spite of the drought. It carried away effluent from factory and city and brought fresh water to farms and residents. It floated barges full of human enterprise. It also floated ducks. People fished along its

Respect for continuity of existence

shores. The river captains know that the river changes every day - sometimes dramatically - and yet it continues to flow to the Mississippi and thence to the Gulf of Mexico. On our time scale, it is a constant.

Western Pennsylvania has also seen the emergence this year of the seventeen-year cicada. This remarkable insect is only seen above ground for a few weeks every 17 years. It mates during this time and the female lays her eggs in the twigs of trees, causing the ends of the branches to die and fall off. The eggs hatch and the larvae enter the soil where they will live for another seventeen years. These cyclical stories are common in nature. We need to know them so that we do not cut down the trees (mostly deciduous ones like oaks and maples) on which the cicadas depend. We also need to know these stories so that we do not pave over or contaminate the soil in which these insects spend most of their lives. Just because we do not see them does not mean that they are not there or that their lives are not important to us.

The Carnegie Museum of Natural History was the main reason for our trip to Pittsburgh, and it did not disappoint us. What a

wonderful place to "get one's bearings," so to speak, within the larger creation! One of the displays showed the evolution of the modern horse. It is always amazing to me that a big Clydesdale could be descended from the tiny *Eohippus*, or dawn horse, that only stood 10-20 inches high. Many animals have become smaller over the millennia but not the horse. It is good that we did not need work horses or thoroughbreds 65 million years ago. Come to think of it, we weren't even around then.

Many people have a real need to find out who their ancestors were in order to feel "connected." But, it has always seemed to me that the family tree - no matter how complete - is only a small part of the story. All of the people within that family lineage were certainly affected by other people with whom they lived and worked. All of them were affected by natural events such as floods, droughts, tornadoes, tides, fires, pest invasions, and beautiful sunsets. Names on a sheet of paper cannot possibly tell the story of a person's origins.

This morning I connected with my origins as I felt my arms getting deliciously wet while picking blueberries. The shower of yesterday afternoon became a part of

me. As the sun dried the bushes, I was serenaded by a male cardinal sitting in the top of our neighbor's blue spruce tree. Again, the connections and continuity of life entered my soul.

Ecology is best learned by experience and thought - not from a textbook. Sleeping in a tent where one can listen to the calls of owls or loons, picking fresh basil from a pot on your windowsill for this evening's spaghetti sauce, or even marveling at the wonders of nature in a favorite magazine are valid ways to connect with our roots.

Learning as much as possible about the place in which we live is essential to our well-being. If we willfully cut down trees that were obviously planted by a former resident who had a good reason to put them there, then we have violated that connection to our predecessors and to the land. We need to value those relationships as much as the ones with immediate family and friends. It is our heritage.

Editor's Note: Professional and personal demands on her time will mean this will be the last "A Case for Conservation" column, at least for the time being.

The Post has school-year subscriptions

The Dallas Post offers special subscriptions for students going away to school or college. Subscriptions run from September through May, and cost \$15 in Pennsylvania, New York or New Jersey, and \$17 in all other states. To order, call 675-5211.



70 Years Ago - Aug. 3, 1929 BACK MOUNTAIN RESIDENT WITNESSES BUS ACCIDENT

Mrs. Henry Disque spent the weekend with her husband in Buffalo. She made both her trip to Buffalo and return on one of Frank Martz busses and on her return witnessed the accident in which the Great Lakes line plunged over the mountainside near Wellsboro injuring 18 persons. The driver was able to run against a tree large enough to hold the bus, so saving the lives of many of his passengers.

60 Years Ago - Aug. 4, 1939 MACHELL AVENUE PROJECT RECEIVES APPROVAL

A decision to complete the Machell Avenue WPA Project was

reached by Dallas councilmen at a meeting in the Burgess' office Wednesday evening. The project which calls for the construction of curbs, gutters and sidewalks will begin within 10 days and run for three months. \$3,000 remains of the appropriation.

The assets of Dutch Mountain Clay Products Co. Inc., a brick-manufacturing plant at Lopez, financed by a group of Dallas men, will be exposed for public sale at Lopez on Aug. 1 and 2. The sale has been ordered by the Court of Common Pleas of Luzerne County in the matter of W.H. Winter vs. Dutch Mountain Clay Products Co. according to Edmund P. Whitby, receiver for the company.

50 Years Ago - Aug. 3, 1949 DROUGHT TAKING ITS TOLL

Two of the measures which Dallas/Shavertown Water Co. had hoped might relieve temporarily the water shortage in Shavertown have made little change in the supply to that drought ridden area. The first of these, extension of the mains from the Still well to mains in Shavertown brought no relief. The second extension of the depth of the Lehigh well by

more than 40 feet produced no increased flow of water. A third measure has not been tried "blowing" three other wells with dynamite. Leslie Warhola, plant manager said he has been unable to obtain competent help to blow the wells, but has made contact with an expert who will come here shortly to do the work. Consumers expressed doubt that there will be any relief until a new well is drilled.

40 Years Ago - Aug. 3, 1959 EXPLOSION IGNITES FIRE

A frame summer cottage at Alderson burst into a mass of flames Tuesday morning when a bottle gas explosion in the kitchen started a fire that raged for almost three hours. A kettle according to reports had boiled over in the gas stove, extinguishing the flame and permitting the bottled gas to escape, later ignited by the pilot light. Loss is estimated at \$5,000.

You could get - Pork loins, center cut 79¢ lb.; rib roast, 65¢ lb.; Ideal Coffee, 2 lb. can, \$1.23; sharp cheese, 57¢ lb.; white grapes, 2 lbs., 29¢; Calif. lemons, doz., 29¢.

30 Years Ago - Aug. 7, 1969 BUILDING SUPPLY STORE BURGLARIZED AGAIN

Plagued by a rash of store burglaries in recent years, Whitesell Brothers Bldg. Supplies, Dallas, again became the target for a yegg attack July 15. An estimated \$1,100 in electrical appliances were taken. Burglars left with their assortment of loot, including two televisions, 19 radios, five clocks; and other small appliances through the front door. The break-in was the sixth since the store opened in 1952. Each burglary has cost the business about \$1,000 store officials said.

20 Years Ago - Aug. 2, 1979 RATE HIKE STILL BEING REVIEWED BY PUC

Shavertown Taxpayers Association this week disputed a statement from the Shavertown Water Company general manager, L.W. Venable that the company's water rate increase was "approved" for a lesser amount than previously sought. The association was advised that the PUC had not yet acted on the lesser increase, of about \$19,000 per year.

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