

EDITORIALS

Going a little overboard to protect children

Egads, they want to change Halloween! At least that's the idea being floated in a couple of Back Mountain towns. The reasoning behind the proposal that trick-or-treating be to the afternoon of the last Saturday before Halloween is quite logical, even laudatory. Little kids, the thinking goes, shouldn't be out in the dark of night, traipsing around streets without sidewalks in dark costumes - it's just too dangerous. There's no sense arguing that point; it certainly is more risky to wander the neighborhood at night than in daylight. But this may be a case in which reasonableness should take a back seat to tradition . . . and to fun.

Let's face it, in modern America, kids get precious few opportunities to feel like they're taking risks because they simply don't have time. After school there's homework, then practice for one sport or another, then maybe dance or music lessons. And heaven forbid they should walk a few blocks to a friend's house - there might be a child molester lurking in every bush just waiting for the chance to snatch them. Now, we don't want to minimize the real dangers out there, but let's not let them cripple our capacity for enjoyment. Young gremlins seldom take on the night without an adult around, just close enough to see what's going on but far enough away that the little ones feel a shiver now and then as they approach a strange house. Yes, there's the chance a careless driver will approach, but isn't Halloween a perfect opportunity to give instruction about how to safely navigate the evening?

Perhaps the people now sitting in council chamber seats have forgotten how far they roamed on Halloween night. (And maybe, too, the mischief they caused.) Yes, there's more congestion in the Back Mountain today, but that means children need not travel miles to fill their candy bags, just blocks. And many of those blocks, while lacking sidewalks and street lamps, are teeming with eager children and gregarious adults, out sharing a harmless ritual that provides a last outdoor evening before cold weather sets in for good.

There are times when we try to do too much for our kids, try too hard to protect them. This is one of those times. As the song goes, this time "Leave the kids alone." (No, it's not sung by Smashing Pumpkins.)

Publisher's notebook

Ron Bartizek



I haven't yet seen the Turner Network Television movie of George Orwell's "Animal Farm," but I'm sure glad it was on. Since it's likely to run about, oh, 36 more times, I expect to catch it soon. If you didn't read this classic short novel, it's an anti-communism tract dressed up in the garb of a tale about animals that take over a farm, on the premise that everyone will share equally in what until then has been unfairly taken from them. The story line is inventive, with animals of differing personalities being led by a mendacious pig who has his own interest, and not everyone else's, at heart. A curious sidelight: Ted Turner is the man many conservatives love to hate, yet his outfit put this message on the screen.

Too many years ago than I like to admit, I read this book, Orwell's "1984" and "Brave New World" by Sir Aldous Huxley. The latter two presented dire messages of a future that is now termed "Orwellian," after the depiction of a world in which an all-powerful central government keeps the masses in control, using rapid entertainment to lull them into a sense of security, all the while spying on them through the screens in their homes, and carting away anyone showing evidence of original thought. In the 1950's and 1960's, this was interpreted as what might happen with television, since even then astute viewers could see that most programming was as intellectually stimulating as watching paint dry, but had an insidious charm that kept people's attention. All that was needed, we thought, was a malevolent government that would take over the networks and install those hidden cameras.

Surprise! Government is now emasculated and ridiculed, and the thought that the bunglers in Washington could take over even the Little Sisters of the Poor is ludicrous. These days, government is itself in danger of being taken over by a far more capable and dangerous force, Big Business. Now, you conservatives out there, bear with me. Who do you think is calling your home day and night trying to sell you a new credit card, knowing exactly what your spending habits are? I'll give you a clue; it ain't Algore. And it's not some pot-bellied bureaucrat who's hard at work designing Internet programs to record your every keystroke and sell the insight they reveal to anyone who will pay for it. The geeks at Microsoft and other companies have had to 'fess up to that trickery in recent months, but only because it was bad public relations to sneak around in customers' computers, not because it's illegal.

Even that's not the scariest thing to me. More frightening is that so many people don't seem to care. After all, most of the information deals with shopping habits, and separating mindless consumers from their money is surely the most popular entertainment these days.

Now there's a real Orwellian thought.



Getting ready for the cold weather to come. Photo by Charlotte Bartizek.

Library news



Carol King

The library has acquired a few books on CD ROM, including **Walk through the Woods**, and plans to add others. Martha Butler asks for your suggestions.

Discussions with avid readers in the area, including Shirley Forney, Chairman of the Friends of the Library, have brought home the realization that book reviews should again be a part of this column. Nancy Kozemchak routinely quoted from book jackets of new books.

For a start, we'll mention that most of the fiction best sellers on the current New York Times list are in the library - but not always on the shelves! Library staff member Millie Zarambo says that Harry Potter books, authored by J. K. Rowling and extremely popular with children and adults alike, almost literally fly off the shelves. (Please note: you may put your name on a waiting list for any

Harry Potter tops charts

book that is in circulation.) The top three best sellers on the Times list this week, and synopses of their plots, are Harry Potter books:

Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban: at a school for witchcraft, Harry, an English school boy, is menaced when an infamous murderer escapes from prison;

.. and the Chamber of Secrets: Harry finds trouble when he returns to a witchcraft school;

.. and the Sorcerer's Stone: Harry finds his fortune attending a school for witchcraft, they were undoubtedly written in reverse order of their rank on the list. Also in the library are Stephen King's **Hearts in Atlantis:** five long, interconnected stories about an American haunted by the Vietnam War; **Tara Road,** by Maeve Binchy: two women, one from Ireland, one from New England, exchange houses for the summer; **The Alibi,** by Sandra Brown: jealousy, intrigue and corruption beset a Charleston lawyer during his pursuit of public office; and **Black Notice,** by Patricia Cornwell: Kay Scarpetta's investigation of a ship's cargo gets her involved in an international conspiracy.

We would like your input on the topic of book reviews. Copies of a

form will be placed at the library counter for your suggestions.

Marilyn Rudolph reported that 71 children registered for the four story hours which began last week. Also, 23 four-year-olds from the Small Wonders Day Care Center, under the direction of Kim Cool, toured the library and listened to stories.

Active borrowers top 12,000

Total library circulation for the month of September was 6,075. Added were 156 new books and 76 new borrowers. There was a total of 12,234 active borrowers.

At the meeting of the Board of Directors on October 5, librarian Martha Butler reported that she had attended the National Women's Conference in Wilkes-Barre in September and found it very informative. She and Marilyn Rudolph, children's librarian, attended the dedication of College Misericordia's new library on September 24.

Melinda Smith is a new staff member in cataloging at the library. She lives in Centermoreland.

The entire staff has been involved in rigorous training with automation procedures. More wonderful computerized services to come!

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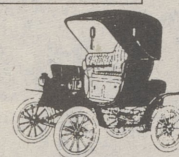
State Representative George Hasay
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Hasay's district encompasses: Harveys Lake, Lehman Township, Jackson Township, Lake Township, Franklin Township, Ross Township, and Dallas Township's north voting district.

State Representative Phyllis Mundy
(Democrat)
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Mundy's district encompasses: Dallas Borough, Dallas Township except for the north voting district, and Kingston Township.

Do you agree? Disagree?

Editorials are the opinion of the management of The Dallas Post, and are written by the editor unless otherwise indicated. 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 or bring letters to: The Dallas Post, 607 Main Rd., 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.

ONLY YESTERDAY

70 Years Ago - Oct. 12, 1929
DALLAS TOWNSHIP MAKES \$50 DONATION TO FIRE CO.

Announcement has been made by James F. Besecker, president of Dr. Henry M. Laing Fire Co. of a gift of more than \$50 from the supervisors of Dallas Township. The gift is a portion of the State Tax Fund on insurance premiums which by law may be given to local firemen. The township contribution together with a similar gift of \$200 from the borough council a short time ago is especially pleasing at this time, since the company at this time is making efforts to raise \$1,500 for the final payment on equipment.

60 Years Ago - Oct. 13, 1939
WILKES-BARRE INDUSTRIES JOIN WAR EFFORT

"Industrial plants in the Wilkes-Barre area are included among the nearly 1,600 in the state which have received secret instruction for mobilization in wartime. A survey of the State's industries was completed this week by army officials who recognize Pennsylvania as a key industry in the production of war materials. The results of the confidential plan are under lock and key in the War Department at Washington.

50 Years Ago - Oct. 14, 1949
LEGION APPEALS LIQUOR CONTROL BOARD DECISION

Daddow-Isaacs Post, American Legion, has appealed a decision of State Liquor Control Board denying its application for a club liquor license for the Castle Inn. The Post has a \$1,000 option on Castle Inn owned by John Panco. The option will be exercised provided the Legion can obtain a license at this location. Members of the Post's Home Assn. who could be contacted reflected confidence that the license would finally be granted. They state the Post already possesses a club license in Dallas Borough and there are a few such licenses in Dallas Township.

You could get - Porterhouse steaks, 79¢ lb.; center cut pork chops, 69¢ lb.; Campbell's Tomato Soup, 10 cans, \$1; Heinz Ketchup, 14 oz. bot., 24¢; cauliflower, lg. hd. 15¢; Pa. #1 potatoes, 100 lb. bag, \$2.89; cabbage, 3¢ lb.

40 Years Ago - Oct. 15, 1959
CONSTRUCTION OF DALLAS H.S. MOVES FORWARD

Bids for construction of a new school building will be opened by Dallas School Authority Oct. 29 at an adjourned meeting. Members of the school board will meet with the authority. Francis Ambrose for the building and grounds committee, stated that the new well on high school property had been blasted and increased water flow obtained. Acquisition of another half acre triangle of land is seen necessary to provide space for sewage disposal.

30 Years Ago - Oct. 6, 1969
POST COMPANY PURCHASES MOUNTAINTOP EAGLE

Northeastern Newspapers Inc. has acquired a third paper, the Mountain View located in Mountaintop, a Wilkes-Barre suburb. Northeastern publisher Henry Null, IV, announced this week. The new acquisition though currently published every other week will become a weekly publication issued on Thursday. The name of the paper will change to The Mountaintop Eagle with the first edition scheduled for Oct. 30.

20 Years Ago - Oct. 11, 1979
PENNDOT RECONSIDERS PROPOSED JUG HANDLE

PennDOT's proposal to construct a jug handle intersection on the Luzerne/Dallas Highway in the vicinity of the access road of DAMA has aroused considerable opposition from several Back Mountain residents. The proposed jug handle would allow motorists traveling north on Route 309 to exit off the highway at the above mentioned location, go to a light, then cross over the north and southbound lanes to enter the parking lot of the business facilities owned by William Guyette and Paul Wasserott. Although the project is in the design stage the proposed jug handle is being re-evaluated by PennDOT officials in the Central Office at Harrisburg.

The Dallas Post

Published Weekly By Bartsen Media, Inc.
P.O. Box 366, Dallas PA 18612
570-675-5211

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