

EDITORIALS

We can't let commerce displace civil rights

The police turn out in force, using tear gas and rubber bullets to subdue a mostly orderly crowd. Large areas of a city are declared "demonstration-free zones." Protesters against human rights abuses are kept away from an international meeting. A 7 p.m. curfew is laid down, to keep people off the streets. Did this happen in China or Iran? Similar incidents have taken place in both those repressive nations, but this time Seattle, not Beijing or Tehran was the city.

It has been some time since demonstrations on this scale took place in an American city, but that is no excuse for the overreaction that marked the World Trade Organization meeting last week. Some rabble rousers showed up and gave all the protesters a black eye by rampaging over a few blocks, putting peaceful demonstrators in the odd position of defending shops like Niketown, where they would more likely be found picketing. But misbehavior by a few must not bring the revocation of rights for everyone. The scene of police keeping legitimate demonstrators away from limousine-riding global hotshots is anathema to American sensibilities, or at least it was until recently, when material comfort and acquisition may have overtaken freedom of expression in our collective value system.

And where was our President, the one who as a college student marched in London to protest the Vietnam War? Well, he did make some critical comments about working conditions in third-world nations before slipping back to Washington without indicating whether or not he thought the police tactics used on U.S. citizens were appropriate.

World trade is important; American civil rights are more important. The two were reversed in Seattle, and that is something about which we should be very concerned.

Publisher's notebook

Ron Bartizek



At last there's an explanation for that repugnant character who sat next to you at a Red Barons game last summer, and for the one who cut in line at the checkout counter. And you know that oafish neighbor who plays the stereo loud enough for people in the next town to hear it? Scientists have discovered the root of his problem, too. It's not these obnoxious boors' fault, you see, it's genetic.



NEANDERTHAL

Does this look like anyone you know?

Researchers now believe Neanderthals and modern humans coexisted for thousands of years, and perhaps mated to produce offspring, which obviously led to the people who continue to bedevil us today. When I learned this, it was as though a lightbulb switched on in my brain - this was the answer to all those idiots who have crossed my path through the years. To quote from a 1980 edition of *Collier's Encyclopedia*: "... given a shave and a haircut, and suitable clothing, any of the Neanderthals might move among us without attracting special attention..." Little did the writers know how correct they were! Or maybe they knew all too well; perhaps having run into enough of these folks to warrant including that sentence in their volume.

Now I'm not saying that every blockhead in the world is a Neanderthal descendant; in fact many of us with Eastern European bloodlines may have a little of the big N in our gene pool. But, as with other characteristics, some of us get a bigger dose than others.

This news clarifies other aspects of modern life that are otherwise inexplicable - the popularity of the World Wrestling Federation and Fred Williams, for just two examples.

So, the next time you've followed a car with the left-turn signal blinking for two miles, only to watch them turn right, bite your tongue and recall that their genes made them do it. Then let out a primal scream.

About letters, columns and editorials

The Dallas Post attempts to publish opinions on a variety of topics in many forms.

Editorials, which are the opinion of the management of *The Post*, appear on the editorial page and are written by the editor unless otherwise indicated. Any artwork represents the opinion of the cartoonist, and columns are the opinion of the author.

Letters to the editor are welcome and will be published, subject to the following guidelines:

- Letters should not exceed 500 words.
- No writer may have more than one letter published on a single subject during a 30-day period, except as a reply to another letter.
- Letters must be signed and include the writer's home town and a telephone number for verification.
- Names will be withheld only if there exists a clear threat to the writer.

• *The Post* retains the right to accept or reject any letter, and to edit letters for grammar and spelling, as well as to eliminate any libel, slander or objectionable wording.

In addition to letters, we welcome longer pieces that may run as columns. The author or subject's relevance to the Back Mountain will be the prime consideration when selecting material for publication.



Winter sunlight casts a curious shadow. Photo by Charlotte Bartizek.

LETTERS

Light a candle for the children who aren't here

Editor:
Christmas comes but once a year. It's a time when we're asked to give a little more, do a little more, and be of good cheer. We get caught up in the shopping, decorating, baking, and don't mind spending extra time and energy getting everything done. We enjoy giving and receiving gifts, visiting, and spending time with family and friends. The spirit of the season of Christmas is certainly uplifting and a reason that we look forward to this time every year.

But when another Christmas passes, we also can't help feeling a sense of relief and gladness that it only happens once a year.

People who feel a sense of relief in a different way are those par-

ents who have endured the death of a child. For us, the Christmas season always brings a tinge of pain in the midst of all the hustle and bustle and celebration. At this time of the year, parents in many ways show their children how much they love them, and realize how precious a gift they are. We are, after all, celebrating the birth of a Child, a gift to all of us. Our children are a great part of our joy and a reason to be thankful, especially now.

Bereaved parents miss their children every day, and at Christmas, we miss them more. They aren't here as we trim the tree, bake cookies, visit Grandma and Grandpa's. It hurts when we hear other parents talk about what they will be buying their child this year

or that they'll be home for Christmas. We wonder what to do with the decorations and ornaments they made for the tree when they were small or in school. We don't know if we should hang up their stocking with the rest of the family's or fill it.

So, we parents who have lost a child to death ask that with us you remember them this Christmas season. Please light a candle at 7 p.m. on Sunday, December 12, National Children's Memorial Day. By doing so, we will remember them in a gentle, quiet way.

It's only once a year.
In Peace and Joy,

Lois Linsinbiger
Harveys Lake
The Compassionate Friends

Library news



Carol King

Announcements: The Back Mountain Memorial Library most cordially invites you visit the library during its Holiday Open House on Friday and Saturday, Dec. 16 and 17. Refreshments will be served.

The library will be closed on Friday and Saturday, Dec. 24 and 25, and on Friday, Dec. 31, and Saturday, Jan. 1.

Reminders: The citrus fruit shipment will be delivered to the library this Friday, Dec. 10. Please come to pick up your order on Friday from 7 to 9 p.m., or on Saturday, Dec. 11, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The season is upon us! Don't

Open house Dec. 16-17

forget that the library has two fund-raisers available which would make excellent gifts. The Entertainment 2000 Book, priced at \$25, offers many discounts. Tote bags, in red and embossed with the library's name, are \$5 for the child's size and \$8 for the larger size.

Registration for the winter story-hour program will take place the week of January 3, 2000. The 10-week program will start the first week in February.

Book review: The assignment of the book, *The Bad Place*, by Dean Koontz, for the November meeting of the Monday morning book discussion group, was an effort on the part of the book selection committee to broaden our horizons and educate us in a different genre. Some members did express their thanks for being guided to read something they would never have read on their own, thought the book was well written, and planned to read other books by the same author. Many

of us, however, were turned off by the many characters with no redeeming qualities and the abundance of gruesome images presented. Several, in fact, felt unable to finish the book. The numerical ratings given the book reflect our divergent views: on a scale of 1 to 10 they rated the book from a low of 0 (yes, 0) to a high of 9.

Dean Koontz has written 96 books, many of them best-sellers, so obviously his writing pleases a lot of people. He graduated from Shippensburg College (now University), tried teaching briefly, and then devoted himself to writing. His personal life, as revealed by his newsletter on the "net entitled USELESS NEWS, is at variance with his horror stories. If you would like to read his poem about Santa Claus - delightfully humorous and surprisingly benign - sign on to the following web site: <http://www.geocities.com/area51/Realm/3725/dknews1.zip>

ONLY YESTERDAY



70 Years Ago - Dec. 7, 1929

SIGN CHANGES ALLOW TRAFFIC TO RUN SMOOTHLY

The State Highway Dept. by agreement with the County Commissioners have changed the "Stop Signs" which were placed at the intersection of the Upper Road at the lower end in Dallas and the intersection of the Dallas-Trucksville Road. The signs were formerly placed so that all traffic traveling on the upper road going in the direction of Dallas had to come to a complete stop when entering the highway, which runs to Fernbrook from Dallas. One also had to stop when traveling the Upper Road to Trucksville at the intersection of the lower road at West Trucksville. This action on part of the Highway Dept. is a big benefit to the traveling public.

60 Years Ago - Dec. 8, 1939

DALLAS BOARD FILES LIENS AGAINST UNPAID TAXES

Confronted by an almost empty treasury, the result of slow payments by taxpayers, Dallas Borough school board this week authorized Jonathon C. Valentine, solicitor to file liens on all returned taxes with certain exceptions from 1928-1938 inclusive. Board made the decision after payment of \$2,645.80 left only \$129 in the district's treasury.

50 Years Ago - Dec. 9, 1949

FIRE COMPANY RESPONDS QUICKLY, SAVES BUSINESS

Devens' Milling Co. warehouse was saved from serious damage and possible loss by the quick action of Dr. Henry M. Laing Fire Co. early Friday evening. Discovered by two patrolling State Troopers and Al Shaver who lives across the street, the fire was gaining headway when Chief Russell Honeywell, notified by the troopers turned in the alarm. Devens, summoned by phone, drove over to find the firemen using water from the booster tank and the fire practically under control. Loss was estimated at \$1.50.

40 Years Ago - Dec. 10, 1959

NEWLY FORMED LL SCHOOL BOARD ELECTS MEMBERS

Lake-Lehman school board meeting Monday evening according to state law to reorganize individual school boards and the 5-way jointure and to swear in new school board members, reelected Edgar Lashford to the presidency. Supervising Principal Lester Squire read a letter of commendation from Lake-Noxen PTA complementing the school board members on the way in which the problems of the jointure had been handled.

30 Years Ago - Dec. 11, 1969

FIRST NATIONAL BANK OPENS TEMPORARY OFFICE

Dallas Village Office of First National Bank of Wilkes-Barre will open Monday at 10, bank officials have announced. Located at the intersection of Routes 415 and 309, the mobile banking unit represents the 14th office in the bank's expanding system of branch offices in Luzerne and Columbia Counties and will offer a full range of banking services. Construction on the bank's permanent branch office is scheduled for completion this summer.

20 Years Ago - Dec. 6, 1979

HANOVER BANK OF PA MOVING TO BACK MOUNTAIN

Excavation being done on the property of the former Mama Mia's Restaurant marks the beginning of the construction of a Back Mountain Branch of Hanover Bank of Pennsylvania. The new branch will open the middle of end of January. Ernest Ashbridge Jr. vice president of Hanover Bank said the bank decided to open the Back Mountain Branch because of the many customers they have in the area.

You could get - Chicken quarters, 49¢ lb.; ground beef, \$1.49 lb.; Red Emperor grapes, 59¢ lb.; Reynolds Wrap aluminum foil, 25-ft roll, 39¢; Silver Floss sauerkraut, 2.27-oz cans \$1; apple cranberry juice drink, 1/2 gal. jug, 99¢.

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