

EDITORIALS

Warning monitors needed to sound alert of gas spills

The release of about 5,000 gallons of gasoline in Jackson Township was unfortunate and regrettable. Sun Oil Co., which operates the pipeline that leaked, owes more than an apology to the people who have been and will be affected by the spill. So far, the company and government agencies involved in trying to clean up the mess have responded quickly and with force. They must continue to do so, even if that means eventually buying out those most severely affected. The company must also be held liable for damage to water supplies and wildlife, and must do everything in its power to remove every bit of contaminant. So far, Sun seems to be accepting those responsibilities, and the people who represent the firm have been as accommodating as anyone could expect.

That said, there is no excuse for the size of the spill. Accidents happen, and the fact that a valve leaked is not in itself reason to think Sun was careless in its operation. The length of time the gasoline leaked - about an hour - is another story. A Sun employee was in a building near the leaking valve, which spouted gasoline 50 feet or more in the air for some time. That doesn't mean Sun should post someone at the window to gaze at the pipeline for hours on end, but there should have been a mechanism that would have warned employees of the leak. That could be a pressure gauge of some sort, or something as simple as a detection monitor that sounded an alarm when gasoline fumes reach a certain level, much as a home carbon monoxide detector does.

If such devices are required and this location lacked them, or they were not working properly, Sun should be assessed heavy fines for that failure. If they are not, our representatives in Washington should put the industry on notice that they must be installed voluntarily, or the government will force the issue.

Publisher's notebook

Ron Bartizek



As the saga of the poor little Cuban boy drags on, I have a thought. Many people believe certain individuals are destined for greatness. You know, that George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Winston Churchill and people like them were the only ones who could have led their nations to a successful outcome in tenuous times. Well, what if Elian Gonzalez is one of those people. Suppose he is, or was, fated to become The One who would lead Cuba out of the darkness of Castro's communism and into the light of democracy? But something went wrong; he washed up on the Florida shore and U.S. lawmakers fought and won the battle to "save" him from the perils of that unfortunate island, to which he never returned. Just an idea. Hey, maybe the point will be moot when those brave guys in \$1,000 suits will sneak across the Florida Straits, strap on AK-47s and liberate Cuba from Castro's iron grasp. Nah, that would take real courage.

I've seen the future of the Internet, and it's . . . fast! Anyone who has spent much time online knows the World Wide Web is a vast resource for information that is frustratingly slow to access. Even with a 56K modem, many web pages open at a pace that makes the phrase "Information Superhighway" a joke. Want to check out NASA's website? Be prepared to wait about as long as it takes for a space shuttle to orbit the Earth. Looking for video from Kosovo? It will make slow motion television look like Carl Lewis in the 100-yard dash. But now things are changing for the better. We put in DSL modems at home and the office, and the Internet world has become a much more friendly place. Web pages that used to take several minutes to load now pop up in a few seconds. Video "streams" at near real-time speed. Going back or forward within a web site is no longer an exercise that strains patience to the limit, it's actually enjoyable. The other night I was looking at golf courses in Ocean City, Maryland, and in the span of a few minutes was able to check out nearly every one listed on the web site, each of them with pictures of the course. Even America Online comes up quickly, except in prime time when 50 million teenagers are each exchanging instant messages with a few dozen close friends. Our setup isn't the only way to get fast access, and it's not even the fastest. Some lucky souls have cable modems, or soon will, and they're 10 times faster than the basic DSL. I'm not jealous - I'm just happy to finally be able to use the Internet without wasting away at the keyboard waiting for my stock quote to appear — on 20-minute delay, of course.

Your news is welcome

The Dallas Post welcomes submissions about Back Mountain people and events. In order to plan each issue, we must adhere to self-imposed deadlines, as well as those of our printer. To have the greatest likelihood of publication, items should be received at our office by 4 p.m. the Friday prior to each issue. Items will be accepted until 4 p.m. Mondays, although much of the paper is already assembled by that time. Send or bring items to: The Dallas Post, 607 Main Road, P.O. Box 366, Dallas, PA 18612. Our normal business hours are 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. A deposit box is located at the front of the building for after-hours submissions.

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Winter gate, off Lower Demunds Rd., Dallas. Photo by Charlotte Bartizek.

LETTERS

Thoughtless snowmobiler killed beloved family pet

Editor:

It was blustery and bitter cold this past Tuesday evening when my brother bundled up and connected the leash to the family pet, Lassie to take her for her nightly walk. Little did he know, as they proceeded out the door, that it would be their last walk together.

My brother and his family live in Orchard View Terrace, a residential development in Dallas. That night, the quiet streets of this development became a speedway for a reckless snowmobiler, travelling at a high rate of speed headed right at them. My brother yelled and jumped into a snow pile off the road to get out of the

way. He pulled on Lassie's leash, but it happened so fast, Lassie couldn't jump to safety, too. The snow mobile ran over Lassie. The snowmobiler lost control of his machine at that point, but managed to keep on going. Perhaps he didn't hear the cries from my brother or Lassie...but he knew he hit something. He never stopped.

Lassie didn't die immediately. Her heart was still beating, so my brother picked her up and carried her home, where she died moments later with her loving family by her side. Obviously, the family is heartbroken. Lassie was a very young 12 years old. She was full

of life! Our entire family loved her, and she loved her family. She was a great dog, killed by a speeding snowmobiler disobeying the law. A residential community is not a snowmobile trail. Just because the roads aren't plowed, doesn't mean they're available for snowmobilers.

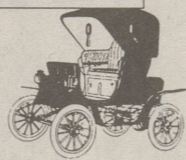
The police were notified at once about this tragic incident. When they arrived, they explained how difficult it is to find a snowmobiler and driver. As I write this letter, I find my sadness turning to anger. I'm human. I can't help but wonder WHAT IF...What if my brother didn't get out of the way in time and he was killed, instead of

poor Lassie? Could that snowmobile and driver be found? It was fresh snow. Fresh tracks.

I hope the person responsible for killing Lassie reads this letter, and understands the pain and heartache you caused three children, my brother and his wife to feel. It really hurts. If you would only have stopped and helped, showed some compassion and apologized. It wouldn't bring Lassie back, but out family would be able to deal with this terrible pain a lot better. You can still do the right thing. Think about it.

Judi Blase Shaver
Harveys Lake

ONLY YESTERDAY

70 Years Ago - Jan. 31, 1930
PERSIAN RUG IS PRIZE FOR CARD PARTY WINNERS

Sullivan County sheep and wool growers who have marketed more than 200,000 pounds of wool through their cooperative pool in the past ten years, have decided on another important step in the improvement of their product, according to W.B. Connell, sheep and wool extension specialist of the Pennsylvania State College. With 95% of the wool produced in the county marketed through the pool, they want this product to be presented in good condition. The 1930 clip must be tied with paper twine, the association has decreed, or the grower will receive one cent a pound less than the price paid for fleeces properly tied.

The annual card party and dance of the new St. Therese's Church, Shavertown, will be held in Hotel Sterling, Wilkes-Barre, Wednesday evening, Feb. 5. A feature this year will be the awarding of a beautiful Persian rug. A special effort is being made to offer the public the finest assortment of prizes ever offered at a card party in this section.

60 Years Ago - Feb. 2, 1940
SCHOOL SICKOUT EXPOSED

A deep-dyed plot at Dallas Borough High School for an outbreak of "hookey" on Monday afternoon was nipped in the bud by alert

school officials. Apparently, a group of ring-leaders had proposed a "Senior Skip Day" which was to be observed by a wholesale skipping of afternoon classes. Supervising Principal T.A. William detected the unusual number of absences when he received his report from the teachers early in the afternoon. With the help of the truant officer, he began an immediate investigation, news of which brought some of the erring students back to school promptly. As soon as the plan was exposed it collapsed, and only nine students remained absent without a reasonable excuse.

An actual alarm sounded while volunteer firemen of the Dr. Henry M. Laing Company were conducting siren tests last Saturday, taking the community and more than a few of the firemen by complete surprise. All afternoon the firemen, who are experimenting with an alarm system, had been testing. The community had been warned to ignore the siren blasts, so when the real alarm came, most people dismissed it immediately as "more of that testing". Taking no chances, about 15 firemen responded.

50 Years Ago - Feb. 5, 1950
EASTER HORSE PARADE CONSIDERED

In keeping with the County Superintendent's plan to further school consolidations in the Back Mountain area, school directors of Dallas Borough, Dallas Township and Franklin Township will meet with county school officials Tuesday night at Dallas Township High School to discuss proposed plans for operating joint elementary and secondary schools. Members of the county schools office staff will present

data on proposed costs of the plans and costs to each school.

Plans for a Back Mountain Easter Horse Parade similar to the one held for many years in Kingston, will be discussed at the meeting of Dallas Business Association on Monday night. Those behind the plan say that they have held several informal meetings and that more than 100 horses and vehicles are assured.

40 Years Ago - Feb. 4, 1960
DALLAS TWP. PTA LOOKS INTO GIFTED PROGRAM

Dallas Township P.T.A. heard a program on "The Gifted Child", given by Mrs. Ida Wallace and Grace Lord of Wilkes-Barre school system. Intellectual inspiration follows placing gifted children in a class where they can develop their potential with teachers who permit them to work ahead, making the most of their energy and long attention spans. They work in a relaxed atmosphere in their own age group, receiving a broader curriculum which increases their range of knowledge and encourages alertness, independence, judgement and planning.

You could get: Hershey's Cocoa Mix, 16 oz. can for 45¢; Star Kist Tuna Fish, 6.5 oz. can for 28¢; Kraft Italian Dressing, 16 oz. bottle, 49¢; Keebler Chocolate Fudge sandwiches, 16 oz. pkg. for 49¢.

30 Years Ago - Feb. 5, 1970
VETERAN NEWSMAN VISITS

A veteran news correspondent and dynamic platform personality, Bernard Eismann, will be in the Pennsylvania State University's Wilkes-Barre campus, in Lehman, Feb. 10, to address students on the pulse of

today's news. With long experience as a news correspondent for both CBS and ABC, Mr. Eismann now broadcasts on Eastern Educational Television, where his "in-depth" approach to the issues and problems of our times is seen to a great advantage.

Paramount Theatre, Wilkes-Barre, Presents "The Molly Maguires" starring Sean Conery, Richard Harris and Samantha Eggar.

20 Years Ago - Jan. 31, 1980
'VIAL OF LIFE' PROGRAM HELPS IN EMERGENCIES

The "Vial of Life" program has come to the Back Mountain. The program is a nationwide service that enables house-holders to store life-saving medical information in a three-inch clear plastic vial so that it is accessible to ambulance personnel, rescue squads, police and fire departments in case of emergency. The plan has the house-holder fill out a medical data form included with the Vial of Life kit. The vial containing the form is then placed under the upper right shelf of the family refrigerator. A "Vial of Life" decal is placed on the refrigerator door to let rescue personnel know the family is a participant.

The Ladies Auxiliary of the Shavertown Fire Department held the first meeting for 1980 on Jan. 14. Installation of the new officers for the year was conducted by Carol Paxton and Betsy Joyce. The Ladies Auxiliary extends an invitation to any of the ladies of the community with a little time to give as a volunteer in a group dedicated to service to the fire company and the community. They also welcome girls, age 14 to 18 to join the Junior Auxiliary.

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.