

EDITORIALS

Listen to mom; cut the risk of gun violence

Can several thousand moms be wrong about guns? Sure they could, but the ones who marched in Washington and other cities over the weekend don't appear to be. They weren't asking that guns be outlawed or confiscated, simply that sensible steps be taken to protect innocent children — and adults — from the burgeoning cache of arms in America.

It's estimated there are about 200 million guns in private hands in this country, with the number growing fast. That is undoubtedly the highest total in comparison to the population in our history, and it comes at a time when those of us who live outside the inner city have only the slimmest chance of being assaulted in our homes. Those facts haven't stopped rabid gun rights advocates from their silly arguments, including the latest one — that teaching elementary school children how to handle a gun would put a stop to senseless killing.

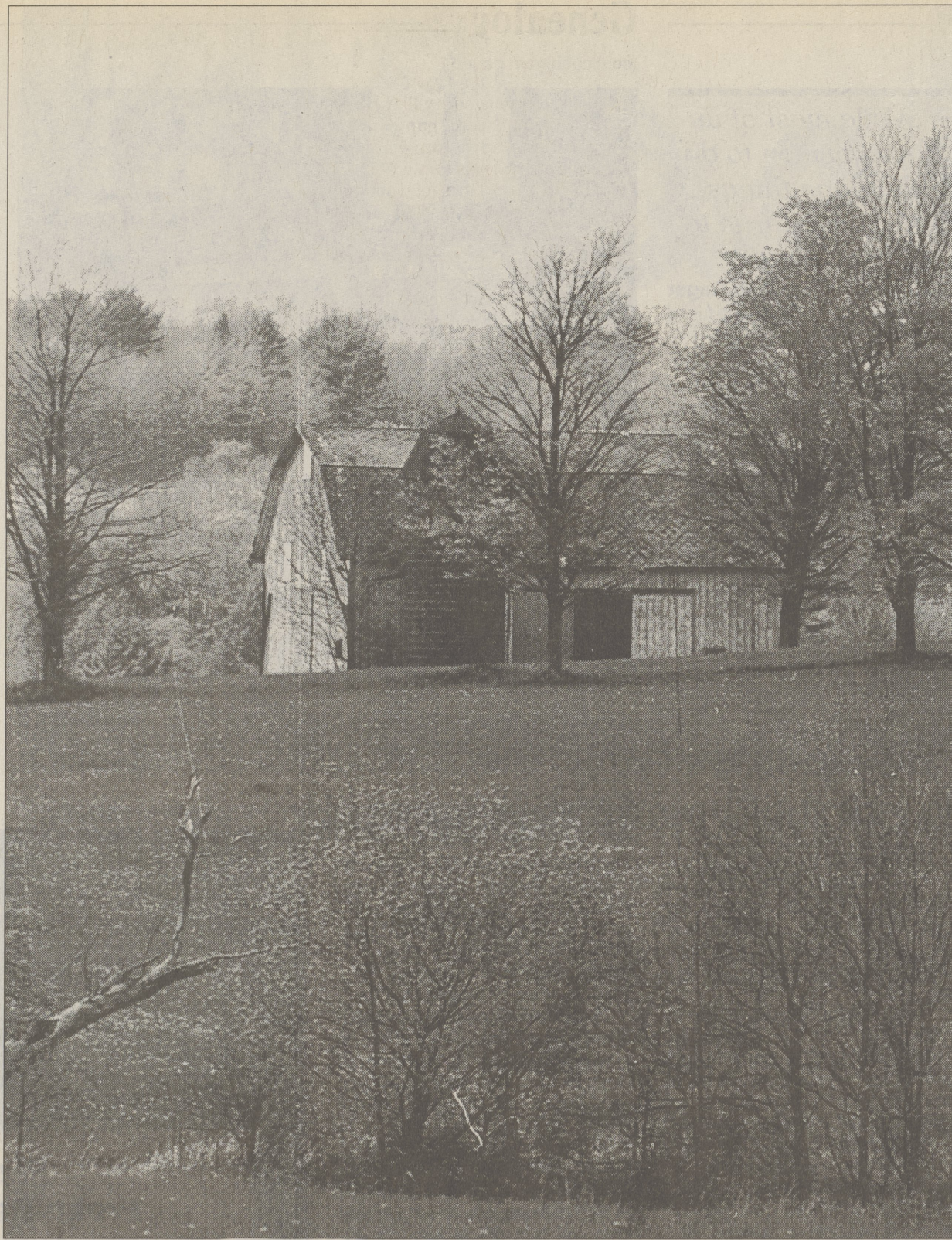
Here are some honest perspectives on guns and gun violence:

- An infinitesimal minority of guns are ever fired in self-defense, even among those who are most likely to use them, police officers. Most killing of men, women and children occurs either as crimes of passion among family members or acquaintances, or by accident, not in the commission of a crime.

- Trigger locks won't stop every fatal shooting. Neither do seat belts in cars prevent every fatality. But they each could avert quite a few. Isn't that worth the effort?

- The Second Amendment to the Constitution specifically links the right to keep and bear arms to the existence of a "well-regulated militia" to be used in the common defense. The perverse motivation of many of today's extreme gun rights advocates is fear that the government has nothing better to do than cook up new ways to subjugate them, even as they have complete freedom to promulgate their loony ideas.

It's true that people, not guns, are ultimately responsible for violence. It's equally accurate to believe that appropriate controls on deadly weapons will prevent some temper tantrums from spiraling into fatalities, and some acts of carelessness from becoming tragedies. We shouldn't let the paranoid fantasies of a minority stop us from taking steps to protect the vast majority of citizens.



Back road, country barn in Lehman. Photo by Charlotte Bartizek



**70 Years Ago - May 16, 1930
PLANS FOR CARD PARTY COMPLETED**

Plans were completed for a card party and dance to be held by the members of the local fire company. The firemen had done everything to make the affair bigger and better than the one held previously in February. A large assortment of prizes were donated by people of the town that were awarded to the winners of the card games. Any card game was allowed to be played and prizes were awarded to each table. Everyone was expected to attend as it was the last affair the firemen were to conduct until the next fall.

Peyton Lee, of Windham Township was exhibiting a live osprey which he captured on a local pond. The bird was flapping in the water, apparently helpless, so Lee went out and brought it to shore. As it was still there the next morning, Lee decided to take the Osprey to Game Protector Moss.

**60 Years Ago - May 17, 1940
ALEX THE BEAR BEGS FOOD FROM DRIVERS**

Alex, the cantankerous bear, who caused so much trouble at the Wilkes-Barre zoo that the city sold him to the Humane Association, who in turn carted Alex to the Poconos and turned him loose, was begging food from brave motorists along Poconos highways. The bear was formerly owned by Squire Davis of Harveys Lake and later by Emory Newell of Noxen, who sold him to the Wilkes-Barre zoo.

Alterations to the front and interior of Williams 5¢ and 10¢ store on Main Street, Dallas, began under the supervision of J.G. Hadsell of Idetown. A new front was erected and alterations were made to improve the interior. The store, one of Dallas' busiest and most progressive, expected to stay open during the renovation, which was estimated to be completed in four weeks.

**50 Years Ago - May 19, 1950
DALLAS TWP. P.T.A. CELEBRATES ANNIVERSARY**

Dallas Township P.T.A. celebrated its twentieth birthday in the high school auditorium. Mrs. John Girvan, original founder of the organization, reminisced about the P.T.A.'s small beginning to its present important position in school activities. Membership had grown from 27 to 352 in twenty years.

You could get: sliced bacon, 45¢/lb.; fresh haddock fillets, 49¢/lb.; red raspberries, 45¢/lb.;

Now playing at Himmler Theatre "Little Women" with June Allyson and Peter Lawford.

**40 Years Ago - May 19, 1960
PROPERTY VANDALIZED**

More than 200 windows were stoned out, doors were broken off, summer furniture and books were scattered over several acres when vandals entered the secluded old Wyckoff property at Forest Echo Bird Sanctuary on Center Hill Road.

**30 Years Ago - May 21, 1970
SUPERVISOR OF ELEM. EDUCATION RESIGNS**

William A. Austin, supervisor of elementary education in the Dallas School District, announced his resignation which was to become effective on August 30. Mr. Austin had been in public school service for 40 years. Mr. Austin joined the Dallas School District in 1955. He served one year as elementary principal of the Dallas-Franklin-Monroe jointure; one year as elementary supervisor of Dallas area prior to the formation of the new district, and most recently as the elementary education supervisor for the entire Dallas School District.

**20 Years Ago - May 15, 1980
SENIOR CITIZEN OLYMPICS HELD**

Dallas Senior Citizens Center was well represented in the Senior Citizens Olympics with the hometown team taking second place overall. Over 700 senior citizens from Luzerne and Wyoming Counties either competed in or watched the games that included bocce ball, dancing, horse-shoes, softball throw, bicycling, bowling and the frisbee toss.

Publisher's notebook

Ron Bartizek



Beware the politician preaching values. That would seem to be the lesson in the indescribably delicious scandal with Rudy Giuliani occupying center stage. You remember the old Mayor Rudy, the one that last year tried to shut down an art exhibit he felt attacked traditional values, especially Catholic ones. He ranted and raged as if he was the solon of a conservative burg in the middle of Iowa, not the Mayor of the "Capital of the World," with all that designation connotes. Last week, in a startling turn of events, Rudy told reporters - apparently before letting his wife in on the news - that he would seek a separation from her and try to develop a closer relationship with a "friend." Donna "It's Hanover, not Giuliani" responded with her own public display of big-city sensitivity, saying she wasn't surprised since her husband had carried on with an aide a few years ago. The public, if you can believe polls, could care less, at least in terms of Rudy's chances for a Senate seat.

Obviously, we have a better understanding of politicians' than they suspect, and a poll that asked if Rudy really meant it when he attacked the art show would likely reveal a good deal of cynicism among voters. Meanwhile, Rudy's opponent, should he actually make a run for the Senate, is powerless to take advantage. But wouldn't it be great if she tried? Can you imagine Hillary dressing down Rudy for behavior that is less boorish than that of her husband, whom she has defended through thick and thin?

Rudy appears to be telling the truth, at least as he understands it at the moment. (Depending on the meaning of moment.) While all this is making headlines, Newt Gingrich is quietly preparing to marry for the third time, this wife a 34-year-old former aide with whom he was carrying on an affair while he simultaneously lectured us bumpkins on the value of values. Go figure, or if you're so inclined, go to Macy's web site where you can sign up to give the happy couple a gift. I wonder what Gary Hart thinks of all this. You remember him, the arrogant candidate who in 1987 challenged reporters to track him when questions were raised about his fidelity. In another demonstration of why these folks are into politics and not rocket science, Hart was seen shortly thereafter exiting a condominium not his own in the wee hours, and not much later caught with Donna Rice on his knee on the good and aptly named ship "Monkey Business."

So there you have it; two Republicans and two Democrats, equally naughty, one of each stripe relatively straightforward, one each sleazy and slippery, but all of them more than willing to proclaim their heartfelt concern for our morality when it's politically expedient. Watch out.

The economic viewpoint

Howard Grossman



Strategy is a key word for the 21st century and perhaps the longer-term future of Northeastern Pennsylvania.

It was advocated by Michael Fairbanks, a graduate of the University of Scranton and an outstanding advisor to third world countries, at the October 9, 1997, Regional Economic Summit and further enhanced at the April 2, 1998 Regional Leadership Forum.

Strategies for the 21st century may not be those which were successfully implemented in the 1960s. Opportunities exist to promote and market Northeastern Pennsylvania in ways that have not proven successful in the past. Seeking information technology firms and promoting technology as a strategy for Northeastern Pennsylvania's future may not seem doable, however, the information age has already arrived in the region. It is advanced by firms such as Intersil, Diversified Information Technologies, Connaught, Specialty Records, and others. It is promoted by the excellence of 22 higher educational institutions which have come together through the EDCNPE Education Task Force. It is united by organizations such as the Technology Council of Northeastern Pennsylvania, the Northeastern Pennsylvania Industrial Resource Center, and the Economic Development Council of Northeastern Pennsylvania.

New jobs have come to Northeastern Pennsylvania as a result of some of the corporations mentioned above and those which are to follow including, but not limited to, Corporate Express in downtown Wilkes-Barre, Lowe's at the new High Ridge Business Park in Schuylkill County, AT&T in downtown Scranton, Hilton Reservation Systems in greater Hazleton, and several more.

The travel development and tourism industry continues to be a strong contender for economic expansion in various sectors of

Envisioning the future

Northeastern Pennsylvania. The Internet has taken hold in the region and is being used as a major technological advance which includes the ability of the region to be economically and technology competitive in the 21st century.

One of the most dominant scenes across the region is workforce development. The new Pennsylvania Career Link System represents a strong, targeted activity which is designed to promote Northeastern Pennsylvania's work skills for 21st century life.

Penn's Northeast and Team Pennsylvania represent new regional commitments to cooperative partnering between and among economic and industrial development organizations. One of the most remarkable functions is the four year history of Penn's Northeast as a regional marketing collaborative.

Transportation and workforce productivity remain the two most featured assets of Northeastern Pennsylvania's lifestyle. For example, the EDCNP Rural Transportation Planning Program is a key effort to make the region economically competitive for 21st century life. The Metropolitan Planning Organization serving Luzerne and Lackawanna counties is another step to promote a transportation partnership. New and creative functions such as the Northeastern Pennsylvania Civic Arena & Convention Center and the Wilkes-Barre/Scranton Penguins, American Hockey League franchise, along with the startling investments being made in resorts and other facilities in the Pocono Mountains are important avenues of progress.

Within the next year or two, the Northeastern Pennsylvania Regional Entrepreneurial Network, Community Development Banking within the region and other techniques will be unveiled.

While these activities are positive, needless to say there are obstacles to progress. The unemployment rate hovers at least two points higher than the national and state averages despite reductions recently. Other obstacles include the need to seriously and aggressively expand regionalism and create even more partnerships between and among governments, the private sector and

the non-profit sector across the region. Implementing the 10 visioning projects which are currently in place in Northeastern Pennsylvania is another step which needs appropriate action. The fact that we have so many visioning projects underway at the same time demonstrates substantive progress. The 21st century is close at hand.

All of this is reminiscent of the Chief of Chiefs of the Six Nations Iroquois Confederacy, who stated "We have not inherited the Earth from our ancestors, but have borrowed it from our children."

Carl Sagan, the great writer, in his book titled "Billions and Billions" notes a direction for regions of the world as follows: "The Earth is an anomaly. In all the Solar Systems, it is, so far as we know, the only inhabited planet. We humans are one amongst millions of separate species who live in a world burgeoning, overflowing with life. And yet, most species that ever were are no more. After flourishing for 180 million years, the dinosaurs were extinguished. Every last one. There are none left. No species is guaranteed its tenure on this planet. And we've been here for only about a million years, we, the first species that has devised means for its self destruction. We are rare and precious because we are alive, because we can think as well as we can. We are privileged to influence and perhaps control our future. I believe we have an obligation to fight for life on Earth not just for ourselves, but for all those, humans and others, who came before us, and to whom we are beholden, and for all those who, if we are wise enough, will come after. There is no cause more urgent, no dedication more fitting than to protect the future of our species. Nearly all our problems are made by humans and can be solved by humans. No social convention, no political systems, no economic hypothesis, no religious dogma is more important."

This is a legacy for the future generations of Northeastern Pennsylvania.

Howard Grossman is executive director of the Economic Development Council of Northeastern Pennsylvania. He lives in Dallas.

**Q. Where do you find the most Back Mountain news and photos each week?
A. Only in The Dallas Post**

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

Ronald A. Bartizek PUBLISHER	Charlotte E. Bartizek ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER OFFICE MANAGER
Ken Brocius ADVERTISING ACCT. EXEC	Bill Goodman REPORTER
Ruth Proietto PRODUCTION MANAGER	Joanna Cease OFFICE/TYPIST/CLASSIFIEDS

PRINTED WITH SOY INK
PENNSYLVANIA NEWSPAPER PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION