

EDITORIALS

Too much summer fun not good for kids, or parents

Believe it or not, we're already closer to the start of a new school year than to the end of the old one. Time flies when you're having fun, they say, and one of the things many kids do for fun in the summer is play organized baseball and softball. Actually, they start playing well before school ends, practicing for a season that begins in late April, and finishes at the end of June. At that point the best players are selected for all-star teams and begin playoffs that can last until — well, until August if they're good enough to make it to the Little League World Series. That, of course, is rarely the case, and district champions are crowned by mid-July. After a two-month regular season and another two or three weeks of playoffs, you might think the season would be over. But it's not. Most teams enter several "tournaments," which are sponsored by various leagues, and it's not unusual for a group of 9 to 12-year-olds to play three or four games a week well into August. At the same time, fall soccer teams are starting to practice, so some kids go from baseball game to soccer practice to baseball practice and so on. It can get to be too much.

We know there are many people who will point out that playing sports is a healthy activity for youngsters, and we don't disagree. But the old saying, "too much of a good thing," may apply when children are constantly under the scrutiny of adult coaches who expect them to take the sport as seriously as the adults do. These are children, remember, and they need time to relax with friends, without the pressure to perform up to a parent's or other adult's expectations. They need time to kick back and relax, be silly and learn to relate to peers in a setting other than an athletic contest. And their parents need a break from the constant shuttle to and from games and practices.

Publisher's notebook

Ron Bartizek



Politics, it is said, makes strange bedfellows. I'm not sure of the origin of that phrase, but it surely predated the time when it was generally accepted for fellows to share a bed. In any event, the meaning still holds, as we all will witness during the Republican and Democratic "nominating" conventions, the title of which should be changed to "coronations." Time was, the conventions were exciting and important because something unexpected might happen. Now, the only drama surrounds whether or not the anointed ones will look presidential or be revealed as pretenders to the throne, and whether their closest rivals will be able to keep a straight face while lavishing praise on the person who, only a few months ago, they said had equal qualifications to be president as a turnip.

The first test will have taken place before you read this, since John McCain was scheduled to address the Republican delegates Tuesday night. McCain, you might recall, nearly knocked the wheels off George W. Bush's campaign train before his own race ran out of steam. You might wonder why he would get such a prominent place on the docket. One answer, apparently, is that McCain can be trusted to toe the party line, more or less, something other Bush rivals like Alan Keyes and Steve Forbes might not be able to do for 15 minutes straight.

Personally, I think the real powers behind the throne ought to get primetime speeches. For example, Kenneth Lay, who arranged that he and his company, Enron, ponied up more than \$600,000 for the Republican National Committee in just a year and a half, should spend a few minutes before the camera explaining how a Bush presidency would pay back the favor, perhaps by relaxing regulations he doesn't like. When the Democrats meet later in the month, they could invite a few trial lawyers or union bosses to do the same, so we could get a contrasting look at the people whose opinions — and bucks — really count.

It could be worse, and it probably will. Undoubtedly both parties will drag out "ordinary Americans," you know, the kind who don't send money by the bushel, but who believe they've been helped by George and Al, reminiscent of the proverbial Boy Scout who helps old ladies across the street. These folks make attractive window dressing, but it's too thin to disguise the room full of special interests who are on the inside, looking out.

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.



Doin' the Butterfly Stomp. Photo by Monica Marzani.

Back in time



Anna Mae Estus

Texas wasn't the only place where there were cowboys, Dallas, Pennsylvania had them too. They were 10 year old boys who had their own ponies complete with cowboy hats and cap guns in holsters. They were my brother Gerald Sullivan, Wilson Garinger, Bob Fleming (Attorney Bob), Merle Thomas and Ross Lapp.

They rode together around Dallas and the back roads to Huntsville Dam. They raced too, and even though Wilson Garinger's pony was blind, he was the fastest and won most of the races.

Every morning they rode to a big field behind Captain Booth's house on Booth Hill where he taught them to ride in formation and precision drills. Captain

The cowpokes of Dallas

Booth was retired from the Pennsylvania State Police. The state police had a performing precision riding team that was quite famous.

The cowboys practiced every afternoon in our backyard, putting the ponies through their training for the rodeo they would have before school started.

Gerald's pony "Spot," light brown with white patches, knew lots of tricks. He had belonged to a man who took him to fairs and carnivals and amusement parks to give shows and rides on his back and in a cart. The owner was elderly and wanted to sell Spot so he could retire. When Gerald heard that, he wanted Spot more than anything. He promised he would do everything if he could have that pony. Gerald got the pony and the man retired that very day.

When the pony and cart arrived from Fern Brook Park, there was no stable for him nor room in the garage. A visiting uncle jokingly told Gerald he should put Spot in the playroom in the house in case it rained in the night. We

heard a "clomp-clomp" in the back hall when it got dark. It was Gerald putting Spot in the playroom. Mother didn't agree, and until a stable was built the pony spent his nights on the back porch which was closed in with lattice. I wonder if Bob Fleming remembers sleeping in the stable with his pony. Gerald remembers sleeping with Spot.

When it came time for the rodeo, Paul Shaver, Sr., who was an electrician and lived across the street from us, came and put up strings of colored lights around the backyard. Planks set on concrete blocks were the seats. Neighbors paid 10¢ to watch the performances.

Each boy and his pony had a special act. There was hurdle jumping, kneeling, bareback riding and trick walking on hind legs and limping. And of course the riding Captain Booth taught them.

Spot did all the tricks he had learned in his travels. He could tell you his age and count and add numbers. He could answer "yes" and "no" nodding his heading. He

could walk on his hind legs and bow and whinny for "thank you".

These cowboys were quite professionals with rope tricks and lassoing. They lassoed things, not ponies. They had make believe Cowboy and Indian battles and cap guns made a loud racket for a while.

My sister Helen, a petite blonde, was the only girl in the rodeo. She did the rope walking with an umbrella, and performed on a trapeze between two apple trees. She was really good, she could swing with the best of them. Her act went on until she fell off the trapeze and broke her arm. But she rode on Spot's back in the finale, broken arm and all.

The rodeo went on each summer until the boys outgrew their ponies, not in size, they were really small horses. But other interests came along, like girls. Even though at age 10 they had taught their ponies to chase girls, they finally won out over the ponies.

They kept their ponies until they were very old. Spot enjoyed his last days in a lush meadow in Centermoreland.

ONLY YESTERDAY

70 Years Ago - Aug. 1, 1930
NEW HOUSE DESTROYED BY FIRE

An unoccupied house on the former Dallas fair grounds and owned by W.L. Higgs, Wilkes-Barre, was destroyed by fire believed to be of incendiary origin Tuesday night. The house is a new one having been built about three years ago. Loss is estimated at about \$5,000.

Now playing at the Himmler Theatre, "Only The Brave" starring Gary Cooper.

60 Years Ago - Aug. 2, 1940
IMPROVEMENTS CAN BE MADE TO SCHOOL GROUNDS

Congressman J. Harold Flannery announced at Washington today the approval of an allot-

ment of \$10,777 for improvement of grounds at the Trucksville School. Sponsored by Kingston Township School board, the project calls for grading, seeding, landscaping and surfacing; installing drains, pipes, septic tank trap door and construction of curbs, gutters, catch basins and walls. Flannery said the project is now eligible for operation at the discretion of State WPA authorities.

50 Years Ago - Aug. 4, 1950
SPORTSMEN'S SHOW PLANNED FOR SEPTEMBER

A fall sportsmen's show with competitive shooting, fly casting demonstration, marksmanship exhibitions and displays of sporting goods by national manufacturers is being planned for September by Harveys Lake Camp United Sportsmen. The show will be held on the Sportsmen's campground at Alderson.

You could get - Veal leg or rump roast, 69¢ lb.; frying chickens, 45¢ lb.; green peppers, 12¢ lb.; Calif. oranges, 39¢ doz.; southern yams, 2 lbs., 25¢; sandwich rolls, pkg. of 8, 15¢.

40 Years Ago - Aug. 4, 1960
LINEAR, INC. LARGEST TAX PAYER

A survey this week shows that the largest taxpayer in the Back Mountain Region is the Committee of 100 which owns the building in which Linear, Inc., is located. Second highest taxpayers is Natona Mills. Taxes for the Linear Plant are paid in Dallas Township while taxes for nation Mills are divided between Dallas Borough and Dallas Township; local municipal tax being paid to Dallas Borough. The third largest taxpayer is Eyerman and Fine owners of Back Mountain Shopping Center whose taxes go to Kingston Township.

Robert Voelker will be installed tomorrow afternoon as postmaster of the Shavertown Post Office, an appointment which was confirmed July 2.

30 Years Ago - Aug. 6, 1970
BACK MTN COMMUNITY WILL HAVE 24-HOUR POLICE

A new county program which will bring 24-hour police service to the Back Mountain Community will be initiated September 1,

reports Nicholas Souchik, executive director of Luzerne County's Civil Defense Central Center. The new system Souchik said, will enable police "to render rapid, efficient police service on an emergency basis" to persons throughout the county. The system will be known as the Luzerne County Police Communications Center.

Mrs. T.M.B. Hicks recently returned from a trip abroad where she visited Norway, Sweden, and Denmark. "Hix" as she is known by her friends in the Back Mountain area, had a delightful time and will tell of her experiences in five installments to be published by the Dallas Post.

20 Years Ago - July 31, 1980
K-MART WILL NOT OPEN IN AREA

Recent reports that a K-Mart Store would be constructed on Route 309 in the vicinity of Coscia's Restaurant and the Center Hill and Hildebrandt Roads intersection are apparently unfounded. An official of K-Mart at the regional offices in Michigan denied the report stating that their office had no information on the construction of a store in that location.

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Mountaintop PA 18707
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

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Mundy's district encompasses: Dallas Borough, Dallas Township except for the north voting district, and Kingston Township.

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