

EDITORIALS

Read all about it,
the kids are all right!

The young people of today will be the leaders of tomorrow, and judging by the ones in this week's issue of *The Dallas Post*, we're in good hands. Their interests and activities run the gamut, from show horses to exotic travel, from softball to math. You can bet that many of them are competent at much more than one thing, and it is evident that they all want to do more than win a medal or hear the crowd cheering; they want to help and share with others.

As much as they might like to think so, they didn't get this way without help from loving and supportive parents, teachers, coaches and friends. One man who embodies all those qualities is also featured this week, Ron Moran, who is stepping down after more than a decade as coach of girls soccer at Dallas and nearly as many years as field hockey coach. Throughout his tenure, Ron has run the kind of program any school could be proud of; one that emphasizes personal growth, dedication and team spirit and which also happens to win more often than it loses. When he's asked about his best memories, Ron doesn't mention the playoff appearances or key victories, he talks about the enjoyment of working with young people, seeing them grow and having them come back and give him a small measure of credit for their success.

There are public service spots running on radio these days that lead you to believe our youth need to combat rampant, undesired reputations for rebellion, lawlessness and disrespect. While youth will always show some of those characteristics, it's good to see that when families and communities work together, the good far exceeds the bad.

Publisher's notebook

Ron Bartizek



Recent surveys have alarmed the journalistic community with reports that more and more people think the press has too much freedom and ought to be held more accountable for its reporting. One survey found about one of five people thought newspapers shouldn't be able to publish freely without government approval, and an astounding 23 percent said newspapers shouldn't be allowed to criticize public officials. I think we've reached this state of affairs for one of two reasons:

1. The press has spent too much time and ink on stories about sex, sleaze, sleazy sex and Survivor. Or,
2. About 23 percent of Americans now work for the government.

Of course, that still doesn't account for the 51 percent who think the press in America has too much freedom, or the 43 percent who say newspapers should not be allowed to endorse political candidates. Those numbers correspond roughly with the share of citizens who don't participate in the electoral process, so I'll take a wild guess that most of them don't vote. At least I hope that's who they are; it would be pretty scary to find that people who are politically active want the press to go away so they can spew out their biases without any balance.

I suspect one of the reasons people are responding this way to the press is because they see us as a monolithic industry with a single mindset. That's what Rush Limbaugh tells them, anyway. It's also possible that few people are making an effort to search out voices beyond the one that lands on their doorstep each morning, and they don't realize how much diversity exists in the tone, tenor and focus of news reporting.

It would be really interesting if the next pollster posing these kinds of questions also asked each respondent if it would be okay to outlaw coverage of their favorite subject or ban criticism of the public figure they dislike the most. The response might be similar to what happens when parents are asked about the state of education in America. Generally, they say things are pretty bad, but their school, it's okay. So, this sounds to me like a problem that is quite common in the modern American psyche: What I think and do is wonderful, but everyone else is suspect.

As for anyone who really believes freedom is too hot for individuals to handle, there are places for them. One is Baghdad.

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 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.

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Hay Bales in the Sun. Photo by Monica Marzani.

The economic
viewpoint

Howard Grossman

Tax increment financing can be used as a multiplier effect to enhance job opportunities, improve the overall tax base of a community, increase jobs, improve the infrastructure such as roads, streets, etc., in an area of a community which would then lead to further private sector development. If a tax increment financing project does not add jobs rather than redistribute jobs, then it is not doing its best to produce value to the community.

Tax increment financing provides the opportunity to utilize the increased value of taxes on properties designated by a tax increment and financing planning process to pay off bonds that have been issued for the project. This is why the word "increment" is so important.

A developer would go to the mayor or other community leaders and say that he or she would like to conduct a project within the community but needs governmental assistance.

An appropriately accomplished tax increment financing (TIF) should have significant impact on

Tax plans can finance growth

the community and probably be applied in deteriorated or run down areas which otherwise would not be developed or redeveloped.

Hopefully, not only would new jobs be created but new buildings and new infrastructure which would benefit as a result of the governmental financing technique.

TIF has been applied in Northeastern Pennsylvania. It has been utilized in the cities of Wilkes-Barre and Scranton, based upon legislative authority which was enacted into law by the General Assembly of Pennsylvania and signed by the Governor in 1992.

A recent study by the Allegheny Institute in Pittsburgh examined the role of TIF within the city of Pittsburgh, where many projects have been undertaken using this tool. Probably, an evaluation should be accomplished in Northeastern Pennsylvania, looking at the results of TIF and suggesting the possibility of this governmental assistance program being utilized in other geographic places across the region.

Another major tool of more recent vintage is the Keystone Opportunity Zone. Keystone Opportunity Zones provide tax abatement of up to 12 years in designated geographic areas wherein the local government, the school district, and county government have all agreed to this designation. Almost every tax applied in

the geographic area designated as Keystone Opportunity Zone (KOZ) is abated. Keystone Opportunity Zones exist in Lackawanna, Luzerne, Schuylkill, and Carbon counties under a plan which was approved by Pennsylvania Governor Tom Ridge in 1998. KOZ has already led to jobs coming to Northeastern Pennsylvania with a recent announcement, for example, by CanDo, the Hazleton area based industrial development organization, of the location of Convergys which is likely to result in over 600 jobs.

Keystone Opportunity Zones are modeled on the renaissance zones in Michigan but changes were made in the Pennsylvania legislation to enable zones in the Commonwealth to be somewhat more flexible. KOZ has become a new word in the vocabulary of economic development professionals in those areas of Northeastern Pennsylvania where they apply.

They should not be confused with enterprise zones, another Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development program originated many years ago and applied to many of the cities or more urban centers of Northeastern Pennsylvania. Enterprise zones exist in the cities of Scranton, Wilkes-Barre, Carbonade, Nanticoke, Pottsville, some mid-valley communities in Lackawanna County and elsewhere. Enterprise zones are more

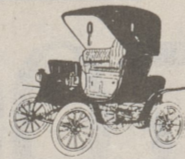
or less tied to central business districts and are administered by local authorities with close partnering with the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development.

These economic development incentive tools deserve close study and analysis on the part of local development corporations, and other economic development service providers to determine their full range opportunities, effectiveness, and capacity for encouraging the appropriate type of economic growth.

To accomplish this, perhaps one or more higher educational institutions in the region should be asked to conduct a study similar to the one which was recently published in the Pittsburgh region. By measuring the economic and overall community development impact of these tools, they can be better utilized and strengthened for the benefit of citizens and officials across Northeastern Pennsylvania in the coming generations ahead.

Anyone desiring additional information regarding any of these program assistance opportunity should contact the Economic Development Council of Northeastern Pennsylvania, 1151 Oak Street, Pittston, PA 18640. Telephone: (570) 655-5581, Fax: (570) 654-5137.

E-Mail: info@edcnp.org
Internet: www.edcnp.org.

ONLY
YESTERDAY70 Years Ago - Aug. 8, 1930
CRISPELL'S HOLD FAMILY
REUNION

The annual Crispell reunion was held at W.S. Kitchen's Grove in Idetown on Thursday, July 31. There had been three births and three marriages since 1929.

Forest fires at Cedar Run above Noxen and Loyalville kept more than 200 men occupied combating the flames with back fires and by digging fire lines and ditches.

60 Years Ago - Aug. 9, 1940
PROPOSAL FOR FIRE PLUGS
POSTPONED

A proposal to install fire plugs in central Dallas was submitted to Dallas Borough Council, but the councilmen postponed action

until they had time to investigate the situation thoroughly. The councilmen felt that it would be unfair to use tax money collected from all sections of the town to protect only one section. As an alternate plan, it was suggested that the council authorize the erection of gates which could be used to dam up Toby's Creek near Main Street, to assure an adequate supply of water in an emergency.

50 Years Ago - Aug. 11, 1950
ROSS TOWNSHIP CLOSING
SCHOOLS

Six one-room school houses in Ross Township were expected to close within the next three years. It was decided that a centrally located school in Sweet Valley would accommodate children from all six schools in first through sixth grades. Seventh and eighth graders would go to schools in Shickshinny Borough and Lehman. The projected building was expected to cost approximately \$143,000.

Now playing at Himmler Theatre "The Reformer and the Red Head" with June Allyson and Dick

Powell.

40 Years Ago - Aug. 11, 1960
DALLAS HAS FIRST BOMB
SCARE

Dallas had its first bomb scare when an unidentified mature, male voice called a Dallas bank and informed the telephone receptionist that "a bomb is in your bank and will go off shortly!" The operator quietly relayed the message to back officials who immediately notified local and state police and the FBI. Fortunately the message was received at 2:20 p.m., when there were few customers in the bank. An immediate and thorough search of the premises was made by bank employees. According to Commonwealth Telephone Company the call originated locally.

30 Years Ago - Aug. 13, 1970
NEW NURSERY SCHOOL
OPENS

A new nursery school was scheduled to open on Sept. 15, at

the Trinity United Methodist Church. Classes would be held from 9:30 a.m. to 12 p.m., four days a week. Out-of-doors play facilities would include swing sets, sliding boards and tricycles. Tuition at the school was \$30 per month.

You could get: California steak, 79¢/lb.; Sweet corn, 59¢/doz.; Jumbo honeydews, 79¢ each; Eight O'Clock Coffee, 3 lb. bag, \$2.35; Jane Parker sandwich cookies, 1.5 lb. pkg., 49¢; Breyers ice cream, \$1.49/half gallon.

20 Years Ago - Aug. 7, 1980
MICU CELEBRATES FIRST
ANNIVERSARY

July 28, marked the first anniversary of the Back Mountain Intensive Care Unit (MICU) and the paramedics who operated the vehicle. The eight paramedics provided assistance to the local ambulances in cases of severe injury of sudden illness when advanced life support techniques were required. The MICU was provided through the cooperative efforts of the Dallas Area Fall Fair Association and the Luzerne County Fair.

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