

EDITORIALS

You can fight city hall, and you can win

In an age of talk radio ranters and voter apathy, the modest folks at the Lake Silkworth Protective Association provide a study in effective public advocacy.

Key members of the 72-year-old association don't just complain when they see deficiencies in government or private influences on the lake, they step forward and take action. They know that nothing gets done by people who lurk in the shadows, too intimidated by irrational fear of retaliation to speak their minds. They also understand that simply nagging government officials or careless neighbors won't produce lasting solutions to problems, so they back up their requests with supporting information. Then they follow through by helping to implement the programs they have argued for.

They aren't the only ones who know how to nudge government to do the right thing. At Harveys Lake, Millie Monk led a long and lonely fight to fix worn and inadequate roads in the Hemlock Gardens development. Shortly after the borough council appointed her to a committee looking into the issue, the borough received a large grant that could be the first step in correcting a 20-year problem.

There could be many success stories like these if more people would throw off the mantle of helplessness and fear that leads them to whine around the kitchen table about government inadequacy, then not bother to attend a township meeting, or even to vote. A little spunk and homework can go a long way when presented with a positive spirit of cooperation. We hope others are inspired by these success stories, and will take a fresh approach to resolving issues in their communities and schools.

Publisher's notebook

Ron Bartizek



Even if you're not much of a sports fan, it's been hard to miss the adulation heaped on Tiger Woods this year. All of it is well-deserved, in my mind. But his success and popularity may be a danger to the game of golf. (Notice I said "game," not "sport?") It's still possible for a paunchy guy or gal who couldn't run a 100 yards in less than a minute to win a golf tournament.)

I'm speaking, of course, about the suggestion that golf may go "prime time." That came about after a made-for-television match between Woods and the Spanish youth phenom Sergio Garcia, staged the Monday after Woods's latest triumph, drew a respectable evening audience, many of them non-golfers. Even though the event took place in California, the final holes took place under lights, just like in baseball. That's where the similarity to "major" sports ends, as far as I'm concerned, and I'm not happy about the prospect of golf becoming just another overhyped entertainment extravaganza. You know, like football.

Maybe I'm old-fashioned (Maybe? you ask incredulously. Undoubtedly!), but I love the game of golf for all its subtleties and rituals. Things like courtesy and honesty, which seem to have no place in big-time sports. In golf, players call penalties on themselves, and it's not unusual for a golfer to lose a chance at winning — and lots of money — because at the end of the round they realize they made a mistake eight holes earlier. Can you imagine a batter in baseball turning to the umpire and saying, "That really was a strike, not a ball. I'm out." Or a receiver correcting the official when he actually scooped the football off the turf?

Then there are the fans. Golf had been fortunate to attract spectators who had a great deal of respect for the game, its traditions and the players. Golf fans were overwhelmingly attentive and appreciative of good play, no matter who was doing the driving or putting. Through no fault of his own, except perhaps for his fist-pumping enthusiasm, Tiger has attracted a new breed of fan, raucous and more concerned with their own fun than with courtesy to the players. The Professional Golfers Association has added fuel to the fire by enticing more and bigger sponsors to offer more "hospitality," as in free beer, to clients and spectators who behave like college students on spring break. Maybe after paying \$100 for a ticket, they feel entitled.

Those are some of the reasons I'd hate to see golf go prime-time, and end up like hockey or football. That is unless it would replace those new "reality" shows that make the rudest, crudest golf fans look like saints.

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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Three heads are better than one. Photo by Charlotte Bartizek.

What's on the Horizon?



Marshall Rumbaugh

This is a monthly column written by members of the North Branch Land Trust, which is headquartered in Trucksville.

Pennsylvania's forests were once home to many large animals that have now disappeared, like the panther, elk and wolf. Most people would be surprised to learn that our state was also inhabited by large herds of buffalo. As late as 1773, one herd along the west branch of the Susquehanna River was estimated to have 12,000 animals.

Wintering as far south as Georgia, the bison made their way to Pennsylvania as the weather warmed, attracted to the wild grasses which grew along rivers and streams. They migrated in an orderly fashion, often going in single file along the Susquehanna River. Their pounding hooves sometimes compacted the river trails to a depth of two feet. (Picture hundreds of bison making their way into the Back Mountain, plodding along Toby's Creek where now a busy highway lies.)

As European settlers poured into America, however, the buffalo migration was disrupted.

How PA lost its last buffalo

Many settlers were people of humble origin whose forefathers were not allowed to carry guns or hunt in the game preserves of the gentry in the old country. The buffalo migrations became an occasion of abandonment when the settlers would wait at the passes overlooking the trails and slaughter the animals as they went by.

One can only speculate as to the fate of the last member of any species now gone from the land. Was the last wolf shot by a farmer protecting his livestock? Did the last panther die of starvation in a lonely den covered with snow? Was the last elk run to ground by a hunter's pack of dogs? But the fate of the last buffalo in Pennsylvania is known and the story is stranger than fiction.

By the summer of 1799, there was only one small herd of buffalo left in Pennsylvania, numbering about 400. Unable to migrate south, the animals faced starvation in the bleak, snowcovered mountains.

One winter's day, led by a giant black bull whom the settlers named "Old Logan," the herd came down from the mountains and onto land cleared by a man named Samuel McClellan, who killed several buffalo as they passed his

cabin. The starving animals fled into the barnyard of Martin Bergstresser where his sheep and cattle were grazing around a large haystack.

Led by Old Logan, the buffaloes broke down a fence and crushed the helpless domestic animals in their path. Aided by Sam McClellan and his 18-year-old daughter Katie, Bergstresser killed four of the buffalo. Panicked by the killing and the attacks of the settler's dogs, the starving bison fled the barnyard leaving behind a scene of destruction. Although the barn was still standing the spring house and haystack were gone; six cows, four calves and 35 sheep lay dead.

Feeling good about having driven off the destructive herd, Sam McClellan headed for home. His good mood was short-lived, for as he came in sight of his clearing, he saw the buffalo circling his small cabin. Thinking only of his family, McClellan fought his way through the herd to his cabin door where he confronted Old Logan. He fired and wounded the old bull who then crashed through the cabin door. Others from the herd followed their leader and crowded into the cabin. McClellan tried to stop them, slashing with his bear knife. But unable to enter the cabin, he ran to Bergstresser's for help. When they returned, the only sound coming from the house was the hideous snorting and bumping of the buffaloes within. Finally after tearing down one of the cabin

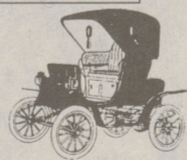
walls, they killed Old Logan and were at last able to drive the herd away. In what was left of the cabin, not a stick of furniture remained. The bodies of McClellan's wife and three children had been crushed and trampled deep in the mud of the earthen floor.

As word of the tragedy spread, it was decided that the buffalo should be hunted down. A posse of 50 hunters was formed. After several days tracking, the herd was found, starving and trapped in crusted snowdrifts west of Lewisburg. The hunters took quick advantage and moved in among the buffalo, shooting and stabbing and bludgeoning the helpless animals to death until the snow was red with their blood. Motivated more by revenge, the men took no meat or hides. The slaughter continued until not a living bison remained. Then the men climbed to the top of the mountain and built a bonfire to celebrate the destruction of the last herd of buffalo in Pennsylvania.

Note from Marshall Rumbaugh: Marion Schock was the author of the original story, written prior to 1936. It first appeared in a newspaper article, which is where Theodore Long discovered it and included it in his *Tales of the Cocolamus*, copyright 1936.

Marshall Rumbaugh is a local artist, and a lifelong resident of the Back Mountain and a member and volunteer of the Land Trust.

ONLY YESTERDAY



70 Years Ago - Sept. 5, 1930

TYPHOID FEVER OUTBREAK

Tunkhannock was experiencing its first outbreak of typhoid fever in many years. Noted throughout the state for its excellent water supply and healthful living conditions, the community had been proud of its ability to deter serious epidemics. It was thought that the outbreak originated at a milk station where Tunkhannock residents purchased their raw milk supply. After discovering the place from which the illness came, health authorities began seeking the carrier. Samples of all the milk shipped to the station were taken and tested and it was expected that authorities would soon be able to determine which farm the milk carrying the disease came from. It was ordered that milk was no longer to be sold at the station without first being pasteurized.

60 Years Ago - Sept. 6, 1940

MORE STUDENTS IN DALLAS

At the beginning of the school year in Dallas Borough, student

enrollment totaled 311, an increase of 12 students over the previous year. T.A. Williammee, supervising principal, stated that of the 331 students, 176 were in the high school and 155 in the elementary grades, including 25 students who were starting the first grade.

More than 50,000 school children from central Pennsylvania were going to attend the Bloomsburg Fair during the 86th annual exhibition which was to open Sept. 23. Directors of the fair were busy perfecting plans for the distribution of tickets to school children in neighboring counties. In the past, many school's had brought along their bands, and it was not unusual for there to be at least a dozen performing on the grounds at one time.

50 Years Ago - Sept. 8, 1950

BOY LOSES VISION IN EYE

A Dallas High School student lost the central vision in his right eye when a friend playfully threw an apple at him the previous week. The apple struck him in the eye causing a hemorrhage which resulted in the loss of sight. He was treated by Dr. James Jordan of Scranton who permitted him to return to school, but instructed the child to "take it easy" for six months by reading as little as possible with his other eye and not participating in sports or other activities.

You could get: Porterhouse steak, 89¢/lb.; Uncle Ben's con-

verted rice, 14 oz. pkg., 21¢; strawberries, 12 oz. pkg., 39¢; baby lima beans, 12 oz. pkg., 31¢; Sunshine krispy crackers, 1 lb. pkg., 27¢; Cream of Wheat cereal, 1 lb. pkg., 31¢; Nabisco Ritz crackers, 1 lb. pkg., 31¢; Spry, 1 lb. can, 34¢.

40 Years Ago - Sept. 8, 1960

TELEPHONE COMPANY CELEBRATES

Commonwealth Telephone Company installed its 75,000th telephone in the home of Mr. and Mrs. William Geiger, Oak Hill. In 1928, Commonwealth had 6,000 subscribers and a general plant in need of immediate repair. The company had since reconstructed its entire outside plant, constructed numerous unattended dial exchange buildings and converted 92% of its system to dial. Commonwealth had expanded until it served approximately 4,600 square miles of eastern Pennsylvania. Plant valuation exceeded \$24 million, compared with \$1.5 million in 1928. Now playing at Luzerne Theatre, "Who Was That Lady" with Tony Curtis, Dean Martin & Janet Leigh.

30 Years Ago - Sept. 10, 1970

91 YR. OLD BUILDING RAZED

The old school building known as the Shavertown Annex, located near the Back Mountain shop-

ping center, was in the process of being torn down by demolition experts. Built in 1879, the building originally housed four classes. Grades one through three attended elementary classes there, and the school had been proud of its modern coal furnace. The school was then superseded by the new Shavertown Elementary School built next-door, and shortly after 1917, the building was abandoned by the Kingston Township School District as a classroom building. Since then, the building had been used as a storage area, a voting place, and a Back Mountain branch of the Wilkes-Barre YMCA.

20 Years Ago - Sept. 4, 1980

4-H COWKIDS COMPETE

Three of six entries from the Luzerne County 4-H CowKids dairy club were blue ribbon winners at the Northeastern 4-H District Dairy Show held in Troy. The three winners were then eligible to exhibit their calves at the Pennsylvania State 4-H Show later in the month.

Mrs. Judith Dawe and Joseph Reina, both residents of Lehman Township, each demonstrated a craft on Colonial Craft Day at the Nathan Denison House in Forty Fort. Mrs. Dawe demonstrated the art of caning, while Reina, a Lehman Township police officer and instructor at LCCC, demonstrated black powder muzzle loading and wood carving.