

## Lake protectors

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then worked with the township supervisors to get an ordinance passed.

The association also works in other ways to maintain the lake. They have a permit from the PA Fish Commission to regulate the water level at the lake, and the lake is lowered about a foot in the winter to prevent damage to docks. The association also works with county offices to monitor growth of gypsy moth populations, and has a private contractor spray the area when necessary.

The association is now becoming an active part of the region's environmental community. "We're just getting into the environmental end," said Kivler.

Although all the Protective Association's members contribute to the preservation of the lake, one person has come to the front of the association's environmental focus. Jack Hanish has become one of the most visible members of the group, and is chairman of the committee responsible for surveying and monitoring water quality at the lake. He regularly attends meetings of the Lehman Township supervisors, and the group "Defend Our Watershed."

Hanish's family lived in Nanticoke, and they would spend time at the lake during the summer. Hanish said the Lake Silkworth area was home to a lively social scene in the 1950s, made up in part of the migrants from Nanticoke. He would often hunt for grouse and squirrel on land now privately owned.



J.P. Hanish uses a Global Positioning System (GPS) unit to find the boat's exact place on the lake in preparation for testing the water.

*"People have an obligation to make sure the food and water supplies are preserved. We're in a critical stage here."*

**Jack Hanish**  
Lake Silkworth Protective Ass'n.

Many of the methods he uses to set and accomplish goals come from his background in engineering and industry. Hanish earned a degree in general sciences from Penn State, and also served in the Air Force. He went on to design aircraft cockpits for Grumman, and later worked in their aerospace division.

Hanish works with several local and state agencies such as the Luzerne County Conservation District, the Fish and Boat Commission, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and Lehman Township supervisors to help stay informed and maintain the lake.

Hanish considers himself a better researcher than public speaker or ambassador. "You have to lay out the ground work before you open your mouth," he said. "These guys (government officials) are busy, but they're also trying to get the squeaky wheel. You've got to get the facts and present them. People won't argue with the facts."

"Sometimes it's easier to get forgiveness than permission," he said. "You have to know your limits, but you have to charge forward."

David Sutton, chairman of the Lehman Township supervisors, is impressed with Hanish's approach. "Jack Hanish always does his homework. He never asks for things that are unreasonable," Sutton said.

One of the protective association's newest environmental projects involves testing samples of lake water on a regular basis. The association has tested the lake water annually, but they now sample the water more frequently. "We're hoping to apply



POST PHOTOS/BILL GOODMAN

John Cooper, left, a director of the Protective Association, and Jack Hanish sit atop the repaired bridge at the Lake Silkworth outlet, are one of the many projects the Association has completed to improve conditions at the Lake.

for grants once we get data," Kivler said.

Hanish wants to involve younger people in preserving the lake. He acts as civilian mentor to Elliot Wright, a student at Lake-Lehman High School, who helps prepare equipment, collect and process the samples, and record data. The program is done in conjunction with the Lake-Lehman school district. Hanish's teenage son, J.P., also helps test and process lake water samples.

Like other citizens concerned with the sale of the former watershed lands, Hanish feels the areas are something people didn't think about until after they were gone. "People who have used that land for years, for right or wrong, are now being denied access. That's a shame," he said.

Because he's worked in other parts of the country, Hanish is

able to see a bigger picture, and he often doesn't like the direction the area is headed. "People have an obligation to make sure the food and water supplies are preserved. We're in a critical stage here. There's a price to be paid for development," he said.

The small changes caused by land development and poor land management practices add up. Because of soil runoff from the logging being done on former watershed land, Hanish said the Pike's Creek Reservoir may drop substantially even during minor droughts. Temperatures in waterways near the deforested areas may also begin to rise, he said. Luzerne County is also part of the drainage area to the Chesapeake Bay, and it will also be affected by changes occurring here.

Hanish said the key to accomplishing goals is involvement and

education. "You have to encourage the people that are affected," he said. Hanish said people have been too complacent, and citizens and government agencies are starting to take notice of the changes happening around them.

Kivler and Hanish both want to see the area of the lake improve, not go downhill. Kivler is also active in the Lake Silkworth Volunteer Fire Company, serving as president of the company and captain of the fire police. Like many service organizations, many members of the association get involved and stay involved. Kivler said he has been part of the organization for about 35 years.

If members like Kivler and Hanish have their way, the protective association will make as much difference in the life of Lake Silkworth in the next 70 years as it has in the past.

## Dolloff

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2000 which were done by different firms, but basically said the same thing. Pasonick's letter included "the runoff from the embankment is still going onto the Moretti property."

She says she doesn't understand why the borough has not taken action about this since the runoff then goes to the street and into the lake. In addition to the lack of soil stability, Moretti says that she also gets runoff from a pond which Dolloff dug out. "The overflow water goes into my back yard like it is a catch basin," she says. Walks in her yard require boots, since it is always wet, she claims.

Moretti says new zoning officer Milton Lutsey didn't know about the case. Now she wonders if Dolloff got an occupancy permit before moving into his new home with construction remaining. She says that she tried to call the zoning board solicitor, but was told that he had resigned. This past Friday, she says that she received a message from Richard Haas, chairman of the zoning board, saying there would be a special meeting called, date unspecified.

Moretti said that she would move, but she can't find a buyer for her home, even though she has had it for sale for the past eight years. Lawyers have told her that she can't sue the borough. Now she feels betrayed by the zoning board and borough council. She is angry that Dolloff has not been held to the deadline and conditions set by the zoning board which included a \$50 fine for every day not in compliance. In spite of progress on his house, she does not see this as the resolution of the real problem.

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