

EDITORIALS

Can't handle a saw? Here's a way to help Habitat

This is the season of giving, and folks in the Back Mountain are finding all manner of ways to help others have a better life, at least for a little while. Food drives bring in thousands of items that can fill empty stomachs, which are more numerous than we imagine. Students at Dallas and Lake-Lehman schools have completed coat collections so that children and adults who can't afford to buy winter garments won't have to shiver in the biting winter wind. And a group of energetic and concerned people even helps refurbish houses for families that would otherwise not know the comfort and security of their own home.

Habitat for Humanity is an international organization that has attracted local volunteers who donate time, money and materials to renovate and construct modest but serviceable housing for low-income families. Well, not exactly *for*, more like *with*, since the homeowners must work alongside the volunteers to demonstrate their commitment to improving their living conditions. Begun in 1976, Habitat has attracted high profile volunteers such as former President Jimmy Carter, and Back Mountain residents like Morag Michael. She and many other local folks have worked on Habitat homes in the past, and are near completion on a project that will benefit a family in Nanticoke.

The local chapter of Habitat for Humanity will hold a fundraising concert Friday, Dec. 8 at the Shavertown United Methodist Church. You may never want to swing a hammer or frame out a window, but this is your chance to support people who take on those tasks so that deserving families will have a decent place to live. The concert, which features Rev. Janet Clark, a co-pastor at the church as a member of the Sister Spirit singing group, begins at 8 p.m. They'll be joined by A Touch of Brass, a five-piece band, for an evening of enjoyable seasonal entertainment.

Publisher's notebook

Ron Bartzek



Try as they might, everyone born after My Generation can't escape us Baby Boomers. Don't believe it? Then why was the top-selling album last week "1," containing 27 of the Beatles greatest hits. So what if it was released 30 years after the band broke up, the Beatles still rule! (To use an up-to-date phrase.)

And what about this year's (and maybe next year's) presidential election? Two Baby Boomer-types from head to toe, unwilling to give up their prize even if it means the destruction of the republic. It's not exactly like occupying buildings at Columbia, but it shows that our spirit of rebellion — or was it entitlement — hasn't disappeared. Then again, W doesn't seem to have rebelled against his folks, unless you count going into the baseball instead of the oil business evidence of youthful defiance.

It's going to get worse, folks. I heard a report on the radio the other day to the effect that businesses catering to the "over 50" crowd are expected to do just fine, thank you, even if the general economy collapses. It seems we Boomers are doing a good job of hanging on to our money, or maybe it's the zillions we're inheriting from our thrifty parents. Either way, if you're selling convertibles to geezers, or retirement housing, things are looking bright. As for the rest of you who depend on younger people's cash — well, don't plan that McMansion just yet. They'll have to wait for us to take our last breath before they get their hands on our mutual funds.

Some economists say the Boomer generation is so dominating just because of its size. Phooey I say; it's obvious that our superior intelligence and moral authority are the keys to our success. Just look at the public figures who came out of our times: Martha Stewart, Carlos Santana, Bill Clinton. Well, maybe not all of us fit the same mold.

Anyway, we Boomers are here to stay, at least for another 30 years or so, so get used to it.

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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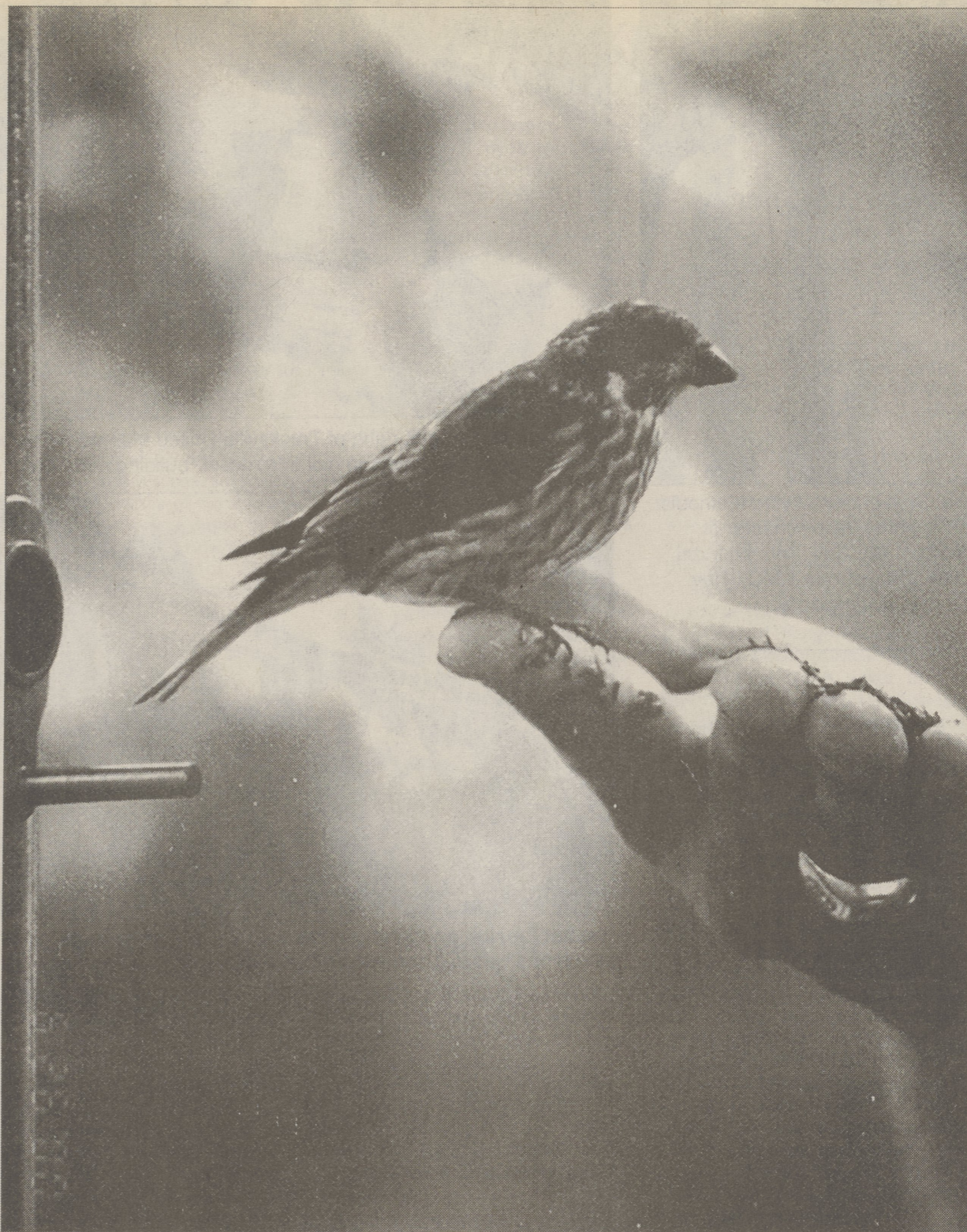
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A fine, feathered friend. Photo by Anker Petersen.

LETTERS

Stores asked to handle magazines with care

Editor,
A national organization to which we belong, named "Morality in Media", has urged us and others to write to our local supermarkets to complain about the display of offensive magazine covers in checkout lanes, where such covers can readily be seen and read by young children exiting the store with their mothers.

We wrote to three local supermarkets, Mr. Z's, BiLo, and the Thomas Family Market on July 30, October 4 and again, in the case of BiLo, on October 23, requesting these stores to shield particularly salacious magazine covers from the view of children exiting their stores.

Mr. Z's responded immediately to the effect that they were already beginning a "shield" pro-

gram in all of their stores. The Thomas Family Market has ignored our letters. BiLo ignored our initial letter, but responded to our second letter to the effect that they had never before received a complaint about the display of salacious magazine covers in checkout lanes or elsewhere, that their policy was currently being reviewed, and that their current policy (or what we would call their current lack of policy) would remain in effect pending the completion of their review process.

We advised these stores on October 4 that it would be our intention to publicize in the local media the names of local markets which had responded to our complaints and the nature of their response, and that is our reason for writing to you.

Those who wish to thank Mr. Z's for their willingness to help deal with the problem of salacious magazine covers can do so by their patronage and also in whatever other way they deem appropriate, and those who disapprove of the indifference shown by the Thomas Family Market and the lack of any affirmative action by BiLo may do so, of course, by withholding their patronage, by oral or written complaints to the management, and by any other manner which they see fit to employ. In the absence of more than one complaint, the latter two stores will obviously do nothing.

R.L. Fleming
E.D. Fleming
Dallas

A pair of special side dishes for the season

Fans of National Public Radio's All Things Considered, the evening news show, have been treated for many years to this recipe, provided by Susan Stamberg, the host for 20 years. It came from her late mother-in-law, and in addition to being given over the air each November, Ms. Stamberg has generously posted it, and another favorite, on the NPR website, www.npr.org. The recipes are reprinted without permission but we hope Ms. Stamberg and the folks at NPR will forgive our failure to obtain same in the spirit of the season.

Mama Stamberg's Cranberry Relish Recipe

- * 2 cups raw cranberries
- * 1 small onion
- * 1/2 cup sugar
- * 3/4 cup sour cream
- * 2T Horseradish

Grind the cranberries & onion together...Add remaining ingredients and mix.
Put in a plastic container and freeze. An hour before serving, move the container from the freezer to the refrigerator compartment to thaw. The relish will be thick, creamy, and shocking pink. Makes 1 1/2 pints!

And here's a little something extra — my TRULY favorite cranberry sidedish. It's from Madhur Jaffrey's Cookbook - East/West Menus for Family and Friends, published by Harper & Row, 1987

Garlicky Cranberry Chutney

- * 1-inch fresh ginger
- * 3 cloves finely chopped garlic
- * 1/2 cup apple cider vinegar
- * 4 TBS sugar
- * 1/8 tsp cayenne pepper
- * 1-lb. can cranb. sauce with berries
- * 1/2 tsp salt (or less)
- * ground black pepper

Cut ginger into paperthin slices, stack them together and cut into really thin slivers.

Combine ginger, garlic, vinegar, sugar and cayenne in a small pot.

Bring to a simmer, simmer on medium flame about 15 minutes or until there are about 4 TBS liquid left.

Add can of cranberry sauce, salt and pepper. Mix and bring to a simmer. Lumps are ok.

Simmer on a gentle heat for about 10 minutes. Cool, store and refrigerate. It will keep for several days, if you don't finish it ALL after first taste!

The Senior Side



Jack Hilsher

An open letter to 'Square Rats'

Although this column is for seniors, I've been reading about how teenagers are having all sorts of serious problems, like "finding themselves" or "learning who they are," and being called "Square Rats" because they are bored out of their skulls and "hang out" on Wilkes-Barre's Public Square until the fuzz boots them out.

I've also observed their antics first-hand, watching a group in front of the Martz bus terminal bounce a ball using only their feet. Very clever. And their sport caps were turned around so the sun visor was in the back. I remember that great remark by a Valley West coach to his team: "As soon as you turn your caps backward you automatically drop 50 points in your IQ." He should have been given a medal.

Anyway you poor, bored, bewildered young persons, leaving aside the question of why your parents didn't tell you this stuff, I have decided to help. First, there is a wonderful building on South Franklin called a library. A library is a building where a collection of books and magazines are kept. If you can read, in time spent there (or in branch libraries all over the Valley) you will discover new worlds of great wonder. You will be transported there and boredom will be banished forever.

When I grew up in Williamsport (pronounced "Weeyamport"), we had a public square too, but I seldom hung out there, only passed through to visit the James V. Brown library where I spent so much time people probably thought I lived there. But perhaps books bore you.

If so, no problem. Go to the "Y" and play handball, or swim, or play table tennis, or basketball. Join the chess club and challenge your mind. Try tennis. Try any activity and see your muddly thoughts clear up as soon as you become refreshingly tired.

Not the active type? Then get a hobby. In my teen years two out of every three boys collected stamps or coins. The third built model airplanes. (What girls did I can't say because my interest in them came only after they started changing shape.)

Try a dog and take him for a walk, or raise tropical fish ... get a boy fish and a girl fish and count the babies. If I still have not turned you on to something and you just want to "hang out" then why the Square? I realize there are no more front porches, where you could swing and think, but what about: dens, family rooms, rec rooms? A pool table? Card games, board games, Monopoly, checkers, dominos? Fun then, fun now.

But the games you choose to play scare me. The newspaper article depicting current teen activity tells of something called "Vampires" where dice and role playing are involved, with different players taking on different characters. It said shootings and stabbings are involved somehow and kept the group "laughing for at least 20 minutes."

This kept me just about speechless. The paper this story appeared in is often fond of "viewing with alarm" and has come close to predicting the end of civilization itself. Yet they did not bat an eye or a comma about such behavior. I can't figure out why. One concern I have is when they reach voting age will we have a hip-hop rapper for president? (Not that it wouldn't present an improvement over what we now have.)

At any rate, my Square friends, I sincerely trust that this has all been of some help. As for me, it has been, like, totally awesome man!

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