

EDITORIALS

Hemlock Gardens proves determined citizens can win

Maybe you can't fight city hall and win, but sometimes you can work around and with the powers that be to accomplish useful goals. That may be the lesson in the saga of Hemlock Gardens, a development at Harveys Lake that has been plagued by road and runoff problems for years, but may now be getting some help.

Millie Monk and her husband, Bill, have lived at Hemlock Gardens for some time, long enough to see the development's steep dirt roads become rutted and nearly impassable. For much of that time, Millie tried to get the Harveys Lake Borough Council to step in and improve the situation, which is not only uncomfortable but dangerous, and a threat to the health of the lake. Her pleas never seemed to spark action until she began to look into state grant money that could be used to repair the Hemlock Gardens roads. She found some, with plenty of help from the borough's Environmental Advisory Council, the Luzerne County Conservation District, county commissioner Stephen Urban and Dr. Fred Lubnow, of the firm that will now use the \$156,550 grant to improve drainage and make improvements to the roadways.

There's still a long way to go before the roads in Hemlock Gardens are up to the standards we expect, but the first step in the improvement process will be taken soon, thanks to Millie Monk's never-say-die attitude.

Students have much to teach about tolerance

Students at Dallas High School are working hard to break the stereotypes and prejudices that are still too common in the Back Mountain. The Diversity Club, only three years old, now has 70 members and has helped raise awareness of issues that might otherwise be overlooked in our relatively sheltered setting. Club members have sponsored programs on the Holocaust, Dr. Martin Luther King and other topics. They have gone out of their way to promote tolerance of those with backgrounds and lifestyles outside the local mainstream, with some success, according to Robyn Jones, guidance counselor.

All has not been sweetness and light along the way; some club members have been subject to taunts and their posters are occasionally defaced by immature classmates who aren't comfortable with diversity. But club members carry on, mindful of their motto, "Respect the dignity of all people." Their actions can be an inspiration for all of us.

Publisher's notebook

Ron Bartizek



I'm dizzy. It seems mere months ago, we were the luckiest people ever to inhabit the earth, at least in a financial sense. It was "the longest expansion in American history," to quote umpteen press releases, especially the ones coming out of the White House. Job growth and home ownership were at all-time highs, credit was free and easy and the stock market — well, it was just racing into the stratosphere. There even was a book out titled "Dow 36,000," in which the author made the case that stocks weren't overvalued, it was our fuddy-duddy thinking that kept them at depressed levels, even as prices soared. And to whom did we owe gratitude for this seemingly endless prosperity? Why to a quiet former musician named Alan Greenspan, the president of the Federal Reserve, otherwise known as Alan the Omnipotent.

That was then, and this is now. Unemployment is still the same, wages are growing a bit faster and the markets are in the tank. Why? Because old Uncle Alan didn't get it perfect. It turns out that as he quaked in fear of inflation, he raised interest rates too high, and thus stopped consumer demand dead in its tracks. And, as we are reminded endlessly, that's two-thirds of our economy. The result of Alan's gross error was that corporate profits weren't as strong as expected for three months or maybe even six, which apparently is the modern equivalent of the Apocalypse.

This reminds me of sports reporting in the year 2001. If a team loses two games in a row, it's as if they might as well fold up their tent and go home. But let them win the next two and they're considered practically unstoppable. In the same way, stocks hit lows — since last March!! — and you'd think the certificates might be useful only as toilet paper.

But don't worry, the pundits say; the worst will be over by mid-year, and we can resume our eternal quest for material fulfillment, secure in the knowledge that while the stock market goes up for 10 years at a time, it only goes down for half a year. At least that's what the guys who peddle shares say.

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The Dallas Post

TIMES-LEADER COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER GROUP

P.O. Box 366, Dallas PA 18612 • 570-675-5211

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Clothespins, not birds, flock together on an empty winter clothesline. Photo by Charlotte Bartizek.

The Senior Side



Jack Hilsher

If you were listening to the radio 50 years ago on a Sunday night at nine o'clock, you must have heard this: "Good evening Mr and Mrs North America - from border to border and coast to coast - and all the ships at sea." This announcement was followed by the clicking of a telegraph key. You were hearing the most hated, and famous, journalist of the 20th century ... Walter Winchell.

And if you weren't listening back then you belong to a different generation. Explaining Winchell to you will be almost impossible, but I will try. In his prime, Winchell, reporter, gossip columnist and political commentator, had an audience each week never before equalled, or since, and I include Larry King, Huntley and Brinkley, Murray and Brokaw. I'll even throw in Joyce Brothers.

Out of an adult population of 75 million, at the very least 50 million either listened to his weekly

The Stork Club, icon of New York

broadcasts or read his daily newspaper column. Winchell became enormously powerful. He made stars out of Arthur Godfrey, Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz. He pushed Franklin Roosevelt into an unprecedented third term as President. He made friends. He made enemies. Both fed his ego. Dorothy Parker said, "Poor Walter. He's afraid he'll wake up some day and discover he's not Walter Winchell."

One of his most notorious achievements, which proves the word to be a mighty effective instrument, was the world famous Stork Club in New York City. Owner Sherman Billingsley said, "Walter made me a multimillionaire after my first plug in his column." For 20 years, Winchell wrote constantly about the club and made it the most famous night spot in America.

Billingsley was strange. Shrewd, but strange. He talked little of his past, but would remark offhandedly to reporters, "I killed a man back in Oklahoma." He had been arrested and convicted twice for liquor law violations, was sentenced to 15 months in Leavenworth and fined \$5,000. He served less than four months.

In the '20s Billingsley ran a speakeasy and then in 1933 when booze became legal opened up the



Reproduction of a Stork Club matchbook cover.

lavish Stork Club on 53rd St. He would give Winchell fawning attention, Walter would return again and again, calling it in his columns "the New Yorkiest Place in New York." The two became friends and Billingsley had it made.

In 1943 the Stork Club grossed \$1.25 million and was averaging 2,000 guests on weeknights, 3,000 on weekends. Breakage and theft alone - mainly of the famous Stork Club ashtrays - amounted to \$25,000 per year. In 1944 Mayor La Guardia discovered sales tax padding but since checks were placed face down it was said that "only an outlander who should not be at the Stork Club at all

would turn the check over to total up the bill."

When Billingsley expanded he added the "Cub Room," designed so Winchell could preside from Table 50 over a roomful of celebrities, eliminating contact with lesser-knowns in the main room. Blacks were never seen there, but they rarely appeared outside of Harlem. Prominent Jews came but if unknown to Billingsley found themselves turned away at the door. If they asked about empty tables they were said to be reserved.

Billingsley had his prejudices but anyone familiar with the club knew about them. So did Winchell. An associate once complained to him, creating one of the most-quoted Winchell legends, "My God, Walter, how can you be friends with that guy? You love Roosevelt and stick up for the Wagner Act and he fights the unions. You're an enemy of prejudice - and he hates 'niggers.' You're a Jew and he's anti-Semitic!"

"I know, I know," Walter replied sadly. "But Sherman never lets me see that side of him."

So there, younger generation, is the story of the world's most famous night club. Sherman Billingsley may have owned it, but Walter Winchell made it.

ONLY YESTERDAY



70 Years Ago - Jan. 9, 1931 EXPLODING STOVE CAUSES SHAVERTOWN FIRE

Considerable damage was done to furniture in the home of Stanley Coslete, of Shaver Ave., Shavertown, Saturday evening, when a stove in the kitchen exploded, when a new fire had been started in it.

After warning his children not to cross the main highway in the vicinity of the Lutheran church, where they were coasting on the Franklin St. hill, Dorey Kitchen, 45, Shavertown, received injuries to his head when the sled on which he and two other men were coasting on Friday evening crashed into a truck belonging to the Mountain Springs Ice Company, after the front end of the truck had passed over the crossing.

60 Years Ago - Jan. 10, 1941 DALLAS SHUT-INS ENJOY HOLIDAYS

Members of Dallas Shut-in Society had a jolly holiday season filled with gifts and Christmas goodies.

Plans for a new three-lane highway from Dallas to Harvey's Lake are nearing completion in the engineering offices of the State High-

way Department at Scranton.

Workman for Banks Construction Company began pouring cement this week for the over-pass bridge on the new Dallas-Trucks-ville highway where it crosses Fernbrook Avenue near Colonial Inn. When completed the new bridge will be one of the most unusual and beautiful parts of the highway, eliminating a dangerous road crossing. At this point all traffic from Fernbrook Corners to the junction with Pioneer Avenue at Cobb's Corners will pass over the Dallas-Trucks-ville road.

Dallas Post office closed its December quarter with the largest volume of holiday business in its history and with total receipts for the year which Postmaster Polacky believes will raise the rating of the office from third to second class.

50 Years Ago - Jan. 12, 1951 KILER UPDYKE TO LEAVE KOREA FOR CALIFORNIA

Mr. and Mrs. Palmer Updyke have had a letter from Kiler, dated January 1, in which he reports that he will be flown from Base Hospital in Korea to San Francisco. He hopes to be hospitalized somewhere nearer home eventually, until shrapnel and mortar shell wounds received early in September are completely healed.

Robert Henney, son of Mr. and Mrs. Ray Henney of Kunkle, has been called back into the U.S. Navy and is at present aboard the destroyer U.S.S. Stribling at Portsmouth, Va. He will return to duty Sunday after being granted a leave

to attend the funeral of his grandmother, Mrs. Otto Stompler.

40 Years Ago - Jan. 12, 1961 TAPE RECORDER IS PTA PROJECT

Purchase of an opaque projector and tape recorder will be the project this year for the Parent/Teacher Association.

One of the largest crowds to witness an event at Dallas Junior High school gymnasium came out Saturday night to see three exciting basketball games between Dallas Faculty and WARM radio announcers.

Back Mountain Bird Club will meet at Frank Jackson's home, Pole 172, Harveys Lake, Saturday afternoon at 1, if the weather permits. Frank Jackson will talk on identification of trees in winter, demonstrating by a hike through his woodlot. Mr. Jackson, one of the region's authorities on birds, is equally informed on trees, flowers, and wildlife in general.

30 Years Ago - Jan. 14, 1971 FIRE BLAZES AT ASPHALT YARD

Heavy black smoke and flames marked the site of a fire Saturday morning at American Asphalt Paving Company off Chase Road in Jackson Township. The fire broke out at about 9:30 a.m. near three liquid asphalt tanks.

"Science Countdown", a 13 week series of high school science quiz programs made its debut Jan. 11 over Channel 44.

The Pennsylvania Game Commission last week praised deer hunters in the state for their fine

safety record in 1970.

The 40 accidents during the regular antlered and antlerless deer seasons were the lowest number reported since 1954. This year there were seven fatal deer season mishaps, a tragic number perhaps, but this was the lowest figure since 1964. One year ago there were 86 accidents, including 14 fatalities.

20 Years Ago - Jan. 15, 1981 JACKSON TWP. FIREMEN ELECT NEW OFFICERS

The Jackson Township Volunteer Fire Department recently held election of officers at the township fire hall for the year 1981. The following members were elected to a one year term: president, Daniel Manzoni; vice-president, John Manzoni; secretary, Walter Knorr, Jr.; fire chief, Rollie Evans, and assistant fire chief, Francis Manzoni, Jr. In addition, Joseph Cigarski was elected to a five-year term as trustee.

In its first major team showing of the 1981 wrestling season the Back Mountain Wrestling Team took a second place trophy at the first Endicott Wrestling Bowl Holiday Tournament (an invitational tournament held at the Endicott Boys Club) consisting of eight teams from various parts of Pennsylvania, New York and New Jersey.

The Harveys Lake Historical Society held a complimentary tea to entertain old and new members. The Society has a membership of over 100 members all of whom are asked to participate in this year's Bicentennial program.

You'll find 'Only Yesterday' only in The Dallas Post