

## EDITORIALS

## Watershed land sale reaches core of Back Mountain

From shareholders of the company's stock, who were deprived of the full value of the company when it was sold, to people who drink water from local reservoirs, the list of individuals, families and wildlife harmed by the sale of former Pennsylvania Gas & Water Co. watershed lands is growing longer by the day. Now this devious scheme is reaching back into history, threatening to usurp land that was part of original settlements in the Back Mountain.

Ruth Ide Johnson, whose great-grandchildren last year unveiled the stone marker commemorating the Idetown bicentennial, has come forward with a tale of treachery and deceit that ends with land settled in the late 1700s now on the market for sale to the highest bidder. This is land that was unwillingly turned over to the Spring Brook Water Co. for the purpose of making a reservoir — land that when taken from her father on the premise that it would ultimately be used for the public good. If it is sold and developed, it will have exactly the opposite effect, because its role in cleansing water that eventually runs into the Ceasetown Reservoir will be lost.

The water company and a compliant state utility commission say that role is no longer needed, but they are wrong. If watershed land is developed, if it is clear-cut of trees as has been occurring, silt and debris will flow into the reservoirs, offsetting the work that filters perform. Ultimately, water customers, who have no choice in their supplier, will pick up the cost of recovery from today's shortsighted actions, which appear to be motivated only by the greed of a handful of investors who have shown no concern for anything except their wallets.

Nearly everyone in northeastern Pennsylvania would dearly love to have the principals in this endeavor step forward and present a responsible plan for the thousands of acres of pristine land that is now threatened. So far that hasn't happened, and until it does, it's likely we will think only the worst of them.

## Publisher's Notebook

Ron Bartizek



Now's my chance. After years — perhaps decades — of predicting a big dive in the stock market, I may be right. This must be how Ronald Reagan felt in 1980, when, after 20 years of holding tightly to the same principles the American electorate finally came around to his way of thinking sent him to the White House. But now that the stock market seems to be in full retreat, I'm not sure what to do. Should I buy now? Should I wait a little longer for prices to get even lower? If I wait, will prices ratchet back up, and then I'll feel I've missed my chance? Or, should I sell everything now before my stock certificates are useful only as wallpaper?

I've faced this dilemma before. When real estate prices skyrocketed in the mid-1980s I said it couldn't last. And it didn't; by 1990 prices in what had been the hottest markets were off 30 percent. Of course, I wasn't in those markets at either the high or low point, so it didn't really matter, but it was reinforcing to see prices fall, even if they were still miles beyond my reach. Now I'm thinking about a vacation home; you know, a nice little bungalow on the fairway of a golf course in North Carolina. I figure, if the market collapses, all those mortgaged-to-the-hilt yuppies will have to sell, at any price. Or maybe the banks will foreclose and I can get a steal before things turn up. But what if I've sunk all my cash into Dell and Cisco at that point, and they still haven't recovered? What will I do then?

According to the evening news, these are some of the big questions in modern American life, at least for those of us who missed that last big jump in real estate prices. (Did I tell you about the house I passed up in 1984 because the seller wouldn't throw in the washer and dryer? It sold for double the price a few years ago.) I think we should be happy to have problems like these, instead of wondering where our next meal will come from or whether we'll survive the next illness. That makes me wonder, though, whether the drug stocks are a good buy now.

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Lonely barn in winter, Sutton Lane, Lehman. Photo by Charlotte Bartizek.

## LETTERS

## Former resident shocked at charge for medical records

Editor,

On June 4, 1958 I graduated from Dallas Township High School. Due to the recession in the "valley," on June 5, I left the beautiful Wyoming Valley for Paterson, NJ where I had obtained a position via mail.

Over the years when I returned to visit family, I often saddened as I had to leave the Back Mountain to return to the harsher metropolitan area that had become my new family's home. I rarely felt the security and comfort of the welcoming country homes where hearts and homes were left unlocked.

Recently my husband and I retired and, seeking a less costly and warmer environment, we built a home in Florida. Due to my parents' increasing age, they agreed to join us shortly after our move so as to be near us and our care. At 83 and 89 years of age, they had mixed feelings of joyful anticipation and sadness, much as I had 43 years earlier.

When I went from doctor to doctor in NJ, I had no problem getting my personal records; and, in preparation for my parents' departure, I had asked their doctor(s) to make a copy of

their records since preparation for a healthy trip was my primary concern. My dad's cardiologist, Dr. Silverstein, was wonderful about meeting all of my dad's anticipated needs.

However, when I went to pick up the records from Dr. Tomedi's, Dallas office, his clerical assistant informed me that there was a \$107 charge for their records. When it became apparent I was upset, she said she would talk to him. I encouraged that suggestion. However, Dr. Tomedi did not relent. When I finally was able to get them settled in Florida, I wrote yet an-

other letter requesting he reimburse them that amount since their income was severely limited. I have had no response.

Something died in me when this happened. I knew a Wyoming Valley that was financially poor but generous of heart for the most part — everyone helped everyone. There were shared harvest, and a barter system where one would fix a car and the recipient fix a porch. Where did that caring go if a family physician exploits the elderly worse than any shame-on-you TV newscast.

Melvina M. Rushnock

### ONLY YESTERDAY



70 Years Ago - Mar. 13, 1931

#### COLLEGE BUILDINGS NEAR COMPLETION

While work on the buildings at College Misericordia is rapidly being pushed to completion with only the interior finishing to be completed, work on the new driveway and approaches to the college is just nicely getting under way.

During the winter months 75 men have been constantly employed on the new additions and on the road building program. R. B. Shaver and sons, local well drillers, have just unloaded a modern new drilling machine from the cars at Dallas Lehigh Valley station. The business of the firm has grown rapidly, necessitating the need for additional equipment. The elder Mr. Shaver has been in the business for many years, and his son Dean, is also a capable drill man.

At A & P stores you could get a lb. of lard for 10¢, 1lb. cheese, 21¢. Eight O' clock coffee, 1lb. 21¢, pack of cigarettes for 12¢, a carton for \$1.19, corn, 3 cans for 29¢, Palmolive soap, 3 cakes 19¢, butter, 3lbs, 89¢, sugar, 10 lbs for 49¢.

60 Years Ago - Mar. 14, 1941

#### COUNCIL ASKED TO PAY DAMAGES ON NEW HIGHWAY

Land damages incident to construction of the proposed new highway from Dallas to Harvey's Lake will be discussed at a special meeting of Dallas Borough Council. The State Department of Highways has recently advised Council that it will not assume claims along the right-of-way where the new highway will run through Dallas Borough. Members of the Council are of the opinion that damages can be settled without great cost so that there will be no delay in construction when bids are let.

Activity at the recruiting station has been brisk with an av-

erage of 20 to 50 applicants a day all seeking to enlist in the Regular Army for the three-year period. Among those enlisted is Private Thomas D. Swainbank, Jr., son of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Swainbank, Shavertown. Private Swainbank is on duty at the Army Recruiting and Induction Station, 16-18 North Main Street, at Wilkes-Barre, as a clerk.

A Townsend Club with 52 charter members was organized and officers elected at a meeting of Townsend supporters in the Shavertown Hose House. Rev. R. S. Nichols was elected president. Other officers are: William Rouse, 1st vice-president; Samuel Woolbert, 2nd vice-president; Mrs. Russell Cease, secretary, and William F. Myers, treasurer. Rev. Nichols and Mrs. Meyers were chosen delegates to the Townsend District Convention to be held in Wilkes-Barre.

50 Years Ago - Mar. 16, 1951

#### LACK OF STEEL HALTS BUILDING

Construction of the Gate of Heaven parochial school on Machell Avenue, Dallas, is held up because of lack of structural steel. Shipments of steel, states Curtis-Pethick Co. are coming in by dribbles, and enough has been promised to finish the job, but until steel joists as well as beams can be procured, the job is at a standstill. The building has no excavation, but will rest upon a concrete mat.

Anthony Broody, Fernbrook, one of this region's outstanding florists, has taken over the former Dallas Floral Shop, and will operate it on conjunction with his growing gardens at Fernbrook and Briar Creek.

Back Mountain Little League has the green light from Kingston Township School Board in the matter of adopting Shavertown School playground for official home ground and diamond of the six teams, Carverton, Fernbrook, Jackson, Shavertown, Trucksville and Dallas Borough.

40 Years Ago - Mar. 16, 1961

#### DALLAS SHOPPING CENTER TO OPEN SOON

Two months of delay caused by severe winter weather is being overcome by the contractor

who is building the beautiful new Colonial A&P building in Dallas Shopping Center. The architecture of the building and its attractive appearance are already exciting much favorable comment in the area. Louis Goring, owner of the Center, said that Addy Brothers have completed much of the grading and filling at the parking lot and that the former Pizza Building will be removed soon so that they can complete the work.

A terrific blast from the explosion of the Schuyler Manufacturing company in Luzerne where two persons were killed and 12 seriously injured, was felt throughout the Back Mountain area. At The Dallas Post two distinct shocks were felt and employees checked the roof to see if a quantity of snow had slid off. Constable and Mrs. Byron Kester felt the shock in their home in Orange. Every window in McCrory's Store in Shavertown Shopping Center vibrated and it was a wonder to manager Thomas Hobbs that some of them did not fall out.

Lawrence S. Jones, seaman, USN, son of Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence S. Jones of Main Street, Shavertown, returned to Norfolk, Virginia, aboard the attack aircraft carrier USS Intrepid following a six-month cruise of the Mediterranean. The Intrepid traveled over 40,000 nautical miles during 185 days at sea, and visited France, Greece, Italy, Lebanon and Turkey.

30 Years Ago - Mar. 11, 1971

#### STUDENTS NOT DETERRED BY BLISTERED FEET

The five-mile hike undertaken recently by members of Penn State's Circle K Club found 35 students and faculty members jogging along Route 118 on their way to the Irem Temple Country Club for dinner with their sponsor group, the Dallas Kiwanis Club. Back Mountain residents who have volunteered to back the hikers with checks for \$5 for the benefit of the Back Mountain Memorial Library were pleased to learn that all of the students finished the trek with banners flying. A total of \$165 was raised by the students.

Kim Davis, Dallas, took first place honors in swimming at the

Middle Atlantic district A.A.U. Junior Olympics. She represented the Wyoming Seminary Swim Club. Kim garnered winner's laurels in the 100-yard breast stroke for girls 14 and under. She is a student in the Dallas School District.

The Daniel C. Roberts Fire Company, Harveys Lake, responded to a fire alarm in the home of Thelma Manfred at Smith's Trailer Court, Noxen Road, Harveys Lake. The fire was extinguished by a fireman before the truck arrived on the scene. Cause of the fire was an overheated furnace.

20 Years Ago - Mar. 11, 1981

#### DALLAS STUDENT SAVES BROTHER

Becky Carsman, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William Carsman, is a junior at the Dallas Senior High School. She is among the 300 students enrolled in the cardio-pulmonary resuscitation course presently being conducted at the school. While Becky was getting ready for school, her 14-month old brother, Jeremy was in his high chair eating breakfast, when suddenly he started choking on an apple skin. She took her brother and gave him four back blows which dislodged two pieces of apple. After that, he was all right. Becky said when learned the technique during classes in CPR.

For the second time in less than a week, the Lake-Lehman Knights captured a Division II championship at Kings College gym. The Knights' Dave Penkrot hit 29 points in the second half to lead the Knights cagers to a 72-49 win over Hanover and the Division II basketball title.

Dallas Township residents who live on Dorchester, Savoy, Windsor and Kingswood drives experienced problems with their roads during February. 30 truck loads of fill were needed to help control the hazardous situation which is a result of the Dallas Area Municipal Authority (DAMA) installed sewer system. The sewer lines were installed during a drought condition and with the unseasonable and torrential rains experienced in February, the underground excavations gave way and a serious subsidence occurred.