

EDITORIALS

School district is asking a lot

There are some good reasons why the property tax rate in the projected Dallas School District budget is 9 percent higher, increasing to 190 mills from 174. Benefit costs, over which the district has little control, are again rising rapidly, for one thing, and there hasn't been a year when teacher salaries have gone in any direction but upward. But that doesn't mean there haven't been missed opportunities where the school board could have tightened up spending, but for which taxpayers now bear the burden.

Dallas has been on a construction and renovation binge in recent years, and most of the projects have been both necessary and desirable. The new Wycallis Elementary School, and renovations and repairs to Dallas Elementary and the middle school clearly fall into this category. There are plans for work at the high school next, and many of them should be adopted, if we can afford it. But it seems at times that the board and administration have a hard time saying "No," to additions and upgrades that pile on higher costs, and lead to higher taxes.

The district also has a habit of hoarding funds above and beyond a reasonable amount that would cover unexpected, emergency expenses. That is rectified somewhat in the 2001-02 budget, which projects drawing down the surplus funds by nearly \$1 million, to \$3.6 million, within striking distance of the 15 percent of annual expenditures deemed prudent by the state board of education.

In recent years, Dallas has made few if any changes to its tentative budgets before final adoption. That should change this year; it's time for the board and administration to look carefully at expenses before settling on final figures. With an economy that appears to grow more shaky by the day, prudence should be the rule of the day.



Ready for the pickin'. Photo by Heather B. Jones

Lower age for hunting is dumb idea

State Rep. Bruce Smith, a Republican from Dillsburg, thinks he has a brilliant idea. He wants to allow young children to participate in "the best bonding activity that a child and parent can experience." How would he do that? By putting high-powered weapons in the hands of 10-year-olds.

The suggestion by itself is ridiculous, and Smith's assertion that hunting with Dad (Moms don't seem to spend all that much time slogging through the woods) is the very best parent/child activity would be laughable if it wasn't made by the chairman of the state House Game and Fisheries Committee. Fortunately, it appears that most hunters don't share Smith's enthusiasm for arming fourth graders. While some of the arguments against childhood hunting focus on physical limitations, such as that a small, young body can't take the "kick" of a deer rifle, others rightly point out that 10-year-old minds simply haven't developed safeguards that show up in later years, such as the ability to foresee the outcome of actions.

If Rep. Smith is concerned that Pennsylvania children and parents aren't bonded closely enough, he might try encouraging them to spend more time together over meals, or at the library. Even watching television as a family - perhaps the Discovery channel or PBS - would make more sense than sending young children out lugging oversized, deadly weapons through the woods.

Publisher's Notebook

Ron Bartizek



We may not have a missile shield yet, but I'm comforted in the knowledge that we have a president who can, in very short order, discern the most innermost thoughts and motives of other world leaders. I'm speaking of George W. Bush's comment - after spending just a couple of hours with Russian president Vladimir Putin - that "I was able to get a sense of his soul." And what did he see? That Mr. Putin was "a man deeply committed to his country and the best interests of his country." That comment may raise eyebrows among the millions of Russians who are mired in poverty and corruption, but perhaps they can now take heart in the knowledge that the former KGB official who can't stand the scrutiny of a semi-independent press has only good things in mind for them.

George W. wouldn't be the first U.S. president to overestimate his soulmates across the sea, and he surely won't be the last. Like a child who gobbles down a triple scoop sundae, then spends hours groaning from the resulting stomach ache, our leaders have a habit of seeing what they want when they first meet old adversaries, only to be disappointed in future developments. This seems to be a particular fault when Russia is involved, judging by Bill Clinton's relentless support for Putin's predecessor, Boris Yeltsin, who did nothing as well as uphold his countrymen's reputation as huge consumers of vodka while stuffing American aid dollars in his pockets as quickly as we could ship them across the Atlantic. Even the great Franklin Delano Roosevelt thought Joseph Stalin was a decent fellow at first glance.

Perhaps wily George W. was simply trying to gain the confidence of an impotent superpower, who might have been frightened into selling old nukes to Saddam Hussein by an American brushoff of opposition to a Star Wars missile defense. Or maybe he's too clever by half, and Putin knows a worthless money pit when he sees it, and is happy to watch us sink billions into a system that either won't work or will be obsolete by the time it passes muster.



70 Years Ago - June 19, 1931

BANK BUILDING TO BE WORK OF BEAUTY AND UTILITY

Work on the demolition of the Reese building on Main Street is moving along rapidly to make way for The First National Bank. It is their intention to erect a thorough modern stone structure on what is now known as the J. M. Reese town's business district.

Jack McHenry and his Melody Makers, who are well known throughout the back mountain region and Wyoming Valley, will furnish music every Thursday night throughout the summer season at Lakewood Pavilion, Lake Silkworth. Harold Crew with his banjo and Charles Pickett with his piano accordion will be playing with the Melody Makers.

Dallas borough council at its meeting purchased 6,000 gallons of road oil from the Barrett Co., at a price of 13¢ per gallon. The oil will be placed on the streets sometime after the Fourth of July.

Only Yesterday is taken from the files of The Dallas Post, which reach back as far as 1929.

60 Years Ago - June 29, 1941

CONTRACTORS START WORK ON NEW LAKE ROAD

Central Pennsylvania Quarry, Stripping and Construction Company of Hazleton has leased the Adleman property on Lake St., for its headquarters, storage facilities and bulk plant during construction of the new Harvey's Lake highway which got under way recently. John Bruner will be superintendent of the construction.

Lawrence Smith and Robert Patrick members of the Anthracite Chapter, Future Farmers of America of Dallas Township High School placed high among 1,000 boys participating in annual F.F.A. judging contests. Lawrence came in second and Robert placed sixth.

Carl Brandon and Loren Keller, Lehman School District bus drivers, have returned from Richmond, Indiana, where they obtained two new Chevrolet all-steel school buses. The 560 mile trip was made at a speed of 30 miles an hour in order to break the new vehicles in gradually.

50 Years Ago - June 22, 1951

PLAN TO OPEN NEW SCHOOL

Brick exterior walls are progressing rapidly so that the limestone trim is being installed on the front of the new Gate of Heaven Parochial School on Machell Avenue. Work is moving ahead on schedule, according to Rev. Francis Kane, administrator of the parish.

The Dallas Post as a public service will publish a Voter's

Guide for the Back Mountain area, using material gathered by Back Mountain members of the League of Women Voters. Those Back Mountain members of the League who are cooperating in publication are: Mrs. Leroy Bugbee, Mrs. C.A. Eberle, Mrs. Williams Evans, Jr., Mrs. Stefan Hellersperk, Mrs. Mitchell Jenkins, Mrs. Arthur Ross, Mrs. Gerald Stout, Mrs. Robert Walsh.

James F. Besecker, Jr., son of Mr. and Mrs. James Besecker, Dallas, was awarded a degree in Bachelor of Science at University of Pennsylvania. James D. Shepherd, son of Mr. and Mrs. R.D. Shepherd, Trucksville, received a degree of Doctor of Laws.

40 Years Ago - June 22, 1961

COMMUNITY WELCOMES NEW A&P

Opening of the new A&P in this area is a milestone. A number of years ago, there was a small A&P in Dallas, but it closed its doors when supermarkets arrived. Some of the local people who will help run the store are: Garry Mauer, Randy Propos, Donald McGill, Lynn Dietz, Russ Parsons, Joe Houlette, Floyd Root, Ray Rondanella, and Chuck Weiss.

Louise Suggs Day at Irem Temple Country Club was a great success, seventy-seven guests attended the brunch. Following was a fashion show of Louise Suggs Fashions. These action outfits were designed by Louise Suggs, American Golf Champion.

Army Pvt. Robert G. Spudis, whose wife, Carolyn lives in Dallas, recently was assigned to the

McGregor Guided Missile Range, N.M. Pvt. Spudis, a radar specialist in the range's Headquarters Battery, completed basic training at Fort Jackson, S.C.

30 Years Ago - June 24, 1971

ROTARIANS PLEDGE \$12,000 FOR LIBRARY AUCTION

The decision to utilize the service club's funds was made after an extensive survey of the community's needs by a committee established by Rotary president Hanford Eckman. The club returned its report to the entire club; the \$12,000 would best serve the citizenry of the Back Mountain Community if it were earmarked for the continuation of that unique community event, the Library Auction. Mr. Eckman, noted that the Dallas Rotary Club "has more than a community-minded interest in wanting the annual auction continued."

Candice Lynn Mohr and Carol Dee Mohr, 1967 graduates of Dallas Senior High School, have been awarded the degree of Bachelor of Arts, mathematics major, by Ithaca College at the school's 76th commencement exercises. The sisters are the twin daughters of Mr. and Mrs. Archer E. Mohr, formerly of Dallas, now of Liege, Belgium.

The formal opening in the Back Mountain area of a new dairy products store of Loudon Hill Farm Inc. was held with ribbon-cutting ceremonies. The store occupies the building formerly known as Gavy's Market on Route 309, in Dallas Township. Stephen R. Balut, Plains, has been appointed manager.

Memorial and honor books donated to BMT library

Back Mountain Memorial Library announces the addition of new memorial books.

May 2001

In memory of John Scoble, "Seabiscuit" by Laura Hillenbrand, presented by The Wilt Family

In memory of Elizabeth Saunders, "Plays 1937-1955" by Tennessee Williams, presented by Ladies' Tea Group

In memory of Anna Tetschner, "Decorating with Family Photographs" by Ryne Hazen, presented by Rita Ryan Mundy

In memory of Virginia Nahas, "The Big Book of Baby Animals," presented by Bruce and Jan Goring

In memory of Phillip Baker, "The Eye in the Door" by Pat Barker, presented by John and Elizabeth Lloyd

In memory of Mildred Salansky, "The Tent of Orange Mist" by Paul West, presented by Mr. and Mrs. Salansky

In memory of Marcella Sedor, "Greenland Expedition: where ice is born" by Lonnie Dupre, presented by The Independent Insurance Agents of Wyoming Valley

In memory of Georgia Phillips, "From a House to a Home;" by Jemima Mills, presented by J. David Roskos

In memory of Anna Tetschner, "Traditional Style for Today's Home" by Ellen M. Plante, presented by The Staff and Faculty of Wycallis Elementary School

In memory of Anna Tetschner, "Garden Lighting: contemporary exterior lighting" by James Davidson, presented by John and Grace Reishus

In memory of Mrs. Mary Brown, "America's Queen" by

Sarah Bradford, presented by Sordoni Construction Services

In memory of Jane McMichael, "The Climbing Garden" by Cathy Wilkinson Barash, presented by William and Ethel Bergstrasser

In memory of Hilda Frey, "The Quotable Birder" edited by Bill Adler, Jr., presented by Mr. and Mrs. Chester Taroli

In memory of Jane McMichael, "Uncommon Traveler" by Don Brown, presented by Sterling W. McMichael

In memory of Jane McMichael, "Laura Ingalls Wilder" by Alexandra Wallner, presented by Sterling W. McMichael

In memory of Jane McMichael, "My Dog" by Heidi Goennel, presented by Sterling W. McMichael

In memory of Jane McMichael, "If You give a Mouse a Cookie" by Laura Joffe Numeroff, pre-

sented by Sterling W. McMichael

In memory of Philip Baker, "Founding Brothers: the Revolutionary generation" by Joseph J. Ellis, presented by John and Elizabeth Lloyd

In memory of Mr. Omar Hallison, "In the Heart of the Sea: the tragedy of the Whaleship Essex" by Nathaniel Philbrick, presented by Dallas Rotary Club

In memory of Mrs. Mary Bown, "Fence Style" by James & Margie Roe Harper, presented by Sordoni Construction Services

In memory of Irene Bieniek, "Thank You, Mr. Falker" by Patricia Polacco, presented by Norbert Swithers

HONOR BOOKS

In honor of Paul and Jean Rodda, "Collected Essays and Poems" by Henry David Thoreau, presented by Kay and Duncan Whitehead.

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P.O. BOX 366, DALLAS, TX 75201 • 570-675-5211

Ronald Bartizek
GENERAL MANAGER

Heather B. Jones
REPORTER

Ruth Prioletto
Production Manager

Ron and Charlotte Bartizek
PUBLISHERS EMERITUS

Stephen Peterson
PRESIDENT & CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER
1-800-427-8649

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