

EDITORIALS

## Lake-Lehman board, public deserve better information

At least two Lake-Lehman school directors are questioning the reliability of the district's financial reporting, apparently with good reason. Angelo DeCesaris, who is a certified public accountant, and Lois Kopcha want to know why annual financial estimates vary by as much as \$2 million, depending on the date they are prepared. Kopcha offers as examples projected budget surpluses for the end of the 2000 and 2001 fiscal years that shrank dramatically between December and June, then seemed to reappear. DeCesaris points to the current year's budget, which projected a deficit of about \$450,000, but after six months shows a surplus of \$500,000, with no adequate explanation of how that came about has been offered.

As anyone in business knows, budget fluctuations are a fact of life, although one would expect a school budget to be more predictable than that of a private business. Of greater concern, the district's business manager sometimes has not been present at meetings when questions come up, and has been less than cooperative when asked by board members and the public for details or interpretation.

Given that Lake-Lehman is in the midst of a large and expensive renovation project, it's important that directors are given accurate, reliable information on which to base decisions that will have a long-term effect on taxpayers. It is their job to look out for varied interests, but they can't do their best work if they don't have complete, trustworthy information.

While some board members have in the past questioned where the money has been going, there's no reason to suspect anything improper is taking place. That doesn't lessen the frustration of both the board and the public over financial information that is either unavailable or unexplained.

### Publisher's Notebook

Ron Bartizek



Oh, the embarrassment of it. I can hardly bring the words to my lips: We own a Mercury Villager. That's right, we're one of the apparently teeny minority who purchased what seemed like a perfectly good minivan, only to learn a few years later that even the people who sold it to us think it's a loser. That must be the reason this model is being discontinued by its manufacturer after less than a decade of life. Fortunately, we've had ours for most of that decade, so the stain of unpopularity won't take much off the value, which is negligible at this point anyway.

Our Villager has been a pretty good car, or so we thought. It's usually reliable, except when we inadvertently leave the headlights on overnight, and we know the power door locks operate flawlessly, given the number of times we've called AAA after leaving the keys inside at the mall. So it comes as a shock that our little mom van will join the likes of DeSoto, Studebaker and - egads! - Edsel in the Automotive Hall of Shame.

We're trying to keep our spirits up, though, reminding ourselves that popularity isn't important, just as we tell the kids. Besides, our tan van is getting a little long in the tooth, so it's time to look for a replacement. I was thinking maybe of an Oldsmobile.

It seems the lessons of the dot.com crash, Enron and two years of stock market declines may not have taken hold with publishers of magazines that offer financial advice to the teeming masses. A recent issue of a major publication advised readers on how to put their retirement plans back on track. Mixed in with advice on stocks and bonds was the suggestion that future retirees assume a 10 percent annual return on their investments over the next several years. While that may be the historical average for stocks over many decades, it's awfully ambitious for a retirement portfolio in 2002. Ten percent sounds so much better than the 1 percent or less many banks are paying on savings accounts these days; could it be the magazines don't want to disappoint their advertisers - largely mutual funds - by suggesting more reasonable expectations?

### Opinions invited

The Dallas Post attempts to publish opinions on a variety of topics in many forms.

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.



Snow cover. Photo by Jim Phillips.

### LETTERS

## Are hunters the terrorists of the animal world?

Editor,

Now that the "fever" of hunting season has passed, I feel compelled to write this letter in response to an article that appeared in your newspaper during hunting season. The article pictured a local hunter with a "prized" female "cow" elk he killed during the first elk hunting season in Pennsylvania in 70 years.

Initially, let me say that I was truly saddened by our former Governor's acquiescence in the expansion of the hunting seasons, elimination of the antler requirement, permitting of the first elk hunt in 70 years and reinstating of the ability to leg trap bobcats for the first time in three years. It seems

that all creatures great and small were targeted for death, and the beneficiaries seem to be the car insurance industry rather than local hunters.

In any event, the article concerning the cow elk was extremely disturbing. It was apparent the hunter identified the elk as a cow elk by the presence of one of its young. I can't imagine a more traumatic act for that young animal than to see its mother killed before its eyes. In that terrorists deal out death to innocent lives without warning, could it be hunters are the terrorists of the animal world?

I have heard the various arguments in favor of hunting which center around two principles, the first being that, "It has been done for years." This first

argument is completely invalid and could also be used as an argument in favor of human sacrifice, since many cultures did that for thousands of years.

The second argument is the herds need to be thinned since there is a lack of predators. I personally would favor the reintroduction of predators, since to allow humans to fulfill that role lowers humans to the animal level.

More importantly, and as eloquently stated by Mohandas K. Gandhi, "...man's supremacy over the lower animals means not that the former should prey upon the latter, but that the higher should protect the lower, and that there should be mutual aid between the two as between man and man."

Lastly, I fail to see the "sport" involved in this action. In the article about the cow elk, it was clear the hunter was using a high-powered rifle, which could kill at great distances and was equipped with a scope. In addition, the hunter had employed the services of a professional guide. Is this an equal contest? What chance does the animal have except to avoid detection? Where is the sport in this action?

If violence and the taking of life are to be eliminated in the human world, it must begin with respect for all forms of life.

Garry S. Taroli  
Dallas



Have you surfed the library website yet? The address is backmountainlibrary.org. You'll need the bar-code number on your library card to register.

Did you know you can renew books on the library's website? Pick up a card at the library's front desk listing the steps to take. You can also renew books over the phone just by calling the library at 675-1182. Again,



70 Years Ago - January 29, 1932

### 1,000 PERSONS ATTEND OPENING OF NEW BANK

More than 925 persons attended the opening and inspection of the new First National Bank building. The administrative heads are: T.H. Moyer, president and H.G. Buel; vice president. Tilghman Moyer of Allentown, was the architect and building contractor.

Some of the items you could purchase at the American Stores Co. were: flour, 24-lb. bag 54¢; lard, 1 lb., 7¢; peaches, can 15¢; beans can, 10¢; preserves 2 lb. jar, 29¢; chili sauce bot., 19¢; clorox, pt. bot. 17¢.

Fire of an undetermined origin completely destroyed the home

## Check out features on library website

have your card handy.

Slightly Used Bookstore: Fred Krohle, manager of the bookstore, is continuing the biography special: buy two biographies, at \$2 each, and get a third one free. Also, a volunteer at the store has waxed rhapsodic at the supply of wonderful cookbooks currently for sale.

Fred issues a plea for volunteers to work in the store. As few as two hours a week will be helpful, and there is great flexibility in choosing the hours best for you. Come help keep this great operation going! Call the library and leave your name and number, and Fred will call you back.

Book discussion group: The Monday evening group tried a new tack at their January meet-

ing. The theme was biographies — each member chose a different book to review. Pam Oliveira reported that the books enthusiastically shared were "Falling Leaves," by Adeline Yen Mah; "Blackbird and Still Waters," by Jennifer Lauck; "Blonde," by Joyce Carol Oates; and "The Diary of Ellen Rimbauer," edited by Joyce Reardon. Those less favorably reviewed were "Memoirs of an Unfit Mother," by Anne Robinson; and "Ice Bound," by Dr. Jerri Nielsen. Pam felt that the theme meeting went very well as the group was exposed to many different books at once.

The next meeting is on Monday, Feb. 11, at 7 p.m. at Stax. The group will be discussing "A Heart of Stone," by Renate Dorrestein. Everyone is welcome.

For more information, call Pam at 674-9935.

Tudor TLC Book Club: In keeping with the month of St. Patrick, the club's next meeting will feature the Irish author Lisa Carey, who will discuss her Irish tale, "Mermaids Singing." The program takes place on Monday, March 4, at 7 p.m. at Wyoming Seminary's Buckingham Performing Arts Center, Sprague Ave. in Kingston. Everyone is welcome, and no reservations are necessary.

On the afternoon of March 4, there will be a student workshop with the author at Tudor. Call the shop at 288-9697 for time and other details. Tudor will be selling "Mermaid Singing" at 20 percent off.

by Dan Meeker of Kunkle.

40 Years Ago - February 1, 1962

### DAVID SCHOOLEY MADE PRESIDENT OF THE LIBRARY

David Schooled, Trucksville, was elected president of Back Mountain Memorial Library Association at its annual meeting in the Library Annex. He succeeds Robert Bachman who has been president for the past two years.

Fire of an undetermined origin destroyed a garage and toolshed on the William Naugle Sr., property at Pike's Creek. Mr. Naugle, was a Lehman Township School director for more than 20 years. The loss included the garage and a quantity of tools and equipment used by Mr. Naugle for his trucks and machines.

Thomas P. Garrity, lifelong resident of Harvey's Lake, was installed as president of the Greater Wilkes-Barre Real Estate Board. Mr. Garrity has a real estate and insurance business at Harvey's Lake.

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