

EDITORIALS

Making good use of old Westmoreland School

If Scott Ciravolo's plans for the former Westmoreland School building are fulfilled, it will be the second successful rehabilitation of a large, abandoned building in the Back Mountain in recent years. The first was the remarkable renovation of the former Native Textiles building that is now Twin Stacks Center, a thriving complex of businesses that replaced an empty, outdated shell in danger of becoming a white elephant. Westmoreland could have faced that fate as well, given its size, condition and location.

Some neighbors objected to granting a zoning variance for professional offices in the old school, but that kind of use is infinitely superior to a home for vermin and lure to thrill-seeking children. The restrictions that accompany the variance should assure a minimum of traffic and disruption, while allowing an entrepreneur to turn a virtually worthless property into something of value. If the former Trucksville High School, which was converted into apartments several years ago, is any example, there is great potential for improvement and little downside risk.

Only one other potential buyer expressed interest in the old school, and the school district was not inclined to accept the low bid offered. As a result, the building might have been left standing vacant until it became a dangerous eyesore. Instead, there is now the chance that a vibrant workplace will be added to the Back Mountain, but in an unobtrusive manner. That is an important consideration; while our region is enormously popular at the moment as a "bedroom" community, that may not always be the case. Finding logical and low-impact opportunities to create local jobs broadens the tax base and may be an attraction as powerful as the scenic beauty that has drawn many new residents.

Saving the Bay starts here

It's not obvious, but how we handle rain water runoff in the Back Mountain affects the crab harvest in the Chesapeake Bay. We, like every other community in the Bay watershed, contribute a share of the pollution that has reduced the productivity of shellfish and other creatures in the world's largest estuary, and we will have to participate in crafting repairs.

Admittedly, ours is a small part when you consider the sewage, chemicals and other contaminants flowing into the streams and rivers that wind their way southward. But every little bit hurts — or helps — depending on our actions. Besides, conservation and environmental measures just make plain common sense and save everyone money and hassle in the long run. There is much to be said for seeking a harmonious relationship with Mother Nature rather than trying to bend her to our will. Local communities and the Commonwealth should get our support for programs that encourage wiser stewardship of the resources we have been given.

Publisher's Notebook

Ron Bartizek



My son was surprised to find a whole lot more fans of the New England Patriots when he went to school Monday morning. On Friday, he and one other oddball favored the Pats in Super Bowl XXXVI, while all their classmates firmly grasped on to the Rams' band wagon. How quickly things can change.

Sports isn't the only arena in which popularity rules, and neither is fashion. When the mob mentality takes over, some strange things can happen. Just check out the bell bottoms and Earth shoes in your closet. It wasn't too long ago that the words "Enron" and "buy" seemed inextricably linked . . . until a few billion bucks were lost by zealous fans of the New Economy. And wasn't Bill Clinton the toast of Washington before a certain intern with a blue dress came on the scene? Watch out George W, although a form 10-K may replace the article of clothing as evidence.

Have you noticed the people most often found behind the wheel of a sporty convertible? Time was, young people lusted after brightly colored sports cars and older folks drove cushy Cadillacs and Buicks. Not any more; perhaps it's just that "mature" adults have more money, but it seems an awful lot of them are indulging youthful fantasies in racy coupes and soft-tops. And get ready for this — geezers (I'm not quite there yet, thank you) cruising down the road with the Stones blasting on the stereo. Make you want to cringe, doesn't it?

Q: Where do you find the most Back Mountain news each week?
A: Only in The Dallas Post

The Dallas Post

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Psst, it looks like the coast is clear. Photo by Monica Marzani.

What's on the Horizon?

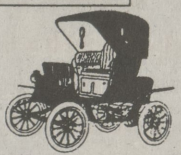


Ben Geouge

Poetry on a winter's day

Note: Horizons are not only scientific or political. They are often philosophical or literary. Among my father's effects were several unpublished poems written by a neighbor many decades ago. I would like to share one of these with you as a winter gift. It is being published here with the enthusiastic permission of the author. Alene N. Case, editor of this column on behalf of the North Branch Land Trust.

ONLY YESTERDAY



70 Years Ago - February 5, 1932

VALLEY MOTOR CLUB ANNOUNCES PLANS

Outlining its program for the present year, Wyoming Valley Motor Club announced this week the following road building schedule. The club has made arrangements to have the road paved from Outlet to Lakeview Hotel at Harvey's Lake. The club is also interested in having the road widened from Dallas to Harvey's Lake and in having concrete road built from Dallas through to Tunkhannock.

At American Stores Co., some items you could buy: flour, 24-lb. bag, 54¢; baking powder, 1 lb. can, 15¢; butter 2 lb., 59¢; bacon 1-2 lb., 10¢; beans can, 10¢; apple sauce can 10¢; peas 2 cans, 25¢; catsup 1 bot., 10¢; grape juice 2 pt. bots, 25¢.

Ninth week of Rural League games were witnessed by the large crowds of the season at Meridian Hall, Dallas and the High School gymnasium at Le-man. In the opening game at Dallas, Shavertown had little difficulty in defeating Beaumont 52-34.

To Mother Earth

by Ben Geouge

It's a very short road we're traveling when compared to a segment of time. Or to the age of this old earth we live in. How can we be so blind?

Great numbers have trampled upon her; sucked life from her crust without thanks. Many ships have sailed her great oceans, many fishermen have fished her great banks. Many a shepherd has tended many a flock of sheep. And many a farmer has harvested many a crop of wheat.

There's been many a cowboy riding freely across her great plains.

Mountain men have explored her great mountains, and she still holds up through her rains.

She is still producing her crops in spite of being old and sore. She still gives timber for shelter, and her waterfalls still roar.

Upon her crust there's mighty wonders that we still don't understand. There's secrets buried within her — we must listen to her demands. Let's pay tribute to her beauty and listen to her cries.

Help preserve her mighty wonders; Oceans, mountains, valleys, rivers, and skies

Ben Geouge lives in Celo Community in the mountains of North Carolina. The members of

Celo Community (generally 30 to 40 families) are stewards of approximately 2000 acres of

beautiful land in the South Toe River valley. It is one of a very few "living" Land Trusts.

60 Years Ago - February 6, 1942
POST WILL GO FREE TO SOLDIERS

The Post has completed arrangements to send the Dallas Post free of charge to every Back Mountain boy who is now serving in the Army or Navy.

Measles have struck Noxen in the worst epidemic in a decade. So many are ill that it may be necessary to close the schools. Many cases are severe.

More than 150 people of all denominations attended the reception at the Shavertown Methodist Church for Rev. and Mrs. Roswell Lyons. They were well received by the entire church.

50 Years Ago - February 8, 1952

TWO REPRESENT WESTMORELAND IN MODEL STATE LEGISLATURE

Westmoreland High School will be the only Back Mountain school represented in the State Model Legislature to be held in Harrisburg, Robert Hontz and Richard Perry were elected State Representative to the Legislature at the recent Pre-Legislative assembly held in Luzerne County Court House. This program is sponsored by the YMCA.

James Maza and Francis Ambrose head the committee drawing up plans for the projected dental clinic at Dallas-Franklin Township school. The PTA voted an amount up to \$750 for equipment.

Pfc. John R. Ide, son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Ide, Lehman, was awarded the Combat Infantry Badge for excellent performance

of duty in combat with the 7th Infantry Division.

40 Years Ago - February 8, 1962

BOY IS RESCUED BY HELICOPTER

Landing on the ice near Culver Island, George Howarth of New Goss Manor was able to rescue a ten year old boy. Paul Hughes, son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Hughes, was playing with friends on the shore of the Susquehanna, when he broke through some melted ice.

James E. Hutchinson, Franklin St., has purchased the Main Street building formerly occupied by Hislop's Market from James F. Besecker and will open a modern hardware store there.

Members of Boy Scout troop 232, St. Therese's Church, Shavertown had their annual camp-out at the Back Mountain Shopping Center. Members will work for honor points by assisting patrons at Acme and A & P stores.

30 Years Ago - February 17, 1972

DALLAS BOARD CONSIDERS REQUESTS FOR CONFERENCES

Negative votes were cast by two Dallas School board members on permitting senior high school coaching staff members to attend football clinics. Board President Milton Evans noted that attendance at athletic conferences is funded from monies received at athletic events.

A petition from Dug Road Area Taxpayers Association was pre-

sented to Kingston Township Board of Supervisors at its meeting. The petition signed by some 50 residents, voiced their request to be included on the Dallas Area Municipal Authority sewer system. A number of residents from the Dug Road area spoke on the water pollution and the smell of the present inadequate septic system.

A new HELP center begins at College Misericordia for college kids. Volunteers from College Misericordia and Wilkes-Barre Campus have been trained by Mr. Arnold Garinger and several of his associates.

20 Years Ago - February 10, 1982

NOXEN TANNERY TO BE SCRAPPED

Redevelopment Authority of Wyoming County will hold a pre-bid conference at which time prospective bidders will hear of demolition and site clearance of the former Noxen Tannery at Noxen. It was purchased by the Wyoming County Redevelopment Authority and plans call for the erection of a low rent housing complex for the area.

The Back Mountain Memorial Library conducted a major campaign on the subject, "How To? Your Public Library-We have the answers." The State Library of Pennsylvania is sponsoring the campaign for the entire state.

Dallas Fire and Ambulance Inc., compiled its annual fire and ambulance reports for the year 1981, showing a decline in the number of fire incidents but an increase in the number of ambulance calls.

Back Mountain library new books

The Back Mountain Memorial Library, 96 Huntsville Road, Dallas, announces the addition of the following books to their collection.

FICTION

"The Oath" by John T. Le-scroart; "The Execution" by Hugo Wilcken; "A Darker Justice" by Sallie Bissell; "The Day Trader" by Stephen Frey; "Love Her Madly" by Mary-Ann Tirone Smith; "The Dark Fields" by Alan Glynn;

"The Happy Pigs" by Lucy Harkness

NONFICTION

"Best Bids, the insider's Guide to Buying at Auction" by Dana Micucci; "The Gilded Age and Later Novels" by Mark Twain; "Stories, Novels and Essays" by Charles Waddell Chesnutt; "Fodor's Chicago"

MYSTERY

"The Clerk's Tale" by Margaret Frazer; "Cold Hunter's Moon" by

K.C. Greenleaf; "Sainly Murders" by C.L. Grace

LARGE PRINT FICTION

"Midnight Bayou" by Nora Roberts; "Naked Came the Phoenix" edited by Marcia Talley; "Kate Hannigan's Girl" by Catherine Cookson; "The Good German" by Joseph Kanon; "Murder on the Trans-Siberian express" by Stuart M. Kaminsky; "Critical Space" by Greg Rucka; "Out of This World" by J.D.

Robb, Laurell K. Hamilton, Susan Krinard & Maggie Shayne

BOOKS ON CD

"The Best-Loved Poems of Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis"

YOUNG ADULT

"Black Mirror" by Nancy Werlin; "Vincent Van Gogh: portrait of an artist" by Jan Greenberg and Sandra Jordan; "Razzle" by Ellen Wittlinger.