

EDITORIAL

Vigilance needed to sustain Back Mountain's appeal

Planning and zoning aren't the most glamorous of governmental duties, but they can be critical to a community's health and welfare. The Back Mountain faces significant development pressure as more families and commercial ventures recognize its charms and potential, both as a place to live and a "market" in which to conduct business. An added wrinkle has been the mysterious sale of thousands of acres of former watershed land, which may now become available for uses as yet unknown.

How our towns respond to these influences now will determine the quality of life here in the future, and the result will either sustain or diminish the Back Mountain's appeal, and with it the tax base. Examples of the forces at work are visible in two current zoning requests, one each in Dallas and Kingston townships.

In Dallas Township, a potential developer is asking that the commercial zoning area of his property, which stretches 300 feet from Route 309, be extended another 75 feet. The supervisors are reluctant to move the line, since that would grant commercial status to the larger area indefinitely, even though the developers haven't offered any specifics about what will be built there.

Things are more complicated in Kingston Township, where a new residential subdivision is contemplated off Manor Drive. Planners must consider water sources, traffic and safety as they decide whether to allow the addition of more than 40 homes in a section of town that has seen substantial building in recent years, with the attendant demands on resources and services.

These cases — and others unforeseen — will test our ability to accommodate the desirable aspects of growth without harming the characteristics that have drawn people and business to the Back Mountain. More jobs, shops and services aren't to be turned away lightly, but not at the cost of the elements we hold dear.

We probably don't appreciate the time and effort local officials put into these issues, but are quick to criticize decisions we disagree with. That is unfair unless we also have been paying attention as questions and plans arise, and making our wishes known. More of us need to get involved to assure that our community reflects the vision most of us have for its future.



Spring torrent, Lehman Township. Photo by Ron Bartizek.



70 Years Ago - April 1, 1932

HEAVIEST STORM IN YEARS SWEEPS THIS RURAL REGION

One of the worst snow storms this section has experienced in years hit with full fury. Power lines fell due to high winds. The traction company was forced to bring out the first time this year its rotary snow plows and sweepers. Trolley cars were able to proceed only as far as the switch at Fernbrook due to huge drifts piling on the tracks.

The Shavertown Five of the rural league had the best offensive to the 15 games of the circuit. Shavertown scored 588 points during the campaign. They also rated second in the defensive records with 413 points scored against them.

At J.F. Besecker Co., some of the new cars you could buy: Roadster, eight cylinder, \$460; Phaeton, eight cylinder, \$495, four cylinder, \$445; Tudor Sedan, eight cylinder, \$500. Coupe, eight cylinder, \$490, four cylinder, \$440; De Luxe Roadster, eight cylinder, \$500, four cylinder, \$450.

60 Years Ago - April 3, 1942

LOW WAGE SCALE COSTS LEHMAN TWO INSTRUCTORS

The low wage scale for teachers which prevails in the school districts of the Back Mountain Region was made evident again

as two Lehman Township High school instructors resigned to take more lucrative positions. One of the pair Donald Dodson, left to become a rural mail carrier at Hunlock Creek, the other Henry Counsman, goes to the Phoenixville schools, near Philadelphia, at a considerable increase in salary.

To serve the interests of National Defense, Jacob Laux's three-story machinery plant on Pioneer avenue will be transferred to the Popky Freezer Company plant in Wilkes-Barre. Laux's business had been around for about two decades.

William "Bill" Cairl, Commonwealth Telephone Company wire chief has been commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the United States Army and has been ordered to report for active duty with the Signal Corps Replacement Unit at Fort Monmouth, N.J.

50 Years Ago - April 4, 1952

AREA EXCEEDS ITS RED CROSS QUOTA BY \$95

The Back Mountain area exceeded its \$2,975 quota in the current Red cross drive by \$95.15, all communities meeting or bettering their quotas with the exception of Shavertown and Trucksville. Total amount raised was \$3,060.15.

Harris Haycox was unanimously elected to fill the term of the late Timothy LaBar at the meeting of Dallas Borough Council. Mr. Haycox is manager of Lazurus Department Store and a former member of the Dallas Borough Zoning Commission.

First National Bank of Dallas with deposits exceeding \$3,408,000 ranks fifty-four in deposits and fourth in percentage of loans among the ninety-three banks in the eight-county

area comprising northeastern Pennsylvania.

40 Years Ago - April 5, 1962

FLAG RAISING MARKS FORMAL OPENING OF WYOMING NATIONAL BRANCH

Wyoming National Bank of Wilkes-Barre and the Shavertown Post Office moved into an imposing structure on main Highway, Shavertown, directly across from the shopping center. A kick-off dinner was held at the Castle, Dallas-Harveys Lake Highway.

Governor Nelson Rockefeller and his brother, Winthrop, will be among the famous personalities this summer enjoying a product manufactured in the Back Mountain Region—the new streamlined Water Skeeter manufactured by Dallas Engineers. The Water Skeeter is marketed by Abercrombie & Fitch and orders are being filled by the Trucksville plant.

James Williams, Dallas Senior High School, has been invited to represent his school at the third Annual Facit Accuracy Contest in typing "Regional Tournament". After having received a medal as class champion, he was selected to compete in the Albany, N.Y. Regional as one of the 500 top typists in the region.

30 Years Ago - April 13, 1972

DALLAS TWP. POLICE FORCE CONCERNED OVER PENSIONS

The seven-man police force, in attendance at a meeting of the township Board of Supervisors, had learned earlier they were ineligible for Social Security benefits under the provisions of the Public Employees act of 1952. Funds they have paid in to Social Security will be refunded to the men.

Negotiations to determine financial matters and other issues pertaining to education were conducted by school boards and teachers of the Dallas School District and Lake-Lehman School District. A "tentative" final proposal had been accepted by the DEA committee, which would present the "packaged" proposal to the full body of district teachers.

Ernie Slocum, Lehman, captured third place in the 80 lb. weight class, Midget Division of the Middle Atlantic A.A.U. Junior Olympic Wrestling Championship at Manheim. He was presented with a Bronze Olympic Medallion.

20 Years Ago - March 31, 1982

20TH YEAR FOR LOCAL FIRM

A big birthday party to mark the 20th year of the "new" Back Mountain Lumber and Hardware Store—the first total electric building in the Back Mountain area was held. To mark the anniversary, a twenty percent discount was offered off every item in the store.

When the 1982 softball season gets under way in the Back Mountain, there will be a new Class "D" League in operation. Ted Napierkowski and Carl Derhammer, two Back Mountain sportsmen, have been promoting the sport. The league will play its games under sanction of the United States Slo-Pitch Softball Association.

Denise Evan, had been selected for membership in the American Musical Ambassadors Band. The members serve as representatives of American youth and ambassadors of good will through their music for the European audiences.

Publisher's Notebook

Ron Bartizek



Ed Rendell, the former Mayor of Philadelphia, who wants to be our next Governor, has proposed a Faustian bargain: fund increased state support for schools through a higher tax on cigarettes and a cut from the take on slot machines that he would approve installing at the state's five race tracks. While there's little doubt those moves would bring in money by the truckload, the linkage gives me the willies.

There aren't many good arguments against hiking cigarette taxes, except the old refrain that bigger tariffs just lead to more smuggling and other illegal activity. Even if that's true, it's unlikely kids will be sneaking boxcars full of cancer sticks across state lines, so in addition to raising cash a higher price might discourage teen smokers who would have to choose between a pack of Marlboros and a couple of gallons of gas. As long as the extra tax money is firmly earmarked for schools — and not transferred at the first sign of a recession — I'm all for that one. Gambling is another matter.

Given Pennsylvania's experience with its lottery, it's easy to imagine a nightmare of consequences from legalizing slot machines, thereby adding yet another unrealistic dream for people to pin their financial dreams on. Almost as bad, we'd be subjected to a fresh campaign of advertising designed to separate citizens from their take-home pay. We already are bombarded by shameless — or shameful, depending on your perspective — references to the lottery's charity toward older people. Building on that theme, it would be only a matter of time before every one-armed bandit at Pocono Downs sported a jazzy sign with the likes of "Your quarters support our children." Yuk.

Gambling supporters claim Las Vegas and Atlantic City simply respond to ordinary people's desire for harmless entertainment; pay no attention to those high rollers behind the curtain or the impoverished gambling addicts on the street. At least you can argue the nation's gambling capitals spread the pain, attracting millions of people from other areas to lay down wagers alongside the local folk. The same can't be said for slots at race tracks; I-81 won't be crammed with New Yorkers heading our way for a night of slots and shows, we'll just take advantage of our neighbors' desperation.

Rendell did some good as Philadelphia's mayor, and he has put forth some useful ideas in his campaign for Governor. This just isn't one of them.

New books added at Back Mountain Memorial Library

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

FICTION

- "The English Assassin" by Daniel Silva
- "2nd Chance" by James Paterson
- "Dancing with the Dragon" by Joe Weber
- "Cape Light" by Thomas Kincaid

- "Desirable Daughters" by Bharati Mukherjee
- "Area 7" by Matthew Reilly
- "Enemy Women" by Paulette Jiles
- "Widow's Walk" by Robert B. Parker
- "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest" by Ken Kesey
- "Defender" by C.J. Cherryh
- "Mermaids Singing" by Lisa Carey
- "Miracle at St. Anna" by James McBride

NONFICTION

- "The Wisdom of Menopause" by Christine Northrup
- "Sacred Contracts: awakening your divine potential" by Caroline M. Myss

LARGE PRINT FICTION

- "Death in Paradise" by Robert B. Parker
- "A Murder of Promise" by Robert Andrews

- "Atonement" by Ian McEwan
- "The Pickup" by Nadine Gordimer
- "One Door Away From Heaven" by Dean R. Koontz
- "Desecration: Antichrist takes the throne" by Tim F. LaHaye
- "To Tempt a Rogue" by Connie Mason

REFERENCE

- "Current Biography Yearbook"
- "Changing U.S. Demographics" edited by Norris Smith

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Q: Where do you find the most Back Mountain news each week?

A: Only in The Dallas Post