

EDITORIAL

They're ugly, but barriers could save lives on Rt. 309

It seems that no matter how unattractive the result may be, installing dividers on Route 309 between Center Street and Harris Hill Road is a logical response to the carnage that occurs there with alarming regularity. In an ideal world, motorists would obey the speed limit, be careful and courteous and not take the wheel under the influence of alcohol or drugs, and cars wouldn't veer across the center line or pull out in front of oncoming traffic. But that's what people do in the real world along that stretch of highway, and some of them die or are injured with unacceptable frequency.

The state Department of Transportation has given this roadway a great deal of attention in the last decade, and much of what has been done has improved traffic flow and safety. Even now, the recent rash of serious accidents can be considered an aberration in an otherwise positive story. But the sad fact remains that grinding collisions will continue to occur until a physical barrier is installed between the north and southbound lanes.

We make this recommendation with great reservation, since barriers would be ugly and could harm businesses located along the highway. We hope PennDOT engineers can devise a plan that minimizes those effects while providing protected left-turn areas where possible. If that can be done, it's likely much potential disruption can be averted, and perhaps even eliminated as southbound drivers wishing to turn left gain confidence they can do so without risking their safety. Given that a center lane already exists, it wouldn't be unreasonable to expect at least a couple of turning locations could be created by strategically placed barriers and clear signage.

Since the roadway already extends to the limits of the right-of-way, we'll have to get used to the idea of "Jersey" barriers on this part of the highway. There's no getting around their homely appearance, but it's a whole lot better than the sight of the wrecked vehicles and mangled bodies that are too often on view.

Publisher's Notebook

Ron Bartizek



Since this season is the last hurrah for Veterans' Stadium, the much-maligned home of the Phillies and Eagles, my son and I decided to pay a visit. With Barry Bonds in town last weekend and the temperature finally above freezing for more than a week, we headed down the NE extension for a boys' night out, prepared for the grimy seats and loutish fans which the Vet is notorious for, or so we thought.

After a tasty stop in South Philly, we arrived at the stadium via the Broad Street subway, emerging steps from a clean and bright — if a bit large — venue. I was pleasantly surprised that we didn't have to step over homeless drug addicts or negotiate a blockade of pickpockets to reach the ticket window. "This is just the outside," I said to myself: wait until we get past the facade and see the brittle bones of this archaic throwback.

But our spirits were lifted when we entered the main concourse and saw nothing but shiny paint, wide aisles and bustling vendor spaces. When we got to our seats, which were a tad farther from the field than a comparable position in the new stadium, we found they were practically brand new and securely bolted in place; not at all the rickety antiques we anticipated, given the plaintive arguments that had been offered for construction of a new ballpark.

A little research revealed that the ancient Vet hosted its first game in 1971. Horrors! That's before ESPN started broadcasting. According to a story carrying the official stamp of Major League Baseball, the Vet cost \$52 million to build, and "continues to be a first-class facility." Why then, do we need to blow it up and spend \$1 billion (20 times the Vet's cost) to construct separate new stadiums for the Phillies and Eagles? I say "we" because you and I are paying for this insanity, as the state is providing a substantial portion of the funds, and that is coming right out of our pockets. Oh, and the same deal went down in Pittsburgh, so the Steelers and Pirates won't have to put up with that relic, Three Rivers Stadium. Pity the folks in Philly — they're footing the bill for another \$394 million beyond the state's share.

Hey, let me tell you what an outdated, rundown sports venue looks like; at Fenway Park, you need to take Dramamine and carry a flashlight when going for a hot dog, since the dingy walkways are as convoluted as a funhouse. But we love Fenway for its character, something I must agree the Vet doesn't have enough of to measure.

Even so, don't buy the argument that we "needed" a new place for millionaires to frolic more than we need to fix up schools or encourage decent businesses to locate in Pennsylvania. The Vet is a fine facility and its weaknesses, such as an artificial surface that looks and feels like green concrete, could be fixed for a whole lot less than a billion.

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

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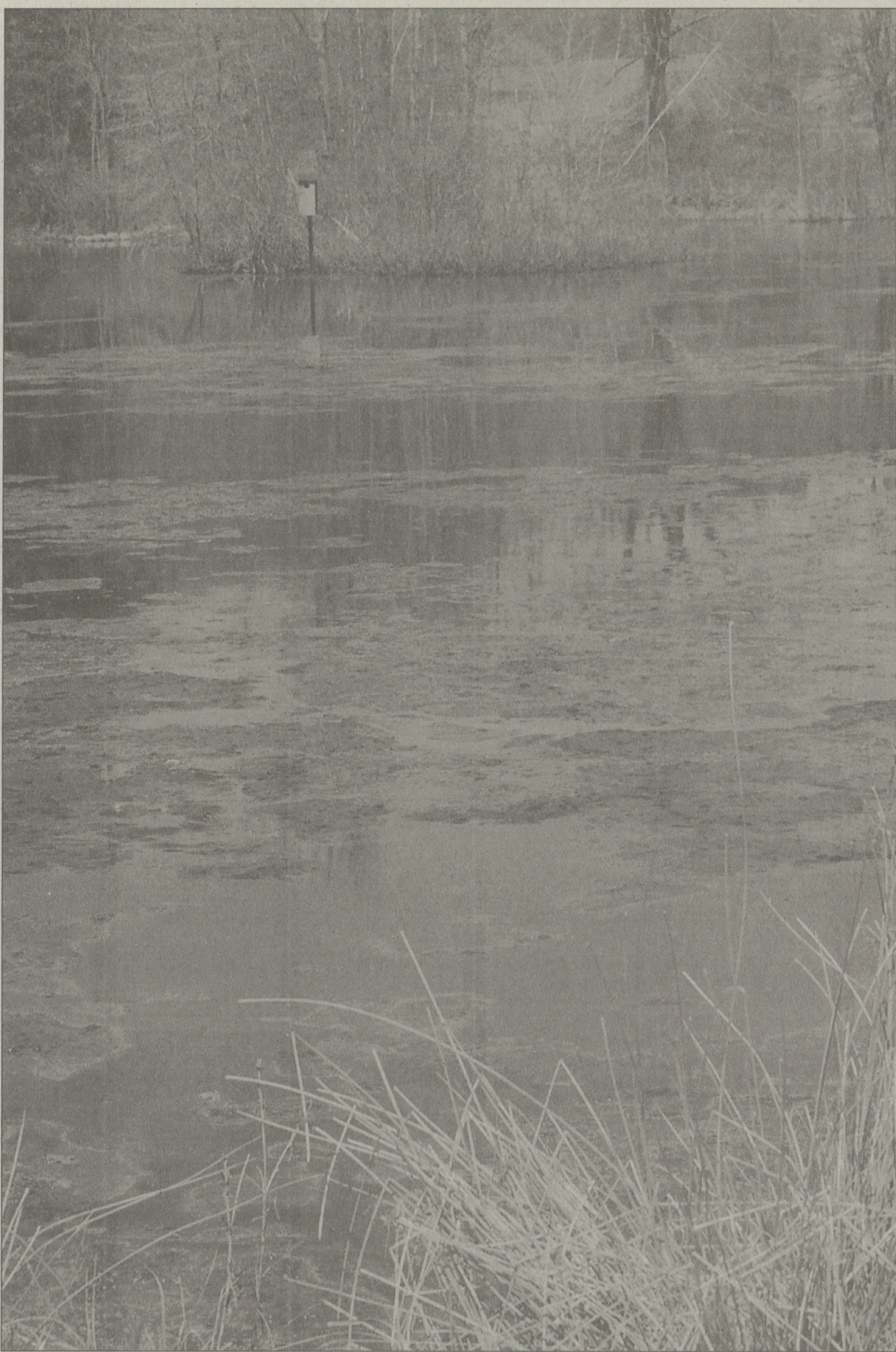
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Springtime along Hardisky Road, Jackson Township. Photo by Charlotte Bartizek.

LIBRARY NEWS



Carol King

"Donuts & Discussion" - This successful program for young readers aged 10 to 13 will be held again this summer at the Back Mountain Memorial Library.

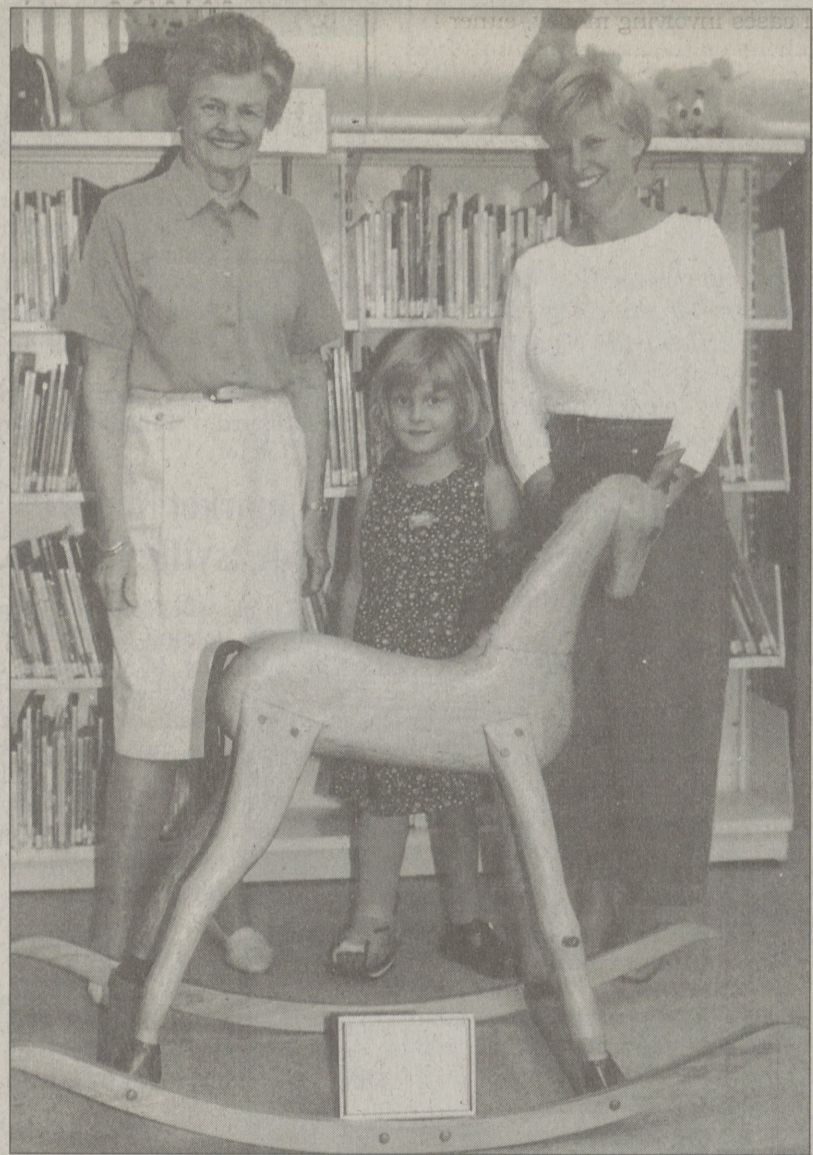
Registration will begin the week of May 12. Call the library at 675-1182. There is a limit of 15 participants.

The group will meet every two weeks to discuss characters, plot, and themes in four junior fiction books, and their reactions thereto — while enjoying donuts and refreshments. Mrs. Janet Bauman, Assistant in the Children's Library, will chair the sessions.

An organizational meeting will be held Tuesday, May 20, in the Children's Room at 4 p.m. and will last about 45 minutes. All registered readers are asked to attend, as meeting days and times and book selections will be discussed and determined at this meeting.

57th Library Auction July 10-13 - Time to be thinking "Auction" in earnest! As you continue to clean up for spring, don't forget that the auction committee will welcome your contributions of old goods in usable condition — household goods, sports equipment, books, games, toys, for example — or new goods still unwrapped. They can be delivered to the library at any time whenever the library is open. For very large objects, call the library for help in transporting them.

Pastries and prose for kids



The picture above shows an item from last year's auction: a decorative rocking horse sculpted by Marshall Rumbaugh. Ten members of the library's board of directors made the winning bid and donated the horse to the library. Pictured with Mrs. Rudolph, Children's Librarian, at left, and Mrs. Butler, Library Director, at the right, is Rachel Pilch.

You may be able to pick up a charming piece like this at the 2003 auction. Put the dates on your calendars now!

Volunteers are needed for the auction. Sign up at the library for the contribution you would like to make.

Summer Reading Program - Details of the theme and events for this summer's program are firming up now, and will be announced as soon as possible.

Sweet Valley cemetery needs help with maintenance

This notice is directed to families who have relatives buried in the cemetery plot adjacent to The Community Bible Church, formerly The First Christian Church of Sweet Valley, PA.

The work that is done to maintain the cemetery is currently all

voluntary. The grounds however are in need of much restoration, such as straightening the tomb stones, filling in of sunken areas with new soil, liming and fertilizing of grass and weekly mowing.

Volunteers are asking for financial help to keep the cemetery

looking respectable. Please do your part by contacting Don Gross at 477-3324 or by sending contributions to The Community Bible Church of Sweet Valley earmarked for cemetery maintenance. Any assistance in this matter will be deeply appreciated.

ONLY YESTERDAY



70 Years Ago - May 5, 1933

GOLD COINS, CERTIFICATES RETURNED TO LOCAL BANK

More gold was received by first National Bank of Dallas during the past month than for the entire year of 1932. The exchange of gold coin and gold certificates for other legal tender came as the result of President Roosevelt's appeal to take gold out of hoarding.

Two mills were cut from the school millage of Kingston Township school district of a meeting of the board making the millage 25 mills, 20 mills for current expenses and 5 mills sinking fund.

The contagious disease cases as issued by the Health department for Luzerne county shows a decline of scarlet fever during the month of April.

60 Years Ago - April 30, 1943

TWO NEW RATION BOARD OFFICIALS ARE NOMINATED

D. L. Edwards, Trucksville and Melbourne Carey, Dallas Township, were nominated to fill existing vacancies at Dallas War Price and Rationing Board.

Thelma Gregory, Mill Street, was sworn into the Woman's reserves of the United States Marine corps at Philadelphia and will leave for six weeks' training at Hunter College, New York City. Gregory is a graduate of Dallas Borough High School.

Melvin Adler, the Shavertown Marine who was injured the day before Christmas on Guadalcanal Co. is coming home to according to word received by parents. He was injured when a 500-pound Japanese demolition bomb struck within 100 feet of where he was standing.

50 Years Ago - May 1, 1953

WORKERS REPORT \$1,592 RECEIVED IN YMCA DRIVE

Second report meeting of Back Mountain Branch YMCA Drive showed the figure of \$1,592 secured to date. Based on the number of calls made, the progress and results are good.

Several loads of old goods from the Library Auction have already been received at the Barn. One exceptional load from the estate of the late Mrs. Albert Stull combined a number of steamer trunks in excellent condition and also a quantity of luggage in first class condition.

Some of the items at Tischler's Variety Store: Sundial shoes: \$4.25; dish cloths 2 for 15¢; cigarettes, carton \$2.20; Van Heusen white shirts \$3.95.

40 Years Ago - May 2, 1963

DISPUTED \$4,500 TAX AGAIN A PROBLEM

Problem of the disputed real estate transfer tax from sale of Natona Mills, plaguing Dallas Borough which claims the \$4,500 and Dallas Township, which has it; loomed up again with the beginning of a new month. Although Natona is still studying the matter, their formal request for return of the money has been registered.

Some of the items at Whitesell Bros.: Exterior house paint \$3.70 gal.; ground lime stone 80 lb. bag 57¢; spading fork \$2.39; 18" metal rake 79¢.

Looting of condemned homes on Memorial Highway across from Harter's Dairy has been under investigation by Kingston Township police.

30 Years Ago - May 3, 1973

FORTY POLICE OFFICERS VIEW MOCK DRUG RAID

More than 40 police officers from 16 surrounding communities witnessed a "staged mock drug raid" at the Kingston Township Municipal Building. The "raid" was part of an eight-week course on drugs and narcotics being offered by the Kingston Township Police Department under the direction of Chief Paul Sabol.