

OUR OPINION

Drugs are the common thread in tragedies

The Back Mountain is again in the news for the wrong reasons, as the police and media investigate the discovery of several bodies in the back yard of a Kingston Township home. Two have been identified as Michael Kerkowski, a Tunkhannock pharmacist who had pled guilty to illegally selling prescription drugs, and his girlfriend. The home is that of Hugo Selenski, described as Kerkowski's best friend and business partner.

This horror follows by only seven months the murder of a Dallas High School student, allegedly by someone who entered his home seeking to steal money for drugs.

That's the common thread — illicit drugs, which hold the potential to be dangerously addicting or hugely profitable, depending which side of the trade in them one is on. A series of anti-drug television ads has tried to make a connection between drug use and international terror. These miss the point; the greatest threat is right around the corner, even in a bucolic community like ours.

The Back Mountain is not alone in the struggle to shield its citizens — particularly young people — from the very real danger posed by drugs and the traffic in them. Parents, siblings, school officials and law enforcement are only too aware of the life-threatening impact a wrong turn can have on individuals, families and the community. While this tragedy may be more than a simple drug deal gone bad, there is no denying that the lure of easy money and chemical escape has a way of drawing both criminal minds and innocent victims into a hellhole, from which some people never escape.

As long as drugs and money retain their power to addict people, we will not eradicate them. But we can pay heed to the catastrophic consequences that drugs bring on nearly everyone who is involved with them, and we can do our best to counsel others on the importance of staying clean.

We can also not shrink from our responsibility to inform authorities when we suspect dangerous activity is taking place. There is too much at stake to bury our heads in the sand of denial and avoidance.

PUBLISHER'S NOTEBOOK

A certified incompetent when it comes to "gardening," as grubbing around in the dirt trying to grow grass and flowers is known among the HGTV set, even I must say I'm disappointed in this spring's weather. Not only has the near-constant deluge caused the lawn to grow like Barry Bonds on "substances," my latest foray into greenthumbery has suffered mortal injury. That's right, I actually planted some seeds this year, and little green things started growing. Sure, some of them are sunflowers, which tend to spring up in the most unlikely places without human intervention, but it's a start. Actually, a couple of wildflowers also are popping up in the cleared spaces cut into the tall grass I euphemistically call a butterfly bed and my neighbors call #&?()*#. The flowers are supposed to add a little color to this otherwise drab patch of green, if they survive the 40 days of rain.



RON BARTIZEK

Then there's the lawn, or what passes for one. Actually, it looks pretty good from a distance, as long as you're not looking down on it, in which case the bare spots kind of ruin the effect. Other people take their lawns very seriously, but I always wonder what theirs look like up close. Is it grass, or do they sneak out at night and spread green paint around to get that perfect hue? I once had a boss who felt even more strongly about lawns, and vowed that he would someday have green-painted concrete in his front yard. I doubt that he ever did.

Did you know that most of our communities have a "vegetation ordinance?" No, it doesn't pertain to squash or cucumbers, it limits the acceptable height of grass on lawns. This seems so anti-environmental — isn't all-natural better? There's a practical side to free-range lawns, too; maybe the deer will leave our precious shrubs alone if there's an abundance of tasty rye just waiting for them to nibble on.

If the sun ever comes out, I'll let you know if my posies survive. I hope they do — they're perennials, so I won't have to plant again for a decade or two, which suits me just fine.

Letters, columns and editorials

The Dallas Post publishes opinions on a variety of topics in many forms.

Editorials, which are the opinion of the management of The Post, appear on the editorial page and are written by the editor unless otherwise indicated. Any artwork represents the opinion of the cartoonist, and columns are the opinion of the author.

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.

In addition to letters, we welcome longer pieces that may run as columns. The author or subject's relevance to the Back Mountain will be the prime consideration when selecting material for publication.



It's a jungle out there. Main Street in Dallas Borough.

70 Years Ago - June 16, 1933

DALLAS FIREMEN VOTE TO IMPROVE PUMPER



ONLY YESTERDAY

Plans to improve the fire truck at cost of \$1,200 were approved at the meeting of Dr. Henry M. Laing fire company. The truck will be taken to Allentown for remodeling.

Calvin McHose, former principal of Lake Township schools, was elected supervising principal of Dallas borough schools. Mr. McHose was selected at a salary of \$1,700 a year.

Some items you could get at American Stores Co.: sardines 2 cans 15¢; cherries big can 19¢; layer cake each 23¢; cookies pkg. 17¢; soda crackers 2 lb. pkg. 25¢.

60 Years Ago - June 11, 1943

EIGHT AREA HAS MOST FIRST AIDERS

In proportion to its population there are more First Aid instructors and more persons who have received training in First Aid classes in the Eight Area, comprising the Back Mountain region.

Dave Deater, Lake Township tax collector, has a little glass bank on the counter at his store in Alderson in which customer drop pennies, nickels and other change. When the amount reaches \$50, Dave will send it to the Reynolds Tobacco Company, makers of Camel cigarettes. The Company will send 1,000 packages of cigarettes to any theatre of war Mr. Deater designates.

Andrew Kozemchack, Overbrook Avenue was made a First Class Petty Officer and First Class Gunner's Mate in the United States Navy.

50 Years Ago - June 12, 1953

JOHN SHEEHAN JR. TO REPRESENT AREA AT CA SCOUT JAMBOREE

John Sheehan Jr. of Huntsville Road, was selected by committee members of

Prince of Peace Troop 200, to be sent to the California Scout Jamboree. He is the only boy in the Back Mountain area to be sent to the Jamboree.

A.C. Devens purchased Himmler Theatre from Mr. and Mrs. Wesley Himmler in one of the largest real estate transactions in this area in some time. In discussing the transaction, Mr. Devens said he expects to continue the same policies carried out by Mr. and Mrs. Himmler.

Robert Richard Rice, Orchard Farm, a member of the senior class at Dallas - Franklin High School, received the American Legion Award for outstanding citizenship at the Commencement Exercises.

40 Years Ago - June 13, 1963

100 GRADUATES RECEIVE DEGREES AT LAKE-LEHMAN HIGH

Lake-Lehman High School was filled to capacity as one hundred graduates received their diplomas in the new building's first graduation ceremony. Lester b. Squier, supervising principal, called each graduate forward to receive his diploma from Willard Sutton, President of the school Board.

Mary A.E. Sigworth, teacher of English at Dallas senior High School, has been awarded a William Robertson Coe Fellowship for American Studies Program at Hartwick College, Onconta, N.Y.

Pfc. Harold A. Coolbaugh was named Soldier of the Month for May of 1963 at Headquarters Company, 7th Army Stock Control Center in Zweibruecken, German. A three-day pass and a check of \$10 accompanied the award.

30 Years Ago - June 14, 1973

DALLAS TOWNSHIP POLICE COMPLAIN OF NO BENEFITS

Dallas Township policemen left the regular supervisors' meeting stating they had little encouragement that their pleas for help would be answered soon. The policemen on the Dallas Township force have no police pension fund and they

are ineligible to collect Social Security benefits. Officer Carl Miers, speaking for the group pleaded with the supervisors to settle the situation or they would be forced to hire legal counsel and bring action against the board.

Preliminary plans and specifications for the new Lehman-Jackson Elementary School have been completed by the firm of Lacy, Atherton & Davis Architects and engineers. The new school will be constructed on a 17-acre site located in Lehman Township between the existing junior-senior high school and the Lehman-Huntsville Road.

A 58 year-old inmate at the State Correctional Institution at Dallas made a daring daytime attempt at freedom by climbing over the high-wire fence in plain sight of guards in two towers and the recreational yard. he was later shot and recaptured by SCID personnel on prison property.

20 Years Ago - June 15, 1983

NEW DALLAS BASEBALL FIELDS?

Back Mountain baseball has outgrown its present facilities. The present fields in Dallas Twp. are in use every night during the season. The Little League Acquisition Committee has found one suitable site in the Back Mountain and the land belongs to the Dallas School District.

The idea of converting the former Dallas Borough Elementary School into new quarters for the Back Mountain Memorial Library is being greeted with enthusiasm. Relocating the library to the former school would provide much needed space.

Some items you could get at Daring's Market: smoked bologna lb. \$1.19; london broil lb. \$2.39; cube steak lb. \$2.19; chicken breasts whole lb. \$1.09; corn 8/\$1; nectarines lb. 69¢; watermelon lb. 17¢.

Only Yesterday
is compiled from
the back-issue files
of The Dallas Post.

New books at BMT Library

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

FICTION

Second Glance by Jodi Picoult
Wild Orchids by Jude Deveraux
Engaging the Enemy by Nora Roberts
About Face by Fern Michaels
Naked Prey by John Sanford
No Second Chance by Harlan Coben
Money for Nothing by Donald E. Westlake
Cerulean Sins by Laurell K. Hamilton
Safe in Heaven Dead by Samuel Ligon
Haunted Ground by Erin Hart
The Wife by Meg Wolitzer
Sweetwater by Roxana Robinson

NON-FICTION

Confessions of a Hero-Worshiper by Stephen J. Dubner
Publicize Your Book! by Jacqueline Deval
Our heroes: present generations honor the Past by Students at Wyoming Area High School
The Way of a Ship by Derek Lundy

The Recipe Hall of Fame Cookbook II

MYSTERY

Moon Over Manhattan by Larry King and Thomas H. Cook

The Dogs of Riga by Henning Mankell

Cat in a Neon Nightmare by Carole Nelson Douglas

LARGE PRINT FICTION

Tempting Fortune by Jo Beverly

Light in Shadow by Jayne Ann Krentz

Someone to Watch Over Me by Judith McNaught

The Last Detective by Robert Crais

The Fellowship of the Ring by J.R.R. Tolkien

Sheik by Connie Mason

WESTERN

The Golden West by Louis L'Amour, Zane Grey & Max Brand

YOUNG ADULT

Pool Boy by Michael Simmons

Dead Girls Don Write Letters by Gail Giles

Historical Society to hold Annual Garden Party

The Luzerne County Historical Society will hold its annual Garden Party on Thursday, June 26 from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. The event will be held in the Hughes Memorial Garden behind the Society's Bishop Memorial Library, 49 South Franklin Street, Wilkes-Barre.

The afternoon reception will be held in the tranquil setting hidden in the heart of downtown Wilkes-Barre. Wander among the radiant display of annuals and perennials and enjoy the random assortment of advertisements through the ages. Cost of Garden Party is \$8 per person.

As part of the Garden Party, the Traditional Hat Contest will be held. Decorate your favorite hat. In the past, contestants in the "prettiest" category decorated their hats with real, artificial or dried flowers. In the category of "most unique," hats featured a miniature golf course, tea bags, photographs, drinking glasses, and giraffes. Prizes will be awarded. Winners will be announced at 6:30 p.m.

Dinner will be served at the Westmoreland Club from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. Cost of dinner is \$40 per person, which includes the Garden Party reception. Reservations required for dinner.

For more information, contact the Luzerne County Historical Society at 823-6244.

Poetry Society seeks members

Anyone interested in forming a poetry group in the Back Mountain, should contact Steve at 639-2320 or e-mail BkMtnPoetry@hotmail.com

THE DALLAS POST

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