

OUR OPINION

Can our water supply hold up under pressure?

Many people are concerned about the deteriorating landscape of the Back Mountain, as homes and stores fill available land, often replacing open fields and stately groves of trees.

That is a legitimate and important concern, although not one that is likely to halt the burgeoning popularity of this region anytime soon.

There are two issues that might, though, and they are like the proverbial elephant in the living room everyone tries to ignore but can't — traffic and water. The first is obvious to anyone who gets behind the wheel of a car, or, worse yet, attempts to walk from one side of the highway to another. We are not a user-friendly environment for drivers, never mind for pedestrians or bicyclists, and the crush of cars and trucks offsets many of the charms that have attracted people here over the decades.

More important, we may be stretching water supplies to and beyond their limits. The Back Mountain's dependence on ground water argues for a thorough review of sources and capacities before, not after, we have exceeded them. This topic rises to the surface whenever an extended drought occurs, then recedes like the tide until the next dry spell. It seems that we are inexorably tapping unseen aquifers without having any idea what their adequacy is. But anyone who was here for the summer of 1988 knows how unpredictable our water supply can be. That year, as rainless days turned into weeks and months, restrictions were placed on water use and some neighborhoods were forced to resort to bottled water. In response, a water commission was formed with support from nearly all sectors of local government, with the goal of determining the status of the aquifer and laying out an action plan to avert future problems. But the effort petered out when precipitation returned to normal the following year.

Now, the new Back Mountain Council of Governments is hoping to launch a comprehensive regional plan, one aspect of which is a study of the Back Mountain's water supplies. If this were to occur, it would be the first time we had a clear picture of our resources and potential, and could serve as a road map to responsible land use as we prepare for the growth pressures that seem unavoidable.

These bears aren't cuddly toys

Recent sightings of bears in residential neighborhoods are a reminder that we share the land with creatures that can respond to our presence in unpredictable ways. It is highly unusual for a bear to attract a human, but not unheard of. The Game Commission cautions that home owners should avoid actions that might attract bears, such as leaving out bird feeders or other lures, and should know how to respond if one is encountered.

If you have questions, or want to report a critter that seems dangerous or troublesome, call the Dallas office at 675-1143.

PUBLISHER'S NOTEBOOK

What a glorious weekend just passed. No, the weather wasn't particularly pleasant and I didn't win Powerball, but something nearly as significant happened — the Red Sox took two-out-of-three from the Yankees. Even better, every game was a great one, and they were played at Fenway Park.

Aside from the on-field rivalry that has waxed and waned over the decades, the Red Sox/Yankees feud has all the elements of an opera, from the legendary Curse of the Bambino to late-game home runs that inevitably spoil the Sox' chance to win another World Series, which would be the first since 1918.



RON BARTIZEK

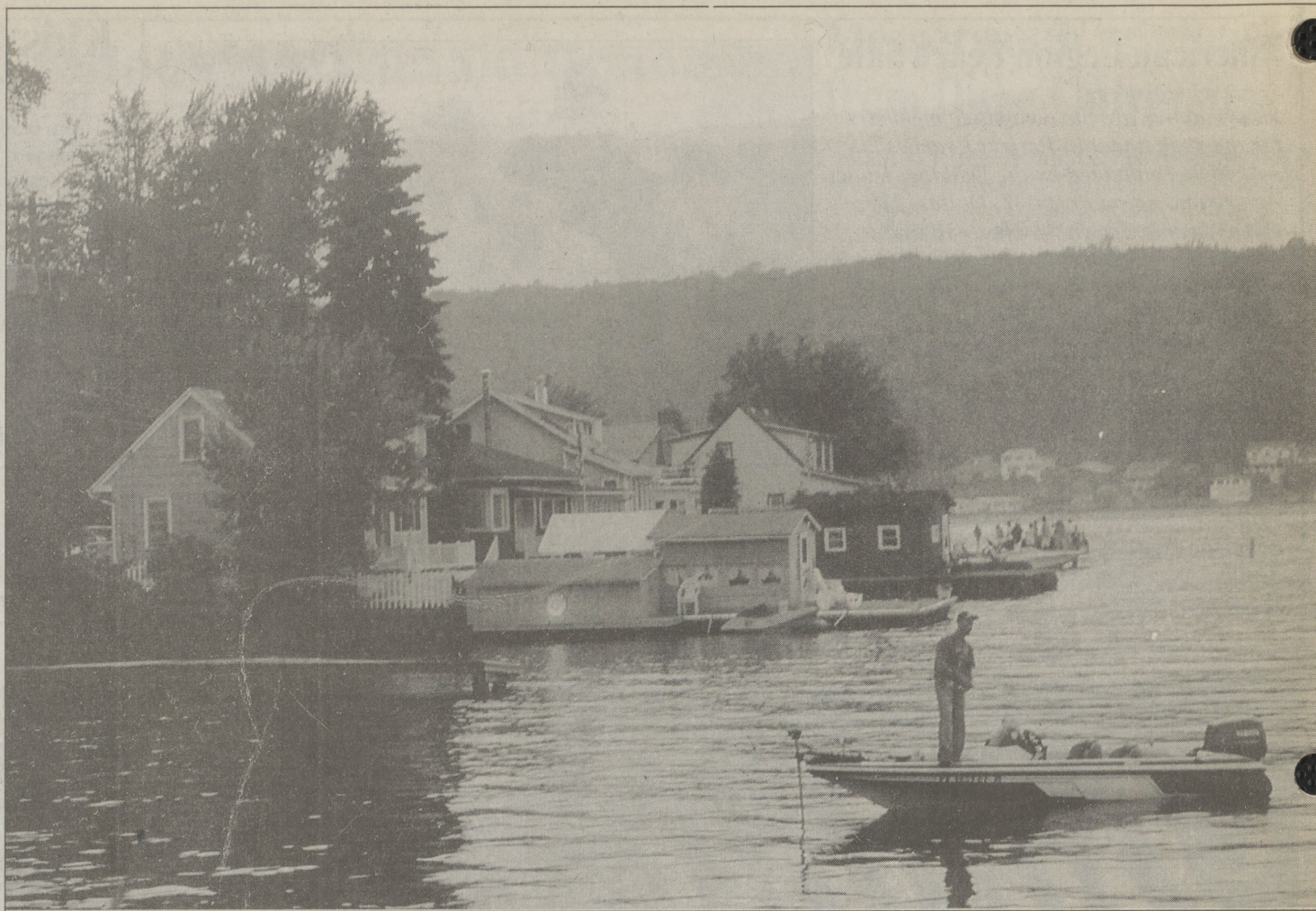
And there are the ball parks. Both Yankee Stadium and Fenway are now on the endangered species list of professional sports venues, having survived for 70 and 91 years respectively. Ironically, the first game played at Yankee Stadium featured the Red Sox as opponents, and the Bronx Bombers prevailed 4-1 thanks to a three-run homer by Babe Ruth. How's that for irony. The Stadium (when your team wins that much, everything gets capitalized) is still a fine ballpark, although George Steinbrenner would abandon it in an instant if the taxpayers would buy him a new one. But it pales in comparison to Fenway, which survived a recent threat only because the bloated cost of construction in Boston scared the jerseys off the team's new owners. Watching this weekend's games at Fenway, which challenges fielders with more angles than a geometry textbook, it's hard to imagine anything that could replace it, ugly metal pillars and all. But you can bet the idea will surface again, just as soon as the Boston economy perks up.

Then again, a new park may be a reward if the Sox win another Series. Given that choice, I'd rather they continue to frustrate fans in the most entertaining way possible, such as beating the Yankees for the American League championship.

Letters welcome

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.



It doesn't get any better than this. Fishing at twilight, Harveys Lake. Photo by Charlotte Bartizek.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Trees, wildlife are paying the price for development

Editor,

Yes, there is a housing boom in the Back Mountain. While everyone is worried about the roundabout and the big box store moving in, clear cutting of trees is going on in my neighborhood of Old Goss Manor in Dallas. A family of hawks (possibly falcons) was displaced when the tree their nest was in was cut down last week along with about three more acres of their habi-

at. They fly from house to house screeching all day. It breaks my heart. A doe and her two fawn are also wandering around the neighborhood with no place left for them to feel safe.

How can landowners be allowed to cut down trees with no limitations and no consideration of how it will impact nearby homes? Why aren't there zoning laws about clear cutting? This land is next to a creek and a Dallas Township owned park

and day after day more trees fall leaving a gaping pit into which (supposedly) houses will eventually be built. Neighborhood residents will no longer be able to take a walk through there and enjoy the beauty of nature, wildlife will no longer have a safe habitat and I will now be able to enjoy the sights and sounds of Route 309, but that's progress, right?

Lorraine Redlich
Dallas

Back Mountain softball team played by the rules

Editor,

It was reported that the Plains Junior League All-Stars could have won the district championship, Thursday July 17, by forfeit due to an allegation that some of the Back Mountain (BMT) players did not meet the league rule that all players must play a minimum of half of the regular season games to be eligible for post season play. The perceived problem started when an unknown caller and parent of a BMT player placed a call to the Plains coaching staff suggesting that several of the BMT girls were not eligible because they did not play enough regular season games. BMT was notified. Of the allegation on game day (July 17), 22 days after the regular playing

season ended.

Back Mountain arrived at the field believing that the required games were played by everyone and were greeted by the Plains manager, and who compiled a list of all the BMT players who had called the other coaches in the league for their score books, to verify the number of games played by the BMT girls. Back Mountain was unable to obtain all of its score books to prove any different. (One of the coaches who was not involved with all-stars had the, missing book.) The game was played minus the two players in question.

The next day the missing book was retrieved, and clearly proved one of the players who was sidelined was eligible. The game in question during the regular season

was between BMT and Plains. A phone call was placed to the Plains League President, Bob Post, to explain the mistake was in fact in their score book.

Back Mountain was quite disappointed to read an article on July 19, after they thought the error was in Plains' score book. Back Mountain is sure it was an honest mistake because of the large number of substitutes BMT made during the regular season with a roster of over 20 girls. It is regrettable that the two players who graciously sat out during regular season to allow others playing time were punished for being good sports.

Rick Evans
Back Mountain Manager
Shavertown

GUEST COLUMN

Woodsman, spare that spindly tree

□ Fungal disease unsightly, but most trees will recover

By Elizabeth Webster
Penn State Forest Resources Extension Writer

This year's heavy rainfall has been as damaging to our trees as it has been dampening to our spirits. Anthracnose, a fungus that affects deciduous trees such as maple, dogwood, ash, and most severely, white oak and sycamore, has stressed trees statewide this year. John Holowid, extension agent for integrated pest management at Penn State says that some sycamores have lost up to 90 percent of their leaves this summer. "I'm afraid people will start cutting the trees down," he says.

A tree affected with anthracnose has brown and shriveled leaves that may progressively die and drop off. Though unsightly, the fungus does not tend to kill trees. According to Norm Kauffmann, forest pest management specialist for the Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry, trees in the southern part of the state (near Juniata and Dauphin counties) have already begun

to re-leaf. Trees in the northern half of the state have not fared as well and may not grow new leaves until next year. Kauffmann advises, "Just because there's no leaves on it doesn't mean it's dead. Some people are too quick to reach for the saw." To check the health of a tree, examine the tips of the branches for a slight greenish color, or snap off a twig and look for live wood.

Anthracnose symptoms appear in early spring when fungal spores infect leaf and flower buds. If conditions continue to be favorable for the spread of the fungus, as they have been this year, symptoms will persist and possibly worsen in late spring and early summer. Trees infected with anthracnose for consecutive years will weaken and become vulnerable to other pests and diseases. Kauffmann suggests that concerned homeowners and landowners can help by fertilizing their trees in the fall.

This season's cool, damp weather has had far-reaching effects. Anthracnose has damaged trees in Michigan and Ohio as well as Pennsylvania. Fungal diseases similar to anthracnose have affected cherry and willow trees. Cherry leaf spot also causes

leaves to drop prematurely. Willows suffer from scab and black canker, which causes wilting of leaves and shoots.

Not all effects have been negative however. The gypsy moth, responsible for large-scale defoliation and death in Pennsylvania's forests, is in decline thanks in part to a fungal disease that attacks the caterpillars. In March, the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) announced that they will not spray insecticide for gypsy moths this year, as they have in previous years.

The Pennsylvania Forest Stewardship Program provides publications on a variety of topics related to woodland management for private landowners. For a list of free publications, call 1-800-235-WISE (toll-free), send e-mail to RNRext@psu.edu, or write to: Forest Stewardship Program, Forest Resources Extension, The Pennsylvania State University, 7 Ferguson Building, University Park, PA 16802. The Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry and USDA Forest Service, in partnership with the Penn State's Forest Resources Extension, sponsor the Forest Stewardship Program in Pennsylvania.

70 Years Ago - August 4, 1933

NOXEN TANNERY EMPLOYEES MOVE TO FORM UNION

Employees of the J. K. Mosser Tannery, owned by Armour and Co. are perfecting organization of a union preparatory to asking for a higher wage scale, a shorter working week and additional employees to help care for increased employment.

ONLY YESTERDAY

Henry Disque of Dallas was appointed to inspect places licensed to sell 3.2 beer as a representative of the office of County Treasurer Joseph Morris. Some items you could get at American Stores Co.: macaroni spaghetti, 4 lbs. 25¢; apple sauce, 3 cans 19¢; layer cake, each 15¢; beans, 4 cans 19¢.

60 Years Ago - August 6, 1943

WORK WILL START ON MEMORIAL PARK FOR TRUCKSVILLE

Thirty representative citizens of Trucksville met in Trucksville Fire Hall and formed The Trucksville Community Association. The immediate objective of the Association is the creation of a Memorial Park and landscaped site for the Trucksville Honor Roll on property extending along Carverton Road and bordering Tobys Creek.

First large shipments of green tomatoes from this area was made from the packing station on Thomas Earl's farm, at Carverton, according to C.L. Johnson, who has been purchasing tomatoes for the "green-wrapped" trade in this section. Johnson annually ships thousands of bushels to the largest markets of the south and east.

Out of seventy-seven voters who registered at John Lewis Barber Shop, in Fern-

brook, fifty-two took advantage of the opportunity to change their party affiliation from Democratic to Republican.

50 Years Ago - July 31, 1953

COMMONWEALTH MAILS 13,000 DIRECTORIES

Thirteen thousand new telephone directories were mailed to Commonwealth telephone company subscribers in the Dallas, Tunkhannock and Shickshinny Districts.

A proposed electric power rate boost that would have adversely affected Bloomsburg and Natona Mills, two of the Back Mountain Region's major industries, and 31 other industrial consumer of Luzerne Electric and Gas Division of U.G.I. was suspended by Public Utility Commission for six months.

Dr. Henry M. Laing Fire company or-
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