

OUR OPINION

Give offending students a taste of real life to learn from

A great deal of ink has been put on paper to publicize, speculate about and comment on the so-called hazing incident in which a Lake-Lehman football player was injured. In the last two weeks, observations and calls for a response have varied from, "It's no big deal; get over it," to "String 'em up," as parents, school officials and officers of the law have struggled to find an appropriate reaction.

Clearly, significant punishment is in order for the four boys who taped a younger teammate to a chair, smeared a chemical compound on his face and — however inadvertently — were responsible for breaking his jaw when the chair pitched forward as it was being rolled from the locker room into the high school gym. The apparent purpose was to humiliate the player after a poor performance on the field in a junior varsity game.

While some have labeled this a "hazing" incident, it clearly is not that, but more a case of dangerous youthful horseplay that got out of hand. Still, the "boys will be boys" approach just isn't a strong enough reaction to behavior that caused a serious injury.

Their guilt was compounded when they ran away after their teammate was injured, obviously more concerned with saving their own skins than with his health and safety.

Given that scenario, and that many team members watched the incident unfold and did nothing to stop it, Lake-Lehman probably made a mistake in playing a game the following weekend. Cancelling the season would have been an unfair overreaction, but forfeiting a game would have sent a message more in keeping with the gravity of the incident.

On the whole, it is best if the school and their families can arrive at fitting punishment for the damage done. That should include a heavy dose of counseling and community service for everyone involved either actively or as a coldhearted bystander. It is not enough simply to respond to the obvious injuries; these young people need to have their eyes opened to the real-life hardships many people deal with while they act out their childish pranks. The four main characters need a stronger lesson; several weeks of one-on-one assistance to physical therapy patients or a long stint serving food at a soup kitchen come to mind as possibilities.

There is a chance that criminal charges may be filed, but it's hard to see what result that approach would bring that a serious schedule of counseling couldn't achieve. Nor does it make sense to force the students out of the district, and thereby let them escape the opprobrium of classmates who are dismayed by the negative spotlight their foolishness has cast on Lake-Lehman and by the plain stupidity of their behavior.

As for football, it should be off limits for the rest of the season for the players directly involved.

Whatever punishment is decided upon, it won't satisfy everyone. Let's just hope the final result is young people with a clearer understanding of their responsibilities to themselves, one another and the wider community, and an appreciation for the relative unimportance of a game compared to the challenges of real life.

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

You'll notice some changes in The Post this week, and we hope you like them. The most obvious is the title, which is now simply "The Post." The reasoning behind this is simple — over the years many people have remarked that the title led them to think we were only about Dallas, not the entire Back Mountain region. There has also been a tendency for Lake-Lehman folks to feel we favor Dallas school coverage, which we try very hard to address by making every effort to give each district a comparable amount of space. But the suspicion lingers on, and this may help alleviate it.

The other obvious change is really an addition, a "Church & Community" page. The Back Mountain is home to many active congregations and it seems they are becoming larger and stronger with each passing year. Previously, we mixed church and social

news together. Now it seems to make sense to separate them. But that's not all we're doing; we are adding a weekly pastor's column that we hope will rotate among every religious leader in the region, and a listing of upcoming activities at our churches. If you don't see your church represented, mention to your pastor that it should be. The deadline to receive items for this page is noon on Wednesdays.

By the way, if you are looking for the classified ads, they are now included with all the others in the main classified pages of the Sunday Times Leader.

We'd like to hear what you think about our renovation project, so don't hesitate to drop an e-mail to rbartizek@leader.net or call me at 970-7157.

Letters invited

Letters to the editor are welcome and will be published, subject to guidelines regarding relevance and suitability.

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.

Send letters to: The Post, 15 N. Main St., Wilkes-Barre PA 18711.

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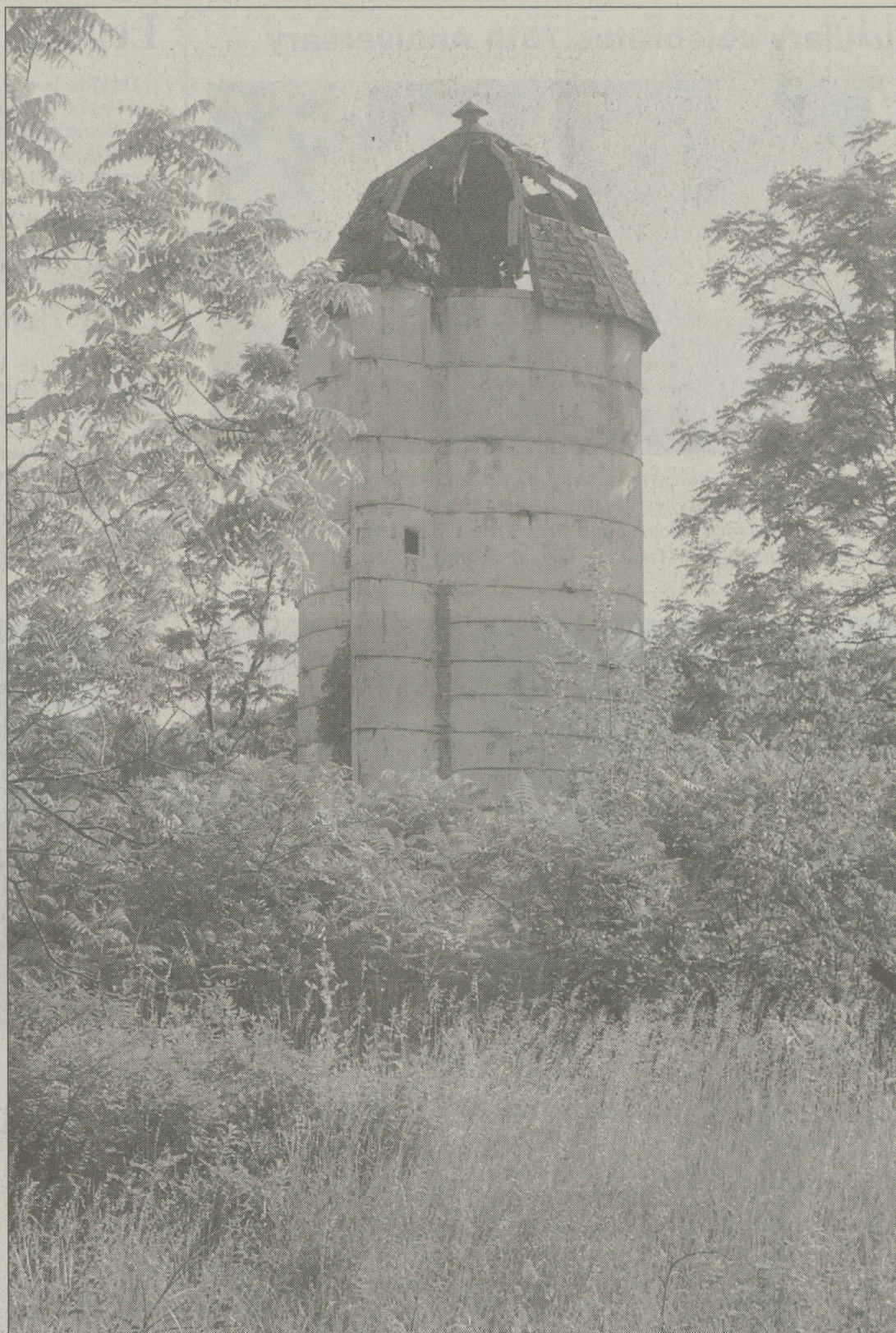
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Brave reminder of the Back Mountain's agricultural past. Photo by Ron Bartizek.

Oratory contest offers scholarships

High school age students of the Back Mountain are invited to compete in the 65th annual National High School Oratorical contest. William Kupstas, Commander of the Daddow-Isaacs Post 672 American Legion, Dallas, said more than \$132,000 in college scholarships will be awarded to winners.

Local school officials and faculty are working with the Legion and will assist with contest arrangements. Home-schooled students are also welcome to enter.

The subject in the Prepared Oration portion of the contest must be about some aspect of the Constitution of the United

States, emphasizing the duties and obligations of a citizen to the United States government. The prepared oration must be the original effort of the contestant and must be 8-10 minutes in length.

In addition to awards to winners of various elimination rounds of competition, scholarships of \$18,000, \$16,000 and \$14,000 will be given to the first through third places in the national finals. Each state winner who competes in the first round of the national contest will receive a \$1,500 scholarship. Participants in the second round who do not advance to the national final round will receive an additional \$1,500

scholarship.

The top three youth orators who have won all previous elimination rounds of the contest will vie for top honors in the national contest on April 3-4, 2004 at the IUPUI Conference Center and Hotel, Indianapolis, Indiana.

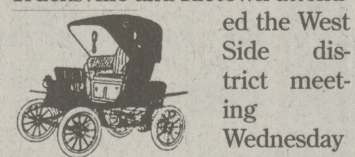
The American Legion will pay the expenses of state winners at the national contest.

High school students in the Back Mountain who are interested in entering the contest will find the complete rules and contest information at the schools, or contact Clarence J. Michael at 675-0488.

70 Years Ago

BOY SCOUTS WIN AT KINGSTON RALLY

Boy Scouts from the Dallas Districts, including troops from Jackson, Dallas, Shavertown, Trucksville and Idetown attend-



ONLY YESTERDAY

ed the West Side district meeting Wednesday night in Kingston. In competition with troops from Kingston, Forty Fort and all other communities on the West Side of the river, the local troops made a good showing in all events.

"Prosperity," the picture that many local fans have been waiting to see, is to be shown at the Himmler Theatre tonight and Saturday.

Some items you could get at the A&P grocery: Tomato soup, four cans for 25 cents, soda crackers, 2 pound pkg, 25 cents. Rice Pops cereal, two pkgs 15 cents.

60 Years Ago

PACKS OF DOGS KILL WILD GAME

State Game Protector T.A.

Reynolds has issued a warning that large numbers of licensed and unlicensed dogs are running wild game throughout the Back Mountain Region. Many of these dogs run in packs hunting rabbits and deer throughout the night until their quarry falls exhausted, an easy prey.

Two members of the Dallas War Price and Rationing Board, comprising the Gasoline Rationing panel, submitted their resignations yesterday to Fred Kiefer, chairman of the board. They are H. Austin Snyder and Howard W. Risley.

50 Years Ago

KUNKLE FIREMEN REVIVE INFANT

Jason Kunkle and Fred Dodson saw a ten weeks infant relieved from suffocation Monday night when they applied the resuscitator mask and started operations.

State and local police ask cooperation in tracing the hit-run driver who seriously injured six-year old Guy Zerfoss Friday night and sped off through Shavertown, leaving the child unconscious.

Dallas Water Company will shortly install a six-inch line to New Goss Manor making it possible for the installation of fire hydrants in that area.

40 Years Ago

MIGRANT SCHOOL NOW AT ORANGE

School for children of migrant workers employed in the harvest of crops in the orange-centermoreland-Falls area is being conducted at the Orange Methodist Church, and will continue for five to six weeks.

A boy (Eric Martin) playing a game of war with his companions, supposedly escaped from his enemy, jumped on his bicycle and wheeled down Hillside Street, when his bike was struck by a car driven by Rev. William Meissner. The boy was saved from serious injury.

Rightly concerned over the safety of school children crossing the dangerous Center Street intersection in Shavertown, Dallas School Board will contact state representatives in an effort to aid Kingston Township supervisors make the crossroads safe.

30 Years Ago

PILOT PROJECT PUTS CITIZENS FACE TO FACE WITH INMATES

Channel 44 staffers, both men and women, as citizens, are exposed for the first time to prison inmates. What citizens

New books at library

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

FICTION

"No Graves as Yet" by Anne Perry

"Cold Ridge" by Carla Neggers

"When the Emperor Was Divine" by Julie Otsuka

"How to Meet Cute Boys" by Deanna Kizis

"The Present" by Spencer Johnson

"Moon Tide" by Dawn Clifton Tripp

"The Maid of the White Hands" by Rosalind Miles

NON-FICTION

"The Woman's Day Weight-Loss Plan" by Kathy Keenan Isoldi

"The Healthy Table" by Luiz Ratto

"Macromedia Dreamweaver MX" by Sherry Bishop

"Creating Web Pages with HTML and XML" by Patrick Carey

"Novels, 1944-1953" by Saul Bellow

BIOGRAPHY

"A Prison Diary" by Jeffrey Archer

LARGE PRINT FICTION

"Miss Julia Speaks Her Mind" by Ann B Ross

REFERENCE

"A Guide Book of United States Coins 2004" by R.S. Yeoman

"Books In Print 2003-2004"

"Subject Books in Print 2003-2004"

BOOKS ON CD

"The Kingmaker" by Brian Haig

"Genesis Force" by John Vornholt

"Horatio's Drive" Dayton Duncan and Ken Burns

YOUNG ADULT

"An American Plague: the true and terrifying story of the yellow fever epidemic" by Jim Murphy

"High Heat" by Carl Deuker

Back Mountain Senior Citizens

The Back Mountain Seniors wish to announce change in meeting dates.

Meetings will now be held once monthly, on the first Thursday of the month.

meetings will start at 1 p.m. and will be held in St. Thereses' Hall on Pioneer Ave. and Davis Street in Shavertown.

We will start to work on sleeping bags for the homeless at 12 p.m. before each meeting.

For information call Lil at 696-1828 or Marie at 696-3095.

see are people attempting to demonstrate their concern for their fellow man.

Public radio is coming to North Eastern Pennsylvania and volunteers can be a part of the WVIA-FM team.

The Singer Company's Climate Control Division has announced plans of closing its manufacturing facility in Trucksville.

20 Years Ago

TOWNHOUSES PLANNED, BOARD CONSIDERS

Plans call for a new housing development consisting of 16 townhouses to be built in the area bounded by Church Street, Center Hill Road and Claude Street, an area known as the Samuels property.

Entering into the ratings war against "Winds of War" was Dallas Township Police Chief Carl Miers, who was a Sunday night guest on radio station WARM. Miers discussed new drunken driving laws with representatives of MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Driving).

State grant pays for a telescope at Lake-Lehman. Kathryn Gregory, science teacher in the district, recently captured a \$3,500 grant from the State Department of Education.

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

A: Only in The Post