

OUR OPINION

Grownups must act their age, too

The budget news for Kingston Township is not pretty. Even more ugly has been the conduct of some members of the board of supervisors and citizens during a round of meetings to discuss the 2004 fiscal plan.

This is just one of several recent disturbing signs of a breakdown in public and private behavior among adult leaders in public, school and private settings.

In the case of Kingston Township, Paul Sabol, Chairman of the supervisors, has made pointed remarks from the official dais about the character of citizens who have commented on and criticized his and other supervisors' performance. Some of those citizens have likewise behaved in a boorish manner, either being the first to fire off degrading words, or responding in kind. "Then shut up!" which was heard from a citizen in addressing Sabol, doesn't advance the cause of anyone's interests. Even incoming supervisor Jeffrey Box, who hopes to lead the township out of its present predicament, has on occasion shown lapses in professional courtesy.

Unfortunately, this isn't the only evidence of demeanor that falls woefully short of acceptable. According to an internal school report, Ted Jackson, the fiery head coach of the Dallas High School football team, lost his temper and grabbed a player during halftime of the Old Shoe game with Lake-Lehman. And the membership of the Dallas Junior Football organization has been in turmoil over an allegedly improper election of board members, with a recent meeting punctuated by shouted charges and responses until one cooler head brought attention to the childish clamor.

There has been much discussion in the past few years about a decline in "civility" in public discourse. That description is perhaps a bit effete. A better way to state the problem might be a variation of Rodney King's "Can't we all get along?" After all, in every instance mentioned here, the main goal is to do something good for as many people as possible, whether that's crafting a responsible budget, building a winning team or teaching the value of team effort to pint-sized gridders.

Therein lies the most disturbing aspect of this conduct — its effect on young people who view grownups as role models for their own adulthood. It is bad enough that the entertainment industry pushes vulgarity, disrespect and violence as its stock-in-trade. Hometown institutions, and local leaders at every level, have a responsibility to control their emotions and tongues, if for no other reason than to set a good example for their sons and daughters.

We must expect more from ourselves and those who represent or lead us and our children. This is not a recommendation to shy away from the ardent, principled debate that is the lifeblood of the democratic process. But there is no excuse for allowing passion to overrule common courtesy or to let personal enmity block out respectful consideration of opposing views.

If we observe leaders who can't acquit themselves in a mature, respectful manner, we will point them out for everyone to see, in the hope that exposure will lead to self-correction, or if not to public pressure that will help to keep issues in their proper perspective.

Borough can respond better citizens' concerns

Surely there is more officials of the Harveys Lake Borough can do to relieve the discomfort of residents than wring their hands and give them the phone number of a state agency. That was the initial response at Tuesday's council meeting when Arlene Sulewski again complained about acrid smoke emanating from a neighbor's home. That is not a sufficient response to a continuing, potentially dangerous situation.

The burning, which Sulewski describes as constant, had been conducted outside until the borough revoked the property owner's burning permit. Now, apparently, the activity has been moved indoors, using what Sulewski describes as a homemade incinerator in the garage. In response, solicitor Charles McCormick said the borough has no authority over inside burning, and referred Sulewski to the state Department of Environmental Protection.

To her credit, Sulewski pointed out an ordinance relating to excess smoke and odors and asked if that could be applied. While McCormick seemed to agree that was worth pursuing, it's only right to question why he or a member of council hadn't come up with that suggestion.

Harveys Lake officials must step up their response to this situation, and any others that threaten the welfare and security of citizens, not sluff off their responsibilities onto other levels of government.

Letters are welcome

The Dallas Post attempts to publish opinions on a variety of topics in many forms.

Letters to the editor are welcome and will be published, subject to the following guidelines:

- Letters should not exceed 500 words.
- 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.



Upside down maple at the Meadows Center, Dallas. Photo by Charlotte Bartizek.

LETTERS

'Coach Jones' taught more than football

Editor:

My dad informed me today that Coach Jack Jones recently passed away. This is a sad day for me. As a kid growing up in the Back Mountain, I'll never forget trekking up to Dallas stadium to watch a Jack Jones coached Dallas team play on a beautiful Saturday afternoon. Many memories as a kid hearing about the great teams he had at Meyers and West Pittston are with me today. Then, as a high school senior, I had the privilege and honor of being the starting quarterback on his Dallas football team in the fall of 1977 that went 8-3. We should have won them all if we played a little harder and executed our plays better. I'll never forget those days. And I'll never forget Coach Jones.

He will always be "Coach Jones" to me. Other than my father, no male figure taught me more as a young man than Coach Jones. I know he was a great football coach. I heard some time ago that he was elected to the Pennsylvania High School Coaches Hall of Fame. I know about his records and undefeated teams at Meyers and other places before he

came to Dallas. And I know how he turned around the Dallas program and put Dallas football on the map. And I played for him.

But I'm not writing to talk about Jack Jones the football coach. He was much more than that to me and to many other young boys who were privileged to play for him. All of the traits that Coach Jones instilled in me as a young football player — hard work, commitment, responsibility, teamwork, discipline, giving it your all, and winning with class — I try to carry with me every day of my life. He was more than a good football coach. He was a good man and a great teacher.

As a young sophomore sitting home with a broken leg listening to my Dallas football team beat Meyers in a close game in 1975 — we lost only one game that year — I'll never forget the knock on the door a couple of days later. There was Coach Jones with the game ball from the win over Meyers, signed by all the players. He wanted to spend his evening with me — a backup third stringer. You'll probably find hundreds of stories like that. He wasn't flashy or flamboyant.

Winning wasn't everything to Coach Jones, but he was a winner. He taught you how to play and appreciate the game. And in the process, through the medium of a chalkboard and a football, he taught us life.

Men like him only come around so often. He was a special man. I have many fond memories of Coach Jones. Don't ask me what grades I got in math class, or what courses I took. Couldn't tell you. But ask me about playing football for Coach Jones, and I'll tell you about every game, virtually every play, and many long and hard practices in the sweltering summer heat and in the brisk cold of a Pennsylvania snow. But more than that, I remember every lesson he ever taught us. He called it football, but by golly he knew it was much more than that.

On behalf of all those kids who once played for and learned from Coach Jones, I want to say "Thanks Coach." We didn't say it enough when you were with us. But your memory and the lessons you've taught us will last forever.

Douglas C. Smith, Esq.
Riverside, California

LETTERS

Computer class scheduled in December

The Back Mountain Memorial Library will sponsor a Microsoft Word class on Saturday,

December 6, from 10 a.m. to noon. The instructor will be a member of the Penn State Wilkes-Barre campus IST Club. Call

the library, 675-1182, to register.

The deadline for the fresh fruit/cheesecake sale has been extended until Monday, November 24. Order forms and payment must be received in the library by 4 p.m. The dates for pickup are Friday, December 12, from 4 to 6 p.m., and Saturday, December 13, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Cheesecakes must be picked up on Friday to guarantee quality. There will be reminders mailed out, so please put these dates on your

calendars. Thank you for your orders!

The two "Giving Trees" are awaiting ornaments in the library, one just inside the entrance and the other in the children's room, and will be up through the holiday season. They give adults and children an opportunity to support the library, and, at the same time, they may choose to honor someone with a book dedication on the reverse of the ornament. The ornaments range in price from \$1 to \$25. Stop by and add your name and your support by hanging your ornaments on the trees.

Fred Krohle, manager of the Slightly Read Bookstore, invites everyone to check out the Holiday Gift Book Table of special books for the season. The regular sale table features books, usually priced at \$1, now only 25 cents each or 5 for \$1. The bookstore is handicapped-accessible, with an entrance and parking lot at the

rear of the library.

Martha Butler, library director, reported to the board the many activities at the library during the month of October, including visits by Larry Kiwak and five Boy Scouts, and Maureen Devine and her group of twenty 4-5 year-olds. Frank Husband has set up a regular monthly schedule of visits for seven special-needs children from the Back Mountain. In October the library received donations from the following organizations and foundations: M&T Charitable Foundation, American Legion, Odd Fellows, Prince of Peace, and the Newcomers Club of Wyoming Valley. Statistics for the month include: total circulation 8,187; books added, 294; new borrowers, 72; and active borrowers, 16,088 (a new high).

The library will be closed on Thanksgiving Day. We hope you have a joyous day with family and friends.

70 Years Ago —
November 24, 1933

TRACY DENIES HE INSULTED MEXICANS

— Louis B. Mayer Studio Executive of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer informed Albelardo Rodriguez, President of Mexico, that Lee Tracy's five-year contract with Metro had been cancelled "as a result of Tracy's behavior," it was announced yesterday.



ONLY YESTERDAY

Tracy is originally from Shavertown. Mrs. W. L. Tracy lives at 220 Pioneer Avenue.

— At its regular meeting, Dallas Borough considered buying a snow plow to be used this winter.

— Dallas Borough Athletic Association agreed this week to replay the Borough-Kingston Township game football game. It was decided by a vote of 6-1.

60 Years Ago
November 26, 1943

ONE NOXEN MAN IN 10 HAS ENTERED SERVICE

— With one man in ten in military service, Noxen, Wyoming County, with a normal population of less than 1,000, has one of the highest percentages of men in service of any community of the Back Mountain.

— Grover Anderson, Jr. and Jack Nothoff, of Harveys Lake, have returned from American Mountain, near Wellsboro, where Mr. Anderson shot a bear last Friday that weighed 150-pounds dressed.

— Fathers, some of them with as many as four children will soon be leaving for military duty. The majority of them have two or more dependents.

50 Years Ago
November 27, 1953

ONE-ROOM SCHOOLS TO BE THING OF PAST IN SWEET VALLEY

— Ross Township elementary students will not return to their one-room schools after Christmas, but will go directly to the new building in Sweet Valley.

— Public Schools will be closed for the first day of deer season, Monday November 30. Students will have five days for the Thanksgiving recess, starting today, Wednesday at 2 p.m.

— At the lusty young Library Auction, a howling infant in June 1947, nobody ever dreamed that a revenue of \$3,000 could ever be topped.

40 Years Ago
November 26, 1963

FINO BUYS DRUG STORE

— A Pittston pharmacist has purchased Kuehn's Drug Store, Main Street, ending a three-generation control of the store. Mrs. Lillian Kuehn says ill health of her son Frank is the reason for the sale, but that she will stay on to help Robert Fino operate.

— Clark Mosier, son of Mr. and Mrs. Sheldon Mosier, Kunkle, has been signed to play with the Wilkes-Barre Barons.

— People around town reacted to the news that the President was shot. A car drew to a stop in the middle of Main Street, blocking traffic, the driver and a pedestrian listening to it's radio: "Full details are not yet available, but it has been confirmed that the President and others have been shot."

30 Years Ago
November 21, 1973

\$1.5 MILLION BID TO BUILD NEW SCHOOL

— An unofficial low bid of \$1,698,000 for construction of a new Lake-Lehman elementary school was received from H. Kline Company at the regular scheduled meeting.

— Stanley Lehman of the Department of Environmental Resources has reported that

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THE POST

TIMES•LEADER Community Newspaper Group

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