

OUR OPINION

Don't 'weight' to take action on hefty kids

Too many kids in Dallas schools are fat. So, what is going to be done to help them slim down and shape up? That seems to be the important question that is going unanswered in response to a study conducted by nursing students from College Misericordia.

Twenty percent of eighth grade students were characterized as obese based on statistics on height, weight and age gathered from the schools. That's 2 percent higher than the state average, and we don't need to remind you that Pennsylvania is not known for the svelte condition of its citizens.

Physical condition has a profound influence on a person's life, and has effects on the community at large when poor health results in higher incidences of disease and illness. Beyond those considerations, an individual's fitness level affects productivity and even feelings of well-being.

Instead of settling for the "wait-and-see" response this survey has engendered to this point, Dallas should jump at the opportunity to become a model for study and instruction in healthy eating and exercise. The college is committed to at least two years of followup, and in that time, the district could take a far more assertive role in student wellness by adopting higher standards for the food and drinks it provides and by taking a hard look at its curriculum and extracurriculars with an eye toward introducing students to activities that promote a lifetime of fitness.

Surely, along with developing young minds, this is a worthy and appropriate role for the Dallas school system.

Small but mighty, Kunkle UMC celebrates

Congratulations to the members of the Kunkle United Methodist Church as they celebrate the little country church's 150th anniversary. It might be tempting to think this tiny institution, with only 93 members, has become irrelevant in an age of bigness, but that would be not only wrong but unfair to congregations past and present that have made the church an integral and important part of the community.

In the early days of Kunkle UMC, a church was the center of a rural town's life, a unifying force that conducted rituals from infant baptism to services for the departed. Through the years, congregants also were kept busy enlarging and improving the church edifice itself, as countless fundraising events brought families together for a common cause. And, as Rev. Martin Bovee points out, those efforts go beyond the front steps of the white clapboard building, radiating out into the wider community through support for a community library, a children's day camp, food pantry and people of modest means who want to repair their homes.

It is fitting that the parishioners pause a moment to reflect on past accomplishments and to enjoy a bit of well-earned praise, even as they continue to exert positive influences on the lives of those the little church serves.

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

"What's wrong with the bike?" my wife asked after I had carefully packed her minivan with this year's contributions to spring cleanup. "Didn't you say last night that it's a sin to throw out things that could be repaired?" Not sensing the immorality attached to discarding a worn-out Huffy, I attempted to defend myself. No, I hadn't said it's a sin, or shame, or anything of the sort, I had only remarked that not many years ago when I was a boy (all right, maybe it was many years ago),



RON BARTIZEK

people fixed bikes and lawn mowers and Barbie dolls until they were beyond salvation, to use another morality laden term. Now, thanks to the twin marvels of a rising stock market and Chinese sweatshops, we don't repair, we replace everything from automobiles to Zenith televisions at the first sign of trouble, and often before that point.

It's hard for today's teenagers to believe this, but there once were businesses called "repair shops," where you could bring a toaster that wouldn't toast or an air-conditioned loafer in need of new soles, and for a fraction of the new price, gain a few more years of usefulness. Even more incredible, there were people who took pride in thriftiness, exactly the opposite of our present acquisition-minded, conspicuously consuming culture.

The new reality is probably not an entirely bad one. Making new products must keep more people working than does repairing old ones, and it really is great that so many of us can afford attractive clothing, even if it is made possible by \$2 a day laborers in foreign lands, the names of which we can't pronounce.

Still I was troubled to see perfectly useful lawn chairs and a nearly new log splitter sitting at the Dallas Township collection area. I almost brought them home, but was dissuaded by the thought that I'd simply cart them back next year, along with whatever else I had decided was cheaper and easier to replace than repair.

Send your comments to The Post by e-mail

thepost@leader.net

Digital photos welcome, too!

THE POST

TIMES•LEADER Community Newspaper Group

15 N. MAIN ST., WILKES-BARRE PA 18711 • 570-675-5211
thepost@leader.net

Patrick McHugh
PUBLISHER

Ronald Bartizek
EDITOR

Justin Wisnosky
ADVERTISING

Erin Youngman
REPORTER

Greg Stauffer
AD PRODUCTION MANAGER



Bright yellow indicators of a glorious season. Photo by Charlotte Bartizek.

LETTERS

Progress hailed in preserving open land

Editor,

As I look out my window this afternoon, gazing to the south and the west, I see the mountains and hills overlooking Harvey's Creek and the Pikes Creek Reservoir. For over 100 years this watershed was protected by men with a vision and sense of purpose. They understood that a pure and plentiful water supply was essential to the growth and development of this area. The former PG&W guarded and patrolled these areas with an intensity that would make John Ashcroft proud. However, as this land passed to Pennsylvania Enterprises, then Southern Union and finally to the purely proprietary entity Theta, its purpose was lost. Last week, Governor Rendell announced the purchase of 3,000 additional acres that will include these mountains and hills. The circle has been closed and the purpose restored. Nearly 11,000 acres have now been protected and preserved. Thank you!

Over three years ago, a group of concerned citizens were brought together because of a bland one paragraph announcement by our new corporate neighbor, Southern Union. Our hills, mountains and watershed — 40,000 acres of land in Northeastern Pennsylvania — had been sold for \$12.3 million. This galvanized the efforts of some of the most dedicated and intense people I have ever met. At his press event, Governor Rendell admitted that he received more letters, e-mail and phone calls about the Theta land than almost any other issue during his first year in office. I have little doubt that this made a great difference and made our political leaders take notice. The people of Northeastern Pennsylvania care deeply about their environment.

As I looked at the politicians lined up with the Governor on Friday, I saw a few of the "true friends of the environment." They fought the battle from the beginning and understood its great significance.

There have been some disappointments in the process, but we are wiser. I regret that Southern Union, our corporate neighbor, did not choose to be part of the solution. There are still large tracts of important watershed in Lackawanna County that need to be preserved. There is still time for redemption. We are not finished.

The Governor announced that there will be a new Growing Greener II initiative. This will preserve additional forest, farmland, and wetlands. It will also clean streams and help to restore those damaged by acid mine drainage. It deserves our support.

It is good to know that as the sun sets on these hills and mountains they will likely look the same for generations to come with "development" provided only by Mother Nature. As always, Defend Our Watershed!

Paul Niezgodza

Jackson Township

President, Defend Our Watershed!

PACE/PACENET applications available

Senior citizens who rely on prescription drugs to stay healthy may qualify for financial assistance through the state's newly expanded PACE and PACENET prescription drug assistance programs.

The PACE income limits have been increased by \$500, allowing more seniors to access the program's benefits. It now includes single senior citizens with incomes up to \$14,500 and married seniors with incomes up to \$17,700. PACENET income eligibility limits are between \$14,500 and \$23,500 for single seniors and between \$17,700 and \$31,500 for couples.

PACENET participants are required to pay a monthly \$40 deductible, and then are only responsible for an \$8 copay on generic drugs and \$15 for brand name prescriptions. PACE participants pay \$6 copayment for each generic prescription and a \$9 copayment for brand name medications.

The law creates a Pharmaceutical Assistance Clearinghouse, which gives seniors access to information on public and private assistance programs available to help them pay for medications. In addition, the law calls on the Department of Aging to

study pharmacy best practices and cost control programs.

The programs are open to low-income Pennsylvanians age 65 or older.

For more information about PACE/PACENET or for an application, contact one of these state legislators:

- Rep. George Hasay, 5315 Main Rd., Sweet Valley, or 862 State Rt. 29 South, Tunkhannock, 836-1247.
- Rep. Phyllis Mundy, 400 Third Ave., Kingston, 283-9622.
- Sen. Charles D. Lemmond, 22 Dallas Shopping Ctr., Dallas, 675-3931.

70 Years Ago
May 11, 1934

DILLINGER DRIVES A FORD, AND YOU SHOULD, TOO

An ad for the J.F. Besecker Ford dealership promoted the fact that notorious outlaw John Dillinger "drives nothing but FORD V-8s. It's the quick get-away that counts." The ad went on to say that was why police departments across the nation have adopted use of the cars.



ONLY YESTERDAY

The Kingston Township School Board retained J.A. Martin as supervising principal, raising his pay from \$2,100 to \$2,400 per year.

Girl Scout executives from five states were expected for a regional convention. They were to be welcomed at a tea hosted by Mrs. William H. Conyngham at Hillside.

60 Years Ago
May 12, 1944

2 LOCAL SOLDIERS MISSING IN MEDITERRANEAN ACTION

Pfc. Robert F. Ressiguie and Pvt. Elwood Blizzard have been reported missing in the Mediterranean Theater. Pfc. Ressiguie was aboard a troop ship that had been torpedoed, and Pvt. Blizzard was missing in action in Italy.

Sgt. Claude Warden returned home after completing 26 combat bombing missions over Germany as turret gunner on the Tagalong. He was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross.

Mrs. Sherman Schooley and Mrs. Clinton Ide entertained at a birthday party honoring their husbands at the Ide home in Huntsville last Sunday.

50 Years Ago
May 7, 1954

3-YEAR-OLD BOY FOUND WITH FAITHFUL DOG AT HIS SIDE

Three-year-old Ronnie Ray was found tired and scratched after an hourlong search to find him. The family's cocker spaniel, Sport, was at his side until rescuers arrived.

Anne Woicewski was named Dallas-Franklin Township High School Queen for the annual May-Day celebration.

Jack DeWitt Jr. claimed the Weckesser Cup for the lowest score on opening day at Irem Temple Country Club. He shot a 76, edging J. Henry Pool Sr. and Warren Unger.

40 Years Ago
May 7, 1964

FIREMEN SAVE HOME OF LARGE FAMILY IN DALLAS

Dallas firemen saved the home of Melbourne Carey on Claude Street from destruction. The family has 15 children, not all of them living at home.

Workers were tearing up rails and fastenings of the abandoned Lehigh Valley Railroad line from Luzerne to Noxen.

Dallas High School students John Wornack and Thomas Peirce finished eighth and third respectively out of 140 competing students from 23 high schools.

30 Years Ago
May 9, 1974

QUESTIONS RAISED ABOUT HARVEYS LAKE SEWERS

Harveys Lake resident Frank Burnside raised concerns the sewer system being constructed is not being adequately inspected.

In a letter to the editor, The North Branch Meeting Friends asked U.S. Rep. Daniel Flood to vote for impeachment of President Richard M. Nixon.

John Majewski, a Dallas High sophomore, set a new school and district record in the high jump of 6'3" in a meet against Bishop O'Reilly. In the same meet, Dallas junior Neil Cross broke the school and district record in the 220-yard dash with a time of 22.5 seconds.

20 Years Ago
May 9, 1984

RALPH MIERS FARM HONORED BY STATE

The Ralph Miers farm in Lehman Township was honored as a Century Farm by the PA Department of Agriculture. Ralph and Nettie Miers were the third generation of the family to operate the 87-acre farm, purchased by Ralph's grandparents for \$11.96 per acre.

William R. Pugh of Shavertown has written "The Shaftdiggers," a story that begins with the arrival of his grandfather from Wales.

Sandi Shone tossed a two-hit shutout over Hazleton, as the Dallas girls softball team won 8-0.