

OUR OPINION

Do-si-do with NCLB

Whatever else is said — complimentary or critically — about the No Child Left Behind Act, it has made public school teachers' and administrators' job more complicated. Meeting artificial standards and tailoring a curriculum to tests might also mean less fun for kids, unless the adults who guide them apply a huge dose of creativity. That's what has happened at Wycallis Elementary School, and nothing illustrates the fruit of their labor better than the annual "Hoedown" performed by second grade students.

This is "probably" the tenth year for the event, offers Suzanne Herstek, one of the teachers who originated it. Anyone who has had young children knows how these shows work; kids dress up, sing songs, perform skits and dance. Sometimes the theme is a holiday, others it's a historic event, in this case it's sort of an Old West slant. But it turns out to be a lot more than fun and games.

The Wycallis faculty has found a way to weave NCLB requirements into the creation, rehearsal and performance of the Hoedown. While learning about cowboys and their surroundings, square dancing and reading about cowboy life, the students are fulfilling requirements in Social Studies, physical education and reading. Aspects of the show touch on music and art as well, and the whole package teaches cooperation, another required standard.

Perhaps the most remarkable thing about the Hoedown, however, is that the teachers have been able to wrap all these dry regulatory requirements into a package that just feels like fun. Maybe that's how all learning should be.

Keep dredging issue before the public

It was good news when the Department of Environmental Protection scheduled a hearing to accept public testimony for or against a proposal to dredge a small section of Harveys Lake. The response — about 100 people in attendance and 21 speakers — reinforced the value of seeking input from real people, not just officialdom.

The dredging issue is a hot one because so many people have passionate feelings about protecting the environment, in this case a wetland area that acts as a spawning ground for some fish species, as a magnet for herons and other wildlife and as a natural "biofilter" of chemical contaminants that flow in with runoff from roads, parking lots and lawns.

Opponents warn of serious harm that might be done to this ecosystem if dredging is allowed. Proponents of the plan minimize the potential risk, and say humans have claims on the lake, too, such as for places to conveniently dock a boat.

Both sides have marshalled scientific arguments to support their cases, and DEP officials will now wade through those and other considerations before deciding whether or not to grant a permit to dredge a channel taking up an area of about one-half acre.

No matter what that decision is, once it has been made, DEP officials need to fully and openly explain the reasons behind it. Holding another public hearing to do so might be the best way to do that.

MOMENTS IN TIME

The History Channel

- On Nov. 29, 1928, fearful that theater owners might balk at showing the tragic story of a doomed affair, MGM releases two versions of "Love," a silent-film version of Leo Tolstoy's novel "Anna Karenina." Theaters could request either a happy ending or a sad one.

- On Dec. 5, 1933, the 21st Amendment to the U.S. Constitution is ratified, repealing the 18th Amendment and bringing an end to national prohibition of alcohol. Some states, however, continued to maintain statewide temperance laws, and Mississippi, the last dry state in the Union, did not end Prohibition until 1966.

- On Dec. 1, 1955, Rosa Parks is jailed in Montgomery, Ala., for refusing to give up her seat on a public bus to a white man, a violation of the city's racial segregation laws. Parks' act of civil disobedience sparked the successful Montgomery bus boycott and inspired a nationwide civil-rights movement.

- On Nov. 30, 1967, Sen. Eugene McCarthy, D-Minn., an advocate of a negotiated end to the war in Vietnam, declares he will enter several Democratic Presidential primaries in 1968. McCarthy's grassroots campaign stuns the political establishment when he almost beats President Lyndon Johnson in the New Hampshire primary.

- On Dec. 3, 1979, before a concert in Cincinnati by the rock band The Who, 11 young people are trampled to death during a stampede for seats at Riverfront Coliseum. The band was not told of the deaths until after the show.

- On Dec. 2, 1985, organized crime bosses Paul Castellano and Thomas Bilotti are gunned down as they exit Sparks Steak House in New York City, making John Gotti, the organizer of the hit, head of the notorious Gambino crime family.

- On Dec. 4, 1992, President George H.W. Bush orders 28,000 U.S. troops to Somalia in East Africa, where rival warlords are preventing distribution of humanitarian aid to thousands of starving Somalis.

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From the cabbage patch. Photo by Charlotte Bartizek.

GUEST COLUMN

Auto tour promotes old-growth forests for eco-tourism

By Elizabeth Webster

A new tourist guide to Pennsylvania's old-growth forests is now available from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) and on the DCNR Web site.

Dr. Donald L. Gibbon, consulting naturalist, and Dr. Walter Carson, forest ecologist at the University of Pittsburgh, first conceived the Auto Tour of Old-Growth Forests four years ago. Gibbon describes the idea as "a tour for people who are interested in the forest, to see how it looked originally, and to see the best of what's left."

Some remaining parcels of old growth include the Alan Seeger Natural Area, the Anders Run Natural Area, Cranberry Swamp, Cooks Forest State Park, and others.

According to the DCNR, less than 1 percent of Pennsylvania forestland (30,000 acres) can be defined as "old growth." Old growth forests occur when man or nature leaves the forest undisturbed and the forest succession cycle is not reset. It takes many years for the different forest types to attain such advanced maturity — at least 100 years for scrub-oak barrens to 350 years for hemlock forests.

"These small fragments represent the best picture we have of what forests might have looked like prior to European settlement," says Carson. "When you walk into a section of old-growth, you get the sense that you're seeing a very different kind of forest. One of the different features is a large amount of big downed, woody debris, and standing dead trees with fallen crowns and very large, slowly decaying trunks."

Visitors may also expect to get a glimpse of towering giants like Cooks Forest's record setting 181-foot white pine, or of 300-year-old black cherry trees in the Tionesta Scenic Area. Cooks Forest's white pine and hemlock trees are between 350 and 450 years old. The 19 natural areas chosen for the tour lie in the Lumber Heritage Region, a 15-county area in the north-west, north-central part of the state that contains many of our state and national forests.

The region owes its name to a history of heavy logging in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The inaccessibility of some parcels spared them from the widespread clearcutting. Even today, the forests along these muddy bogs and rocky inclines have never been harvested; however, individual trees might have been removed

from the area.

Although Pennsylvania's old-growth fragments are too small to provide significant wildlife habitat, Carson says there are some animals that require old growth. Auto-Tour sites frequently overlap the Audubon Society's designated Important Birds' Areas and the Pennsylvania Game Commission's Pennsylvania Important Mammals Areas. Mammals like black bear, pine marten and flying squirrel, and birds like blue-headed vireo, brown creeper, and barred owl find refuge in old-growth forests.

The Auto Tour of Old-Growth Forest brochure, available from the DCNR and on the DCNR Web site, contains detailed directions, photos, and a brief description of each area. Gibbon says, "It would probably take six or seven days to visit all the sites. It's especially interesting to visit them in all seasons, not only summer." Many of the sites are located off Route 120 or Route 322, and some can be accessed by car. Cooks Forest and the Alan Seeger Natural Area, for example, have roads running through them. Other sites are located a couple of miles off the road, and travelers will need to walk to see the old growth.

"This is not set up for the armchair tourist," Gibbon explains. "It's for people interested in experiencing woods as woods." Many of the areas do not provide amenities. As Pennsylvania's second largest industry, tourism is vital to our state's economy. The "Pennsylvania Wild" campaign, one of four new state initiatives to promote Pennsylvania tourism, will encompass portions of the old-growth areas outlined in the auto tour. Contact your local Bureau of Forestry district office for a brochure.

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
Nov. 30, 1934

TEACHERS TO MEET AT INSTITUTE HERE

Teachers from Dallas Borough and Dallas, Kingston, Lake and Lehman townships will attend an institute at Kingston Township High School on Friday afternoon, Dec. 7. Dr. Joseph Miller, director of the vocational guidance department of Wilkes-Barre schools, will be the speaker. His subject will be "Individual Differences Among Children." There will be motion pictures and slides.

ONLY YESTERDAY

W.W. Brace, for many years a widely known and respected resident of Shavertown, died early on Tuesday afternoon at the age of 74. Mr. Brace was stricken with a heart attack while he was unloading wood in his garage.

The widening and grading of the Huntsville Road, started as a CWA project, will be completed by Luzerne County soon after the first of the year. This assurance was given to Henry Disque this week by the County Commissioners. Mr. Disque reported the commissioners will complete the project as planned.

60 Years Ago
Dec. 1, 1944

RETURN FROM FRANCE WITH CAPTURED FLAG

Pictured aboard a Coast Guard Cutter which participated in the invasion of Southern France, on the front page of the Renova Record on Oct. 10, is a trio of Pennsylvania Coast Guardsmen displaying a captured Nazi flag — an invasion memento. Among the men so pictured is Herbert Jones, seaman first class, son of Mr. and Mrs. W. L. Jones of Hillcrest Avenue, Shavertown.

Dallas Board of Health met Tuesday

night to prepare its budget for the coming year and to make plans for further inoculation work in the schools. Last year the board operated well within its annual budget of \$300 largely because of the volunteer work done by its members. Because of the absence of John Frantz for a part of the year, Dr. F. Budd Schooley has temporarily acted as health officer.

Known for many years as one of the leading livestock producing farms in the state, Orchard Farm in Dallas Township has been purchased from the William H. Conyngham Estate by George and Kenneth Rice of Lehman Township. The Rices, father and son, have long been identified as outstanding potato growers but they are equally well-known for their fine purebred Ayrshire dairy, which in 1942 was the highest herd in the state in dairy herd improvement work.

50 Years Ago
Nov. 24, 1954

NEW JEWELRY STORE OPENS IN SHAVERTOWN

David Powell has opened a new jewelry store in the Gosart Building, Center Street, Shavertown. There he expects to handle a complete line of watches, costume jewelry and gift items. A navy veteran of World War II, Mr. Powell and his wife, the former Jean Lamoreaux, make their home on Terrace Drive.

Henry C. Kramer, the man who developed the beautiful Twin Valley Memorial Park at Delmont, dropped in to visit the Post Friday to clear up the mystery of the recent telephone survey here to determine how many people own cemetery lots. Mr. Kramer explained that he has been negotiating for several months to purchase Chapel Lawn Memorial Park, established in 1937 near Castle Inn, but never fully developed.

Plans for Community Christmas Lighting and a Home Decoration Contest were incomplete yesterday as the Post went

to press. It was understood that Dallas Borough Council will sponsor the lighting of Main Street as it did last year with collections from the merchants being made by Chief Russell Honeywell.

40 Years Ago
Nov. 24, 1964

CONTRACTOR OFFERS DALLAS RAILROAD DEPOT TO LIBRARY AUCTION

Raymon R. Hedden gained the contract to build a new Dallas post office on the site of the abandoned railroad station. He immediately offered to give the passenger station to the library, to sell at this year's auction.

"Flip" Diderick, a summer exchange student from Holland, is expected to fly back home soon. Injured in August, when he dived into a shallow pool in Loyalville, he has been recuperating from a broken neck at Nesbitt Memorial Hospital ever since. He will make the trip back aboard a Navy plane equipped with a special litter. The Dallas ambulance will take him to a New York airport to board the plane.

Three classmates from the class of 1960 at Westmoreland High School are studying in Philadelphia for their medical degrees. Jack Eck is enrolled at Temple Medical College, Durrelle Scott is at the University of Pennsylvania Medical School and Mary Lane Jerista is a freshman at Woman's Medical College.

30 Years Ago
Nov. 27, 1974

LAKE-LEHMAN HONORED FOR FIELD HOCKEY TITLE

The Lake-Lehman field hockey team was honored for winning the Northeastern Pennsylvania Field Hockey League championship. The Lady Knights advanced to state playoffs, where they lost in the semi-

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