

## OUR OPINION

## Hooray for competition! We hope.

As Adelphia prepares to raise rates for cable television service next month, a possible competitor is waiting in the wings. Commonwealth Telephone, a company with its roots and headquarters in Dallas, plans to launch "bundles" that would include local and long-distance phone services, high-speed internet and the Dish Network. A spokesman says the company intends to be "ready to compete" with cable. We hope so.

It has been galling to watch over the last few years as cable and internet users in more metropolitan areas, where living costs are generally much higher, have had access to these services at much lower rates than we pay. Commonwealth's digital subscriber line internet, for example, is \$49.95 per month, while similar service in and around large cities is often barely over \$30. We had hope — there's that word again — that our rates would decline when Adelphia added internet access to cable, but there was no effect.

Unfortunately, hope is about all we have on our side. Cable television and internet services are not subject to regulations as is local phone service, which is still considered a public utility. That status puts at least some restraint on rates. For cable and internet, it's whatever the traffic will bear, and while the prospect of serious competition is alluring, there's no guarantee it will become reality.

But we can always hope — that Adelphia and Commonwealth will face off as fiercely as they pretend, offering not just low teaser rates for short periods of time, but genuine money-saving packages.

And we can hope the government will wake up and recognize that times have changed, and affordable access to modern telecommunications services is not a luxury, but a necessity for both families and businesses. Alas, given the present climate in Washington, that hope may have to spring eternal.

## MOMENTS IN TIME

The History Channel

• On Feb. 27, 1922, Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover calls a conference to allocate radio wavelengths. Lack of regulation meant that some 500 stations were broadcasting on the same wavelength before the conference.

• On Feb. 26, 1949, the Lucky Lady II, a B-50 Superfortress, takes off from Carswell AFB in Texas on the first nonstop round-the-world flight. The aircraft was refueled four times in the air by tanker planes and returned to the United States 94 hours later.

• On Feb. 22, 1950, Walt Disney's animated feature "Cinderella" opens. Based on a fairy tale by the Brothers Grimm, "Cinderella" featured enduring songs like "A Dream Is a Wish Your Heart Makes" and became one of Disney's most beloved films.

• On Feb. 25, 1964, 22-year-old Cassius Clay shocks the odds-makers by dethroning world heavyweight boxing champ Sonny Liston in a seventh-round technical knockout. The dreaded Liston, who had twice demolished former champ Floyd Patterson in one round, was an 8-to-1 favorite.

• On Feb. 21, 1972, President Richard Nixon arrives in Beijing, the capital of the People's Republic of China, on the first presidential visit to the world's most populous nation. Given that the United States had formally opposed China's communist government since it took power in 1949, Nixon was also the first president to visit a nation not recognized by the United States.

• On Feb. 24, 1988, the U.S. Supreme Court defends the right to satirize public figures, voting 8-0 to overturn the \$200,000 settlement awarded to the Reverend Jerry Falwell for his emotional distress at being parodied in *Hustler*, a pornographic magazine.

• On Feb. 23, 1997, NBC becomes the first network to broadcast a movie without commercial interruption. Ford Motor Company, which sponsored the broadcast of "Schindler's List," showed one commercial before and after the film.

(c) 2005 King Features Synd., Inc.

## Letters, columns and editorials

Editorials, which are the opinion of the management of The Post, appear on the editorial page and are written by the editor unless otherwise indicated. Any artwork represents the opinion of the cartoonist, and columns are the opinion of the author.

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

- 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.

Letters can be sent many ways:

By e-mail to: [thepost@leader.net](mailto:thepost@leader.net)

By mail to: The Post, 15 N. Main St., Wilkes-Barre PA 18711.

By using the drop box located in the Uni-Mart convenience store on Route 309 in Dallas, across from the Dallas Shopping Center.

Always include a daytime phone number for verification.



Snug as a horse in a rug. Photo by Charlotte Bartizek.

## Program can help families with heating costs

Help is available for families that struggle to make ends meet, as rising fuel prices add to their financial worries over the cold winter months. Pennsylvania's Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) has started accepting applications for the 2004-05 winter heating season.

Administered by the state Department of Public Welfare, the federally-funded LIHEAP program helps low-income households pay for a variety of home heating fuel sources and furnace repairs in the winter. About 350,000 households will participate in the 2004-05 program. Applicants do not have

to be on public assistance or own a home to qualify.

The program provides cash grants or crisis grants, depending on the household's circumstances. The cash grant program is designed to help families pay their home heating bills. Cash grants are based on income, family size, type of heating fuel and heating regions. Crisis grants of up to \$300 are given to families with heating emergencies, such as mechanical breakdowns or unexpected fuel shortages.

The deadline to apply for assistance is March 24. To qualify, households must have a total income at or below 135 percent of the federal income

poverty level. For example, one- or two-person households with income limits of \$12,569 and \$16,862, respectively, may qualify for the program.

A family of four with an annual income of up to \$25,448 may qualify. For more details about income limits, contact LIHEAP.

Applications for LIHEAP are available at county assistance offices, local utility companies and community service agencies, such as Area Agencies on Aging or Community Action Agencies. Families can also apply for LIHEAP cash grants online at [www.compass.state.pa.us](http://www.compass.state.pa.us). In most counties, individuals

seeking crisis grants should contact their county assistance office. In addition to proof of income and household size, applicants must provide a recent bill or statement from their fuel dealer showing the type of fuel they use.

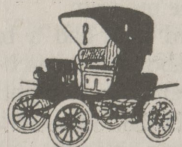
For more information about LIHEAP, call the toll-free information line at 1-866-857-7000 Monday through Friday, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.

Going without heat during the cold weather months poses a serious danger to health and safety. Qualified families and individuals should take advantage of the LIHEAP program to avoid unnecessary hardship this winter.

70 Years Ago  
Feb. 22, 1935

### 2 PROJECTS READY FOR STATE'S O.K.

Applications for Federal funds for the paving of Pinecrest and Spring Avenue projects in Dallas Borough have been filed and will be forwarded to Harrisburgh within the next ten days, Borough Engineer, John Jeeter, reported at a meeting of council Monday night.



**ONLY YESTERDAY** Harrisburgh within the next ten days, Borough Engineer, John Jeeter, reported at a meeting of council Monday night.

There will be few men in the Back Mountain Section without jobs this spring if plans which have been started by the Dallas Borough Unemployment League, with co-operation of borough officials, are carried out successfully. The board is asking that local men be given preference on local projects.

Mrs. Albertine Mayer was guest of honor at a party held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Mayer, Lake Street, recently in observance of her 77th birthday.

60 Years Ago  
Feb. 23, 1945

### M/SGT. EDWARD DAVIS RESCUED FROM POW CAMP

Mrs. George Bromfield, Terrace Street, Dallas, received word on Tuesday that her brother, M/Sgt. Edward Davis, 240 Inman Park, Wilkes-Barre, a prisoner of the Japanese since the fall of Corregidor, has been released by United States Forces.

James A. Oliver was slightly wounded in action on February 6 in Germany, according to a War Department message received by his wife, the former Albert Himmler of Dallas. Jimmie had been overseas a little over a month.

A prisoner of war in Germany since September 14, 1944, Lieut. Irvin C. Davis of Shavertown, son of Postmaster and Mrs. Irvin C. Davis of Shavertown, and husband of the former Maybelle VanCampen of Dallas, was yesterday reported among 91 sick and injured Americans released when the Russian armies took a Polish Corridor town southwest of Bromberg.

50 Years Ago  
Feb. 18, 1955

### LOUIS WILCOX HEADS CHURCH TRUSTEES

Louis Wilcox was elected president, Thomas Carle, secretary, and William Clewell, treasurer, at the meeting of the Board of Trustees of Trucksville Methodist Church held at the home of William Clewell last Wednesday night.

Marshall Nunlist, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. M. B. Nunlist, Oak Street, Trucksville, will have an important ballerina part in the Wilkes-Barre Ballet Theatre presentation of Swan Lake Monday night and Tuesday afternoon at Irem Temple. Mrs. Barbara Linshes Weisberger, instructor, states that funds from next week's recital will go toward establishment of a ballet guild for furthering of classical and modern ballet in Wyoming County.

Looks as if little Sandy Elston wouldn't be scared after her experiences with being dog-bit

last week. Her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Gene Elston of Noxen, brought her home on Monday, lacerations of the cheek and nose healing nicely.

Playing at the Forty Fort Theatre: "Green Fire" starring Stewart Granger and Grace Kelly; "Sign of the Pagan"; "The Black Widow"

40 Years Ago  
Feb. 18, 1965

### CABLE TELEVISION PERMITTED BY LEHMAN BOARD

Lehman Township Board of Supervisors gave cable television a negative okay at their meeting Saturday, but declined to put it in writing. President supervisor William Samuel said the board did not feel it could stop a legitimate business from operating in Lehman area, but did not issue a letter of saying it had "no objection," as was requested in other areas.

Home Association of Harveys Lake American Legion Post 967 elected the following officers at the last meeting: Kenneth Carey, Walter Osko, and Isen Pennyton to the board of directors for three years.

Bob and Melba Grose's Colonial Restaurant on Main Street, corner of Memorial Highway, was sold this weekend to Frank Carmen, of Wilkes-Barre, who took over operation immediately.

30 Years Ago  
Feb. 20, 1975

### LAKE HITS 'ILLEGAL' RESIDENCES

Discussions on "change order" problems with Contractor Louis Pugh, Jr. and

the feasibility of sewerage the "illegal" residents of boat houses encompassed the main points of contention at a meeting of the Harveys Lake Sewer Authority Monday night in the Municipal Authority Office.

Members of the Franklin Township Volunteer Firemen's Association are sporting a new fire truck which arrived during the week. It is housed in the associations building in Orange.

Ambulance service was started in Kunkle as of Feb. 1. The ambulance will cover the same area as the fire company, Kunkle, parts of Dallas Township, Beaumont area, Monroe Township and parts of Vernon area.

20 Years Ago  
Feb. 20, 1985

### FUMES STRIKE 11, INCLUDING FIREFIGHTERS

Carbon monoxide fumes which overcame 11 people including firefighters and children, Monday night at the Fairmount Township Volunteer Fire Company No. 1 Fire Hall on Route 118, was a freak accident according to Fire Chief Ed Jones, and some of the victims. The victims were allegedly affected by the fumes from the engines of fire trucks that firemen were running as a test.

Air Force Airman First Class Barry D. Willis, son of Karen W. Dormio of Dallas, has arrived for duty at Templehof Central Airport, West Berlin.

Kern Brothers, located in the Dallas Shopping Center, recently observed the 50th anniversary of the family beverage company.

THE POST

TIMES•LEADER Community Newspaper Group

15 N. MAIN ST., WILKES-BARRE PA 18711 • 570-675-5211

[thepost@leader.net](mailto:thepost@leader.net)

Patrick McHugh  
PUBLISHER

Ronald Bartizek  
EDITOR

Justin Wisnosky  
ADVERTISING

Pat O'Donnell  
PREPRESS MANAGER

### 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.

Letters should not exceed 500 words. 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, or by e-mail to: [thepost@leader.net](mailto:thepost@leader.net)

They may also be left in the drop box located in the Uni-Mart convenience store on Route 309 in Dallas.