

OUR OPINION

Planning study must not be allowed to go to waste

Knowledgeable observers of a presentation last week by the firm that is developing a "multi-municipal master plan" for four Back Mountain communities likely wondered what the \$100,000 being paid to Kise Straw & Kolodner was buying. After all, most of the material that was shown came from readily available public sources, such as the U.S. Census Bureau or various state agencies. The company's main contribution appeared to have been organizing statistics about this region into readable charts and graphs, which were accompanied by observations most of us could have delivered, such as that traffic sometimes gets really heavy, and we have lots of woods.

To be fair, this was a "first cut" of the work that has been going on for several months, and it reached more depth than that last sentence suggests. But really, this kind of research could be done by any number of local organizations or individuals, at much lower cost.

Except that it hasn't been done. And that has been the problem; lots of people clearly see the pressures on this region, caused mostly by rapid housing development. Some have become genuine experts in specific areas of concern, such as Jack Hanish, who has studied the area around Lake Silkworth for years. But none of us have had the time, resources or energy to coordinate a complete review of the Back Mountain's resources, challenges and opportunities. And even if one of us had done so, it would be viewed with skepticism by others who might suspect a hidden agenda.

That is just one benefit of having a major study like this conducted by professional planners who can take a fresh look at the region. Another is the broad sweep of this effort, which takes into account population and housing, economic development, historic resources, community facilities, land use, recreational facilities, open space, waste water, drinking water, the environment and transportation.

Although it may seem expensive, this project can be worth every penny it is costing, and much more, but only if its recommendations are incorporated into carefully drafted planning and zoning codes that are enforced fairly and vigorously. Not that there is any mandate to accept the findings as gospel; the sponsoring municipalities will be free to accept or reject any or all of the conclusions. We suspect they will like most of them.

This project is at a critical midpoint. While preliminary data have been gathered, much more can be added. The planners must aggressively solicit additional input from people who live and work in the Back Mountain, not just officials. To that end, a public meeting has been scheduled for Monday, May 2 at College Misericordia, where everyone with an interest in the region's future can observe and comment. It promises to be a long night, but anyone who cares about where the Back Mountain is headed should attend.

MOMENTS IN TIME

The History Channel

- On April 8, 563 B.C., Gautama Buddha, the founder of Buddhism, is born in the Kingdom of Sakya along the border of present-day Nepal and India. Buddha was born as Prince Siddhartha, the son of the king of the Sakya people.

- On April 9, 1859, a 23-year-old Missouri youth named Samuel Clemens receives his steamboat pilot's license. During his time as a pilot Clemens picked up the nautical term "Mark Twain," which he would use as a pseudonym in his writings for nearly 50 years.

- On April 6, 1865, Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia fights its last major battle as it retreats westward from Richmond. As Lee watched his men stagger from the battlefield at Saylor's Creek, he cried, "My God, has the army been dissolved?" He surrendered three days later.

- On April 10, 1933, the Civilian Conservation Corps is created in Washington, D.C., as a tool for employing young men during the Depression and improving the government's vast holdings of Western land. Some 2 million men took part in the CCC during its nine-year existence.

- On April 7, 1954, President Dwight D. Eisenhower coins one of the most famous Cold War phrases when he suggests the fall of French Indochina to the communists could create a "domino" effect in Southeast Asia. The so-called domino theory dominated American thinking about Vietnam for the next decade.

- On April 4, 1968, just after 6 p.m., Martin Luther King Jr. is fatally shot while standing on the balcony outside his second-story room at the Motel Lorraine in Memphis, Tenn. The 39-year-old civil-rights leader was in Memphis to support a sanitation workers' strike.

- On April 5, 1976, Howard Hughes, one of the richest men to emerge from the American West during the 20th century, dies in his airplane while flying from Acapulco to Houston to seek medical treatment. He was 70.

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Letters are welcome

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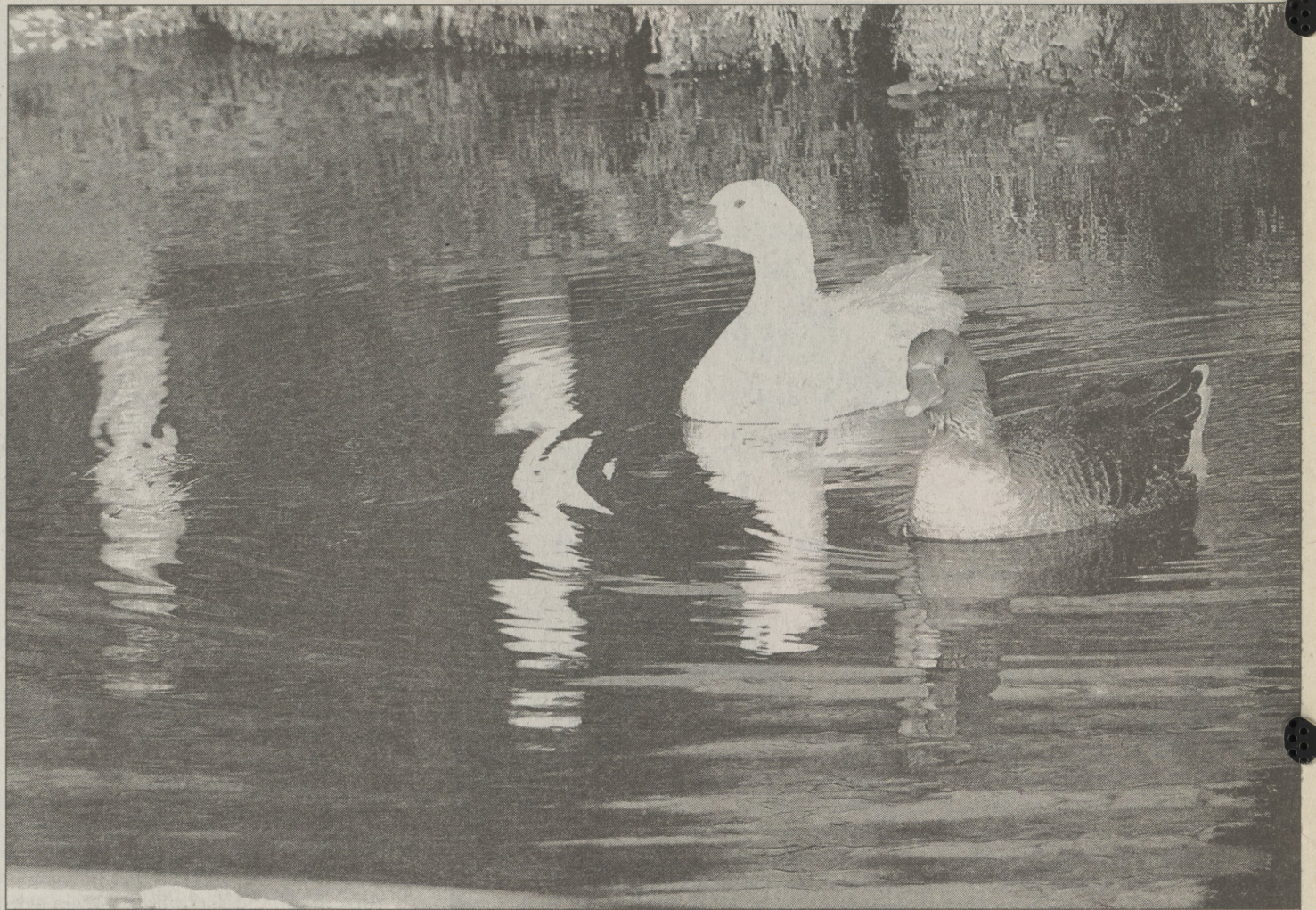
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Happy to be ice-free. Photo by Charlotte Bartizek.

LETTERS

Concert pledges clean campaign for supervisor

I am once again seeking a seat in the Back Mountain. I am running, for Dallas Township Supervisor as a Democrat.

I am running against Supervisor Glenn Howell a Republican, and I would like to say I believe that this will indeed be a great campaign season as I have been out talking to many residents and have been working hard to get people registered to vote as well.

I would like to state that I plan to keep this election about the issues involving the township and Back Mountain. I would like to offer this pledge to Glenn Howell, I will keep

this campaign clean, with no personal attacks against him. I hope that I get the same in return. I will not attack him or this family in any way, although I've been told that negative campaigning actually works.

Let's spend the next several months and talk about all the problems within the township, things that need to be changed, or things that need to be done. I have been very active with in the township for years, and having just moved back to the township after several years outside it. In the last year I was very active in the fight against the Pulverman plant, the

halfway house, and the development within the township which have been huge issues in the past year. Also a few minor issues that concerned the safety of our residents and people using our township such as, I got the township to remove the bushes at the corner of Lower Demunds and Main Street which were blocking the view of up coming motorists.

I am currently working on a plan to update our township meetings and bring them into the new century, I would like to see an agenda provided so the people attending meetings know what will be discussed, I

am working on getting the township to get a podium so that instead of yelling from the back or several people talking at once, they can go to the front state their name and speak.

There are many issues I will be discussing and I look forward to talking to the residents and I would like to thank the people who got me on the ballot and the Republican and Democrat support I am receiving. And last I want to wish the best of luck to Glenn Howell.

Christopher S. Concert
Dallas Township

Nominees sought for historic preservation awards

The Luzerne County Historical Society is currently accepting nominations for its annual Historic Preservation Awards. The awards are intended to recognize successful

examples of restoration, rehabilitation or adaptive re-use of historic buildings and/or properties in Luzerne County.

The winning nominations will be presented and awards

conferred at the society's annual dinner and meeting in April. Nominations will be accepted until April 8.

Private, public, commercial and residential buildings are

eligible. Nomination forms and information about the dinner or membership are available at the society's office at 49 S. Franklin St., Wilkes-Barre, or by calling 823-6244.

70 Years Ago
April 5, 1935

VOTERS IN FAVOR OF DAYLIGHT TIME

Polls being conducted by the Wilkes-Barre Record and The Times-Leader indicated this week that the majority of residents of the valley want daylight saving time this summer.

ONLY YESTERDAY

Competing against seven youths from different parts of Luzerne County, Robert Lewis Fleming, representing Dallas High School, won first prize in the oratorical contest for boys on Wednesday night in Forty Fort High School Auditorium.

At the A&P market, you could get eggs for 25 cents a dozen, four pounds of prunes for 25 cents, and pork chop end cuts for 21 cents per pound.

60 Years Ago
April 6, 1945

ONE KILLED; THREE HURT ON IWO JIMA

One Back Mountain area Marine, Pvt. Joseph Rushinko, Jr., 19, was killed and three others wounded in the invasion of Iwo Jima according to delayed reports reaching their families within the past week.

Only Yesterday is compiled from the back-issue files of The Post.

These casualties are in addition to those previously reported by the Post.

For heroic achievement in connection with military operations against the enemy in France on February 2, Sgt. John F. Guion, 21, son of Mr. and Mrs. John J. Guion of Davenport street, has been awarded the Bronze Star Medal for gallantry.

Stricken with Infantile Paralysis last Thursday, Arnold Williams Jr., son of Mr. and Mrs. Arnold William of Hillside is making a good recovery.

50 Years Ago
April 8, 1955

ANSILIOS OPEN THIRD MARKET

A new business enterprise opened in Dallas this week, the big new California Fruit Market on Memorial Highway opposite the entrance to Bloomsburg Mills. The market is the third operated by Philip Ansilio Sr., and his sons, Thomas and Philip Jr.

The century old Lehman Store is being razed.

Mr. and Mrs. Byron Cook, Dallas R. D. 1, announce the birth of a six pound baby girl, Judith Ann, March 23. The Cooks have a little boy, Byron Dale, aged two. Mrs. Cook is the former Mildred Ruff, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Albert E. Ruff Sr., of Noxen.

A brand new, 4-bedroom, two-story, hardwood floored house with a two car garage was advertised for \$15,000 total cost.

40 Years Ago
April 8, 1965

REMARKABLY FEW INJURIES IN UNUSUAL AUTO ACCIDENT

Police Chief Russel Honeywell pushed a child back out of the path of a speeding vehicle around 9:10 a.m. Monday morning, noting the licence plate as it disappeared down over the next rise on Huntsville Road. Not apparent was that the driver, Mrs. Marie O'Donnell, of 11 Jackson Street, was waving that she had no brakes. They failed her at the top of the hill and she had three children aboard. The car finally stopped as it crashed against the wall of Grace Cave's store window. Injuries were surprisingly light.

There was jubilation in the Anthony Hudak home on Tuesday when a bouncing baby boy was born to Mrs. Hudak at Mercy Hospital. The newcomer, who weighed in at eight pounds, six and a half ounces will be named Anthony John, III, and is sure to become the pet of the household.

Mrs. Frances Barry, Dallas, was top prize winner at Gary's new market, Shavertown, last week. Edgar Hughes, Jr., Overbrook Avenue, won the Pop-up Toaster and Melba Webber, the Corning Percolator.

30 Years Ago
April 3, 1975

DALLAS HIGH SCHOOL ENTERED, ROBBED

Windows were smashed, doors jimmied, files destroyed

and a large "burglar proof" safe broken into at the Dallas Senior and Junior High School buildings late Monday night of Tuesday morning. Despite the amount of damage, the person or persons who broke into the buildings were successful in obtaining only \$40 from the Senior high school candy machine, as all other money had been deposited prior to the long holiday weekend.

Luzerne County Community College will sponsor its First Annual Open Volleyball Tournament at the college gymnasium on April 18-19. Males and females in grades 9 through 12 at schools in Luzerne County are eligible.

20 Years Ago
April 3, 1985

"BOTTLE BILL" IS BATTLED

Both proponents and opponents of the controversial bottle bill for Pennsylvania recently had their turns to present arguments to Senator Ray Musto, D-Pittston, at a meeting held recently at the Sheraton-Crossgates in Wilkes-Barre. The bill proposes a refund value of no less than five cents on every bottle and is aimed at alleviating the little problem.

Jacqueline Latosek of 423 Mountain Road, Jackson Township, has announced her candidacy for the office of tax collector of that township.

Airman James F. Jolley, son of Jim and Lorianne Jolley of Oak Street, Trucksville, has been assigned to Chanute Air Force Base, Ill., after completing Air Force basic training.

Q: Where do you find the most Back Mountain news each week? A: Only in The Post