

## OUR OPINION

## While imperfect, a lake speed limit could help

The proposal to institute a weekend speed limit for boats on Harveys Lake is not without its critics. As proposed, the 45 miles per hour limit would apply weekends and holidays from Memorial Day through Labor Day, exactly the times when the lake is most crowded with boaters, swimmers and users of "personal watercraft," the speedy jet-powered water sprites that carry one, two or even three riders. Advocates of the limit feel it is one way to avert a potential tragedy. Opponents argue that it is an infringement on their rights and cannot possibly be consistently enforced, making it pretty much useless.

We side with the proponents, while agreeing that the limit may be more of a psychological deterrent than a real one, unless the Fish & Boat Commission miraculously comes up with funding for a solid enforcement presence. Don't hold your breath.

As for the principle that someone in a powerful boat should be able to go as fast as they care to — as long as they're responsible about it — well, let's just say that just such a position has long been argued by sports car fans, but logic has superseded their enthusiasm. In this case, the speed limit is geared toward times when the most people are likely to be on the lake, some of them in boats and others in the water, whether intentionally or inadvertently. On weekends especially, there are fishermen and pleasure boaters, sailors and those piloting motor craft. But there also are more swimmers, water skiers and tubers than at other times, and some of take an unplanned dip far from the protection of docks and buoys. Like a speeding car in a busy neighborhood, an otherwise harmless boat racing through this commotion might easily run down someone who shouldn't be in their path, but they are.

Our support for the speed limit is influenced in part by exactly the same factor as that used in some arguments against it — that enforcement of existing laws is ineffective. Yes, the present statutes are supposed to penalize "negligent operation of a watercraft," but there are two problems with that. First, there is inadequate enforcement simply because the commission doesn't have enough manpower. James Stout, Waterways Conservation Officer out of the Sweet Valley office, must patrol lakes, streams and ponds throughout northern Luzerne and Columbia counties. He cannot devote his efforts exclusively to Harveys Lake.

Equally important, the current regulations are imprecise. What exactly constitutes "maintaining a safe speed?" If an offender decided to fight a charge, could the commission make it stick? Chances are it would be difficult and time-consuming, forcing an officer to spend his time in court and not on the waterways.

We don't disagree that there will not be enough muscle behind the speed limit. Even so, with an objective maximum, at least some real enforcement will be possible, when time and conditions permit.

The bigger issue, nearly everyone agrees, is careless, intoxicated or simply irresponsible boaters. They can and should be prosecuted now, and along with the speed limit, we urge the Fish & Boat Commission to find a way to ramp up the enforcement presence and send a message that reckless disregard for safety will not be tolerated on Harveys Lake any more than it is on the roads that bring boaters there.

## MOMENTS IN TIME

The History Channel

- On May 6, 1937, the airship Hindenburg, the largest dirigible ever built and the pride of Nazi Germany, bursts into flames upon touching its mooring mast in Lakehurst, N.J., killing 36 passengers and crewmembers.

- On May 3, 1947, Japan's postwar constitution goes into effect. The progressive constitution granted universal suffrage, stripped Emperor Hirohito of all but symbolic power, stipulated a bill of rights, abolished peerage and outlawed Japan's right to make war. The document was largely the work of Supreme Allied Commander Douglas MacArthur and his occupation staff.

- On May 4, 1959, the winners of the first Grammy Awards are announced. Henry Mancini won the Best Album award for "The Music From Peter Gunn"; Perry Como was voted Best Male Vocalist, and Ella Fitzgerald Best Female Vocalist. "Volare," by Domenico Modugno, won Best Record.

- On May 7, 1966, "Monday, Monday," by the Mommas and the Papas, hits the top of the charts. It was the first No. 1 hit by a musical quartet featuring fully balanced co-ed vocals.

- On May 8, 1984, the Soviet Union announces a boycott of the 1984 Summer Olympic Games in Los Angeles. Although the Soviets cited security concerns, the boycott was more likely the result of strained Cold War relations due to America's generous aid to Muslim rebels fighting in Afghanistan — and payback for the U.S. boycott of the 1980 Olympics in Moscow.

- On May 5, 1990, Jesse Tafero is executed in Florida after his electric chair malfunctions three times, causing flames to leap from his head. Tafero's death sparked a new debate on humane methods of execution, and several states ceased use of the electric chair and adopted lethal injection as their means of capital punishment.

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THE POST

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Howard Whitson, Lehman, goes fishing in the pond at the Meadows Center in Dallas. Photo by Charlotte Bartizek.

## LETTERS

## Speed limit on lake unnecessary and intrusive

The attempt to put a speed limit on boats at Harveys Lake is nothing but the next step in a continuous assault on boating that has been going on for over 15 years. Every year this senile bureaucracy brings more and more regulation that not only encroaches on personal freedoms and liberties, but it fosters their reason for existing. The boating industry has felt the effects of micro-managed regulation both statewide and nationally for years.

I am a 20-year veteran of the

marine industry both as a marine retailer and trade association leader and have witnessed firsthand on how these processes develop. I also have seen numerous petitions for more regulation, promulgated by people who don't know or understand the real issues at hand.

I will give you an example of a petition I saw two years ago. It had names containing disgruntled fisherman in small boats, sailboat owners who hate power boats, people who

had nothing to do with boating, elderly retired people who never went near water, people who just sit on a dock and drink, and uninterested people who would sign anything for a friend. This petition ignored the erosion of freedom and personal choices of boat ownership, law enforcement deficiencies, and economic ravancies.

What most people don't realize is that this type of regulation only is a half-hearted attempt to appease the malcontents of society. State Fish &

Boat Commission regulation has existed for years that states no boater may operate a vessel faster than conditions permit. The Waterways Conservation Officer has the right to determine that. Also, funding for law enforcement in my opinion has never been sufficient to meet the needs of boating safety. So the question comes down to: are there not enough laws or not enough enforcement of what already exists?

George C. Horwath  
Dallas

## Fresh Air Fund planning 2005 summer visits

The Fresh Air Fund is seeking volunteers and host families for the summer 2005 visits of children from New York City. Each summer, more than 5,000 children, ages 6 to 18, spend two weeks or

more with host families in suburban and small-town communities in the northeast and Canada. Local Fresh Air Fund volunteers recruit and interview prospective host families, check references and coordinate activities.

For more information or to volunteer, call Denise Moskaluk at 674-3707. To learn more about The Fresh Air Fund, visit [www.freshair.org](http://www.freshair.org).

70 Years Ago  
May 3, 1935

## QUOIT CLUB ELECTS OFFICERS FOR YEAR

Henry Disque was named president of the Dallas All-Star Quoit Club at an organization meeting held this week in preparation for the summer season. Other officers are

## ONLY YESTERDAY

Scott Van Horn, vice-president; W.J. Jones, secretary; Grant Shaner, treasurer; Charles Stookey, captain; Dominick Detter, first assistant captain and ground keeper; Phil Anderson, second assistant captain, and Grant Shaner, official referee.

A charter was granted to the Dallas Post of American Legion at a meeting of the county committee on Monday night. The local post met last night to discuss local appointments and plans for its program of activities.

Rev. W.S. from the Alderson-Noxen charge was transferred to fill a vacancy at Bennett Memorial and St. Andrew's Churches in Wilkes-Barre.

60 Years Ago  
May 4, 1945

## WAINWRIGHT DIES IN PHILIPPINES

Major Talcott Wainwright, husband of the former Arvilla Randall of Shavertown, died in the Philippines on April 19. Major Wainwright served in the Army Medical Corps in the Pacific area for three years. He was awarded the Legion of Merit badge for his outstanding work in command of a portable hospital.

Dave Pascoe, seventeen-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Phillip Pascoe of Carverton, suffered

severe burns on the chest and right hand Monday evening when he touched a wire hanging over the light wires across the road from his home. David and several other neighborhood children were throwing copper wire across the electrical cables to see them spark.

Staff Sgt. Raymond Kuderka, son of Mr. and Mrs. John Kuderka of Vernon, is well and safe after being liberated by the American Army. He was reported missing in action in Belgium December 25 and this is the first news his parents have had since that time.

50 Years Ago  
May 6, 1955

## LOCAL DOG WINS BEST IN SHOW

Kashdowd's White Rock of Coolyn Hills, Mrs. Z. Platt Bennett's imported bull terrier won his fifth best in show last week at Chester. He was shown and handled by John Roberts.

Daniel Smith, Ruggles, lost the three fingers which surgeons were struggling to save after the accident at Armour Leather Works which mangled his hand. Mr. Smith caught his hand in the wringer while feeding a wet hide through the rollers.

Beacon of Hope Drive to raise money for cerebral palsy victims will end this week with the Telethon over Station W.L.L.K. Local artists who will sing Saturday night include William Burnaford and Charles S. Nicol, Jr., the evening program ending with selections by the Dallas Womans Club Chorale.

40 Years Ago  
May 6, 1965

## STOCK KILLED IN NOXEN BARN FIRE

Fire of undetermined origin consumed a barn on the Donald

Goble property, Buckwheat Hollow, around 7:45 p.m. Tuesday, killing several pigs and some chickens.

With the possibility of Jackson Township secretary of Board of Supervisors, Edward Jeffrey, being in the hospital well into the summer, the board appointed Mrs. Louise Lamoreaux, Chase, as assistant secretary, Mrs. Lamoreaux stating that she would serve without compensation.

You could get: six ten ounce packages of green peas for \$1; a seven ounce bottle of Listerine for 45 cents; 100 teabags for 85 cents; and a 12 ounce jar of Skippy peanut butter for 45 cents.

30 Years Ago  
May 1, 1975

## LAKE-LEHMAN CANDIDATES FACE THE VOTERS

In interviews early this week, the six candidates for Lake-Lehman school board responded to questions centered around the Middle States Association's evaluation of the district and its recommendations. There are six candidates trying for three seats. The candidates are Paul Crockett, Broadway; Richard C. Ide, Idetown; Joyce Hrabowski, Oak Hill; Angelo DeCesaris, Chase; Edward Mark, Ceasetown; and Michael Slimak, Chase.

Local new car dealers attribute their sales figures above the national average for 1975 to two significant factors. The first boost to slackening sales resulting from the energy crisis came in early January in the form of manufacturer's factory rebate programs according to local dealers. The second "saving" factor is the introduction of new models meeting present economic trends.

More than 265 members of the congregation and friends

20 Years Ago  
May 1, 1985

## WHOOPS! FOUL-UP FORCES CANDIDATES TO RUN AGAIN

A misunderstanding by the Dallas Borough Council may cause borough residents some confusion when they to the polls to cast their ballots this May. Following the candidate registration deadline, three two year terms somehow went unnoticed by those running for the three four year seats, leaving no candidates to run for these positions. A representative for the Luzerne County Board of Elections said the election board has no idea how this could have happened.

If you've driven by the Hunstville Dam or along Hillside Road lately and wondered what's behind the drastic change in scenery, you aren't alone. Many local residents have wondered why so many old trees are being leveled by the Pennsylvania Gas and Water Company. The company said that many of the trees are too close to the road and have created a hazard.

The Back Mountain Memorial Library and The Dallas Post are pleased to announce the three first place winners in its jointly-sponsored photography contest. First place in the Adult Color Category goes to Carol M. King, Dallas. First place in the Adult Black and White Category goes to Rhonda Bartorillo, Shavertown. First place in the Student Black and White Category goes to Kris Ertley, Dallas.

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