

Merry Christmas to all



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Serving the Back Mt. Area

Merry Christmas

Bringing a pack full of warm wishes for a jolly Christmas to all the fine folk we count as friends. It's a pleasure to know you... thanks.

from the staff at The Dallas Post

Dallas wraps-up project payment

Dallas Borough wrapped-up the financial phase of the newly-installed sidewalks, curbs, and tree lawns at last Tuesday's council meeting.

The project was funded through a neighborhood revitalization grant at a cost of approximately \$240,000 and undertaken by Linde Enterprises.

Borough engineer Leo Corbett was paid \$25,000 for his input. The contractor began the job in May and will be paid in full after the new year, according to Ralph Garris, borough secretary. The borough has retained \$23,542 due Linde. Council approved Corbett's final \$5,000 installment payment.

Councilman Willard Newberry questioned a change order in the project costing \$7,841. He asked Garris why it was not brought to council's attention prior to the night of the meeting. Garris explained problems developed during construction on Machell Avenue due to "sponging" and Corbett and the Community Development decided the road should be torn up and a catch basin installed. Garris added "these are things we run into." Newberry pressed the point stating he already heard the explanation

when Garris presented it for payment Tuesday night but it should have been brought to council's attention when the construction work was undertaken.

Solicitor John Morris III prepared and presented the newly negotiated 1981 police force contracts which show the police receiving a \$1,000 across the board raise and a \$50 holiday pay as an extra. The solicitor also presented the borough's tailor-made 20 page flood plain ordinance which will be advertised in the Dallas Post prior to its adoption Jan. 19.

Council reappointed Warren Yarnell and Richard Disque to the planning commission as suggested by Nancy Eckert. Councilman Dr. E. Craig Aicher noted there will be vacancies on the zoning hearing board soon.

The family of long-time former borough police chief Russell Honeywell thanked the council for its floral arrangement which offered condolences on the occasion of Honeywell's death.

Hearthstone Pub is cleaning up its act according to the building permits. In November the bar was issued a permit to remodel the

exterior at a cost of \$2,000.

The 1981 budget of \$256,232, which holds millage at nine was adopted.

The spending plan also includes a \$5 per capita and a one percent earned income tax shared with the school as is the one percent realty transfer tax. The council also voted to retain the \$10 occupational privilege tax, although neither secretary Garris or Chairman Harold Brobst could give an estimate as to how much revenue it generated in 1980.

Council passed its annual ordinance eliminating the need for policemen to contribute to the pension fund as it is solvent.

Councilman Bill Berti reported the traffic for the most part, has slowed down on Franklin Street during school hours. This update was in response to a query from Newberry.

Policeman Sev Newberry was paid \$215.46 in overtime working on the Main Street hit and run death case. John E. Morris III, solicitor, was paid \$1500 as his retainer for 1981.

A new garage will be added to the Dallas Professional Building at a cost of \$13,500.

Lake-Lehman school district salaries higher than Dallas

by Tom Mooney
The Lake-Lehman School District gives considerably more generous compensation to its administrators than the neighboring Dallas School District does, a review of pay scales in the two Back Mountain districts has shown. Teacher pay, however, is pretty much the same.

Unlike Dallas', Lehman's most recent salary increases for administrators and teachers were comparatively similar, with both groups having received increases of about nine percent. This year's agreements in the Dallas district gave administrators increases averaging 11.13 percent while teachers settled for 8.3 percent.

All Lake-Lehman administrators received raises in 1980-81, with most of them getting about \$2,000 more than they made last year. Business manager Raymond Bowersox, however, received a pay raise of \$4,700, one of the largest increases given to a school administrator in Luzerne County this past year.

Of the nine top administrators in Lehman, seven receive noticeably more than their Dallas counterparts. Only two got less. Superintendent Dr. David Preston now gets \$33,200 (up from \$30,500), while Dallas' Dr. Richard Shippe gets \$38,400. Superintendent of buildings and grounds William Bates now gets \$12,356 (up from \$11,524) but still trails Dallas' John Gabriel with \$18,500.

But the other seven Lehman administrators lead their equivalents in Dallas. Assistant to the superintendent Anthony Marchakitis gets \$30,000 (up from \$28,150), while Gerald Wycallis in Dallas gets \$29,100. Business manager Bowersox now gets \$24,700 (up from \$20,000), while Dallas' Fred Croop gets \$22,000.

Lehman's high school principal James Nicholas now gets \$27,500 (up from \$25,000), while Dallas' Edgar Hughes gets \$25,700. Assistant high school principal Jay Zaleskas gets \$24,700 (up from \$22,500) while Dallas' Brook Hunt gets \$22,600 after originally receiving no increase at all from \$20,000. Junior high school principal John Oliver now gets \$23,900 (up from \$21,700) while Dallas' Daniel

Poorman gets \$22,600. Teacher salaries in Lake-Lehman are governed by a new five-year contract, now in its first year of operation. Arranged on a scale of education and experience, teachers can earn anything from \$10,500 (bachelor's degree and no experience) to \$21,300 (bachelor's degree and 30 or more years experience).

Those figures will rise in the final year of the contract (1984-85) to \$12,600 and \$28,200 respectively. The figures for neighboring Dallas are roughly comparable. A Dallas teacher earns slightly less in the lower areas of education and experience but finds his or her salary rising more sharply as time and education go on.

Other changes under the present contract give teachers reimbursement for credits earned up to \$50 per credit with a maximum of 12 per year; increase their health insurance from \$100,000 to \$250,000 of protection per year; increase their life insurance by \$2,000 and give an additional \$2,000 a year, afterward; and increase their driving mileage rate from 13 to 17 cents a mile.

Hourly rate for part-time and special project work increased by approximately \$1 per hour, while a retiring teacher can now receive back sick leave pay at a rate of \$10 per day for a number of unused days up to 100, instead of just for all days over 100. Reimbursement for teacher in-service days has been abolished.

Payment for extracurricular activity is likewise governed by the five-year contract, with compensation determined largely by what the district believes to be the demands of the position. Highest-paid activity coordinator in the district is football coach Tom Hisiro, who now gets \$1,900 while the lowest-paid are the assistant cheerleader and Junior High school cheerleader advisors, receiving \$200 each. (Director of the class night play gets \$75.)

Interestingly, activity compensation is scheduled to rise very sharply for the life of the contract,

generally by more than one-third and close to one-half by 1984-85. Band director John Miliuskas is the fourth highest paid activity administrator, with \$1,500, being outranked only by the varsity wrestling and boys' basketball coaches (\$1,800 each) and the athletic director (\$1,600). Overall, non-athletic advisors receive less. The figures overall are comparable to those in neighboring Dallas, though some individuals vary.

Payment to teachers serving as department heads in the Lehman District varies somewhat, though not greatly. The head of the language arts department receives \$550 for the highest figure, while other department heads get either \$500 or \$450. A Dallas head of a department earns a minimum of

\$400 and can receive more depending on the number of teachers to be supervised.

Non-professional or service employees, according to business manager Bowersox, have their own contract with the district, though it is now timed in order to avoid having both contracts come due in

the same year. That contract is likewise graduated over five years but offers less medical and dental benefits.

Secretarial help, Bowersox continued, is not unionized, but compensation parallels that of the service employees, with secretaries averaging about five cents per hour

Riccis build Christmas presebio

by Danny White
Pastor of Dallas Baptist Church

The Ricci family of Dallas has a Christmas tradition that goes back at least 80 years and probably even longer. The tradition has been passed down through three generations by Pete Ricci's paternal grandparents who immigrated to this country from Rome at the turn of the century.

Preparation for Christmas begins at Thanksgiving when Pete Ricci starts to build the Presebio, the manger scene. The Presebio is made from brown paper which is soaked in water and then molded into the setting where the nativity figures are later placed. After the paper has dried into shape it is then painted. Lights are added to give the scene a beautiful effect. Finally, all of the figures are put into place except for the baby Jesus.

Some changes have been made over the years in the making of the manger scene. The project once was on a small scale. Now, the manger scene fills half of a room. Electric lights replace candles which were used at the turn of the century. The nativity figures were once handmade. Now they are bought from a store.

Similarities remain too. The paper used comes from the wrapping used to bundle dress material. The grandfather, father, and grandson have followed the garment industry trade. Ricci's grandfather, a tailor, worked in the garment industry in New York city. His father, now retired, was employed in the same profession. Now, Pete is employed by the same company where his father worked. Another similarity is that a new Presebio is made each year. Each year changes are made, and new features are added.

As Dec. 25 approaches, the cooking begins as part of the celebration to put the baby Jesus in the manger at midnight on Christmas Eve. Pete and his father do all of the cooking. One special favorite is Cicerchita, an Italian candy.

Pete describes this delicious Christmas crunchy candy. "You begin with a cookie-type dough. Then, hand-cut it into peanut-like pellets. Deep fry them. Mix in almonds and walnuts. Cook a mixture of honey and sugar until as grandmother used to say, 'It's just ready.'" (You have to make a few mistakes until you learn when just ready is just ready.) Mix it all

together. Form it into a ring by using a pie pan. It cools to a solid. It lifts out of the pan and looks like a giant doughnut. Finally, sprinkle it with decorated sugar."

With the preliminary baking done, the Christmas Eve celebration begins around 2 o'clock in the afternoon when the men begin cooking. After four hours of cooking, three varieties of spaghetti, several non-meat sauces, three varieties of fish (Bacala, eels, and striped bass), and an Italian salad is ready to be served. At 6:30, everything stops when Santa Clause makes a visit to the children. He promises to return later in the night if all the kids will go to sleep. At 7 p.m., the feast begins. A sample of everything is taken. Deserts follow which include the same cakes that his grandfather and grandmother made over 80 years ago.

At 10 o'clock, everyone plays an Italian game called Lotto, which is similar to Bingo. Cash prizes are awarded. Somehow, the caller always makes certain that no one over 10 years old wins.

When the magic hour of midnight approaches signaling in the Christmas day, the family gathers around the Presebio for the climactic moment. The youngest child is given the Bambino Jesus and places the figure in the manger. It's Christmas! Everyone hugs and kisses each other, and wishes of "Merry Christmas" ring throughout the house.

As long as Pete and his father can remember, the Christmas Eve meal has never changed. Pete reflects on the meaning of Christmas for him. "It's a nice time of year if you're lucky to have family around you. I always felt safe and secure at Christmas time. I felt that people cared for me. People today don't take time to care. My mother and father sacrificed much to do that. They made Christmas a big event for us."

"The Presebio is the center of our Christmas celebration. We can do without anything else—the presents, the tree, Santa Claus. It seems presents are the center of Christmas to most people now. You

can blow \$100 on those electronic games and need a college degree to operate them. In the day of my grandparents, it didn't take much to make people happy.

"It seems that people don't associate Christmas with the nativity as they did even just 10 or 15 years ago. I remember when you could find nativity figures in any Five and Dime Store. Now, we have trouble finding them for our Presebio. I guess Christmas is just taking on a new slant in our society."

The familiar laughs and faces of grandfather and grandmother Ricci are no longer present on Christmas Eve. Yet, the joy and happiness they had for Christmas is given anew every year on Christmas Eve to their many descendants. Some things about Christmas never change.

Pete and Mary look forward on this Christmas Eve when their child, due in May, will be old enough to place the Bambino in the Presebio, and the old family custom passes into a new generation.



PRESEBIO—Pete Ricci puts the finishing touches on the family's Christmas presebio, a tradition of the Riccis. (Mark Moran Photo)

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