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Gabriel hearing

Board putting in long hours

By JANE C. BOLGER
Staff Correspondent

The third public hearing to decide whether or not the Dallas School District can fire Grounds and Maintenance Supervisor John Gabriel will be held tomorrow, Oct. 6 at 6:30 p.m.

To date, just one witness - Dallas School Board Superintendent Dr. Richard A. Shipe - has appeared on the stand and is scheduled to testify again at this hearing.

Dr. Shipe has assumed the role of plaintiff in this case while the Dallas School Board itself is acting as the jury. At the conclusion of Dr. Shipe's testimony, which has already run seven hours, Gabriel's defense attorneys will have the right to cross examine Shipe before any other witnesses may be called.

Observers are expecting Dallas School Business Manager Sandra Vidlicka, who has been seated next to School Board Solicitor Benjamin R. Jones, to be the next one called to the stand. Questions are being raised as to whether or not five other school administrators who have been seated throughout the hearings in a section marked "Reserved"

will also be called as witnesses.

The five administrators are Daniel Poorman, Principal of the Junior and Senior High Schools; Leon Trager, Assistant Junior High Principal; Frank Galicki, Asst. Senior High Principal; Ruth Husband, Intermediate School Principal; and Sam Barbose, Elementary School Principal. A fourth hearing has been tentatively scheduled for Oct. 13 at 6 p.m. seemingly supporting earlier predictions that these hearings may well continue past election time.

The present Dallas School Board "jury" - some of whom will be leaving office after the election - will do double duty this week since a private hearing for John Kundrat is scheduled to be held tonight.

Kundrat is another custodial employee who was fired from his post last month. In addition, the nine-man school board held a work session Monday night and will hold their regularly scheduled Board Meeting next Monday night.

All members of "the jury" have not been present at each of the Gabriel hearings with School Director Tex Wilson having missed the latest one while another director, Harry

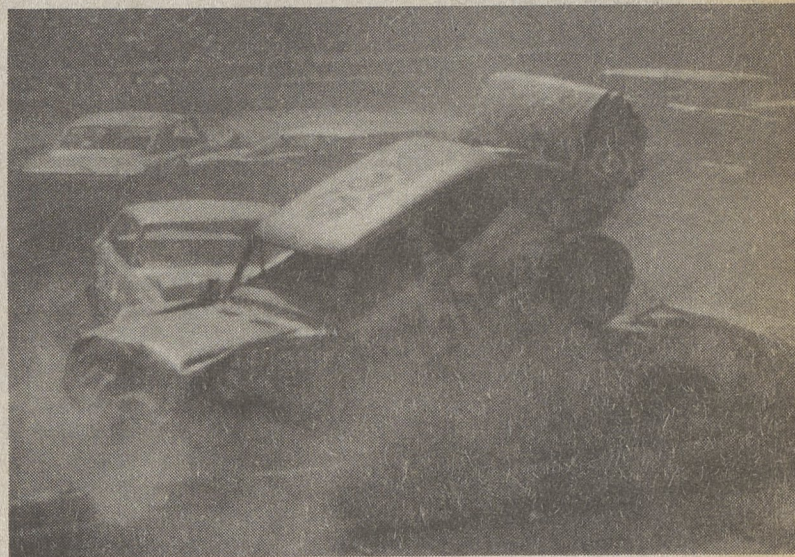
Lefko, was absent from the first hearing. According to the ground rules, it is not necessary that all the directors be present at each hearing since they will have an opportunity to read the typed legal transcripts prior to making a decision.

The length of the hearings, in addition to conducting regular school business, is proving to be wearing on all involved with more than one school board director complaining of "the frustration of sitting."

School directors are not permitted to question witnesses verbally, but may pose a question in writing which is then passed to Board President Dr. William Camp and then on to Atty. Charles Lemmond who has been appointed Special Counsel to the board for these hearings.

Gabriel, who was fired Aug. 8 and again on Sept. 12 under a court mandated change in wording, is represented by Attys. Arthur Piccone and Ronald Santora.

Having continued to work daily at his \$19,800 yearly position throughout this time, Gabriel has reportedly indicated this week that should the Dallas School Board decision go against him he plans to appeal.



Dallas Post/Ed Campbell

Just for fun!

The Second Annual Back Mountain Demolition Derby, sponsored by the Back Mountain Kiwanis Club, was held last weekend at the Lehman Horse Show Grounds, Route 118. Although this picture looks like a mighty horrifying traffic accident, the derby was just for fun. (Story, additional photos, page 8.)

Park gets grant; improves looks

By SHEILA HODGES
Staff Correspondent

A Department of Environmental Resources grant of \$28,704 has been presented to Frances Slocum State Park and Luzerne County Community College to carry out landscaping and improve the appearance of the two areas.

The benefits of the grant are twofold as it has not only enabled tree planting and landscaping work to be carried out at the two locations; it has also provided jobs for the unemployed.

The grant is only a portion of a \$1.4 million statewide program which includes 14 community colleges, 46 state parks, 20 forest districts, four abandoned mine reclamation sites and the Capitol Park Complex in Harrisburg. Throughout the state, temporary jobs have been provided for 482 persons, including four at Slocum Park and six at LCCC.

In Slocum Park, there was a need to close in some of the open areas with trees, shrubs and bushes for shade and to encourage wild life. Deer are one of the main animal attractions and evening visitors at

the park often get a glimpse of them.

Approximately 154 trees such as maple, dogwood and ash and 160 shrubs and bushes, mainly berried bushes such as juiceberry, blueberry, and honeysuckle, have been planted in the park. Ralph Barckac, Park Superintendent, reported that bushes with berries were planted to attract songbirds which he hopes to encourage to visit the park.

The improvements to the 1,006-acre park will be seen by more visitors next year. Since the introduction of the guided walks led by Ann Fry this year, the park attendance has increased considerably. The park is also expected to open its Environmental Education Center next year as Barckac and his staff are currently preparing exhibits now. The center will house exhibits pertaining to the history and natural history of this area and programs will be conducted with school, county agencies and other organizations.

Barckac feels Slocum Park has a great deal to offer the community as an enjoyable and educational center. This landscaping project will improve the appearance and encourage the wildlife which can be both studied and enjoyed.



Dallas Post/Ed Campbell

Park gets trees

John Havar, ranger, Frances Slocum State Park, is shown with just one of the many trees recently planted at the park. Planting of the trees was made possible by a \$28,704 Department of Environmental Resources grant shared by the park and Luzerne County Community College.

John 'J.P.' Walsh is literally 'flying high'



JOHN 'J.P.' WALSH

By JANE C. BOLGER
Staff Correspondent

While most of the fans at the Dallas football game last Saturday had their eyes on the ground watching the action, one member of the senior class was literally up in the air.

Seventeen-year-old John "J.P." Walsh flew over the football field in a Piper Tomahawk, sporting the blue and white Mountaineer colors and drawing waves from his sister, Lauren, and other members of the Dallas Band.

J.P., who got his private pilot's license in May, is just as enthusiastic about flying today as he was at age 13 when he made his first visit to the Forty Fort Airport. It was apparently love at first sight with J.P. spending the years before he was old enough to fly doing odd jobs at the airport.

"I washed the planes and tied them down at the end of the day and lots more," he said. "Sometimes I'd get rides too. I was a good hitch-hiker, I'd just sit in the back and keep my mouth shut." At age 16, J.P. began formal flying instructions.

In less than a year, he had logged the required 20 hours of dual instruction and 20 hours of solo flight in both the Tomahawk and in a Piper Warrior. Depending on the plane, the cost runs \$39 or \$58 an hour. J.P. subsidizes some of this by working at the I.G.A. Market after school as a stock clerk.

"My family thinks it's better that I spend money on flying than just messing around," he explains. The family, which consists of his mom Janet, his dad, John, sister, Lauren 14, and brother James 11, have "all been up" for rides with him said J.P., who is known as John Patrick around home on Clearview Avenue in Trucksville Gardens.

All the Walshes agree that everything looks different from "up there."

"My mom said the trees and all the hills in the Back Mountain look like they're a carpet of green velvet," said J.P. Another slightly more skeptical passenger is J.P.'s grandmother, Gail Pitrowski of Lake Silkworth, who did fly with J.P. and his mom to the Williamsport Air Show which at 125 miles an hour took only 25 minutes.

"The show was fantastic," says J.P. explaining the thrill of meeting Bob Hoover who does aerobatics in

a P51 Mustang with the engine shut off. "He's like a rock star to me," he said. "I'm planning on trying that someday - just tumbling across the sky."

Looking toward the more serious side of aviation, J.P. is applying to Embry-Riddle Aeronautical College in Daytona Beach, Florida. At the moment, he is looking toward a future as an Air Traffic Controller which he believes holds better job opportunities than being a commercial pilot.

In the meantime, J.P. is just enjoying his senior year at Dallas and flying over the area often taking friends along.

"Everyone wants to see what their house looks like from the air; it's a big thrill," he explained, adding that another favorite sight-seeing spot is Harveys Lake which "from the air is shaped like a big J."

J.P. is very familiar with flying over the Back Mountain since "it is the designated training area for pilots learning to fly at the Forty Fort Airport because of the straight roads and the landmarks like Huntsville Dam, the lake, and Frances Slocum Park.

"From the air you can even see the nuclear power plant at Berwick on a nice day," he continued.

The longest flight J.P. has taken to date was the required 300-mile cross country flight to qualify for the pilot's license which he carries proudly in his wallet next to the similar looking driver's license he got last year at age 16.

J.P. said the greatest thing that has ever happened to him was "My first solo flight, it was so fantastic, it can never be matched by anything else."

Peter Johnson

AFS student visits here from Australia

By JOAN KINGSBURY
Staff Correspondent

Peter Johnson, American Field Service exchange student from Australia, arrived in the United States

just in time to celebrate Australia's winning the American Cup.

Peter says that celebrations in Australia will be "huge because they wanted to win that more than anything else". Peter, of course, was delighted with Australia's win.

Arriving in the United States last week after a 30-hour plane ride, Peter was met in Harrisburg by his host mother, Mary Ann Winterteen. Mary Ann and her son, Robbie, are having fun getting to know Peter.

Peter lives near Adelaide, which is a city of one million people. Adelaide is in southern Australia. Summers are very hot with temperatures going above 100 degrees. Peter is missing summer entirely this year since the summer season here is over and the Australian summer season runs from December to February. Winters are cold, with snow only in the mountainous areas.

Australian bush fires are common in the area of Australia where Peter lives. These fires just burn until the wind changes its direction. Eucalyptus trees contain an oily substance which ignites like "petrol". This factor makes putting out brush fires almost impossible.

Animals and plants differ from those in our area. Peter has never seen the lovely colors of the leaves as they change in the fall because there are no deciduous trees in



VENISE MILLER

tender with the most votes. Besides reigning as Mr. or Miss Ugly Bartender for a year, the winner will also win a trip for two to Disney World in Orlando, Florida. The second-place winner will receive a 12-inch black and white television set, while the bartender who finishes third will win a weekend trip for two to the Poconos.

According to Venise, however, the prizes were not the incentive to enter. "I don't really think I'll win. I'm just doing it for the fun and to help a worthy cause," she said. Venise isn't too far behind though. Of approximately 110 contestants in Luzerne County, she is ranked number 10.

When asked if she had any special way of getting votes, she said with a laugh, "Yeah! I tell the regular customers that if they want a drink, they have to put 25 cents in the jar." Although she admits she tries that only on people she knows, she isn't afraid of telling all the other customers what she's doing. And according to her, they usually help out and pitch in.



Dallas Post/Joan Kingsbury

AFS 'brothers'

AFS student Peter Johnson, above left, and his "brother" Robbie Wintersteen are shown here displaying the Australian flag.

Is Venise the ugliest?

By WALLACE KOCHER
Staff Correspondent

At the same time that thousands of women are preparing for next year's Miss America Pageant, and many men are pumping iron in quest of the Mr. Universe title, hundreds of bartenders in Luzerne and Lackawanna County are doing practically nothing to win the honor of the "Ugliest Bartender."

One of these bartenders, in particular, is Venise Miller, 24, of Dallas. Venise is an employee at Sam's Villa in Kunkle. As she put it, she entered the contest, which benefits the Multiple Sclerosis Society, "just for the fun of it, and to help those afflicted with M.S."

Roberta Eagan, area coordinator for the M.S. society, explained how the contest works. After the bartenders were notified via special packets given to them by Falcone Beverage delivery men, they would simply place a canister or jar in their bar. The customers of the bar then pay 25 cents per vote to vote for their favorite ugly bartender in the running. The individual bars are also free to hold other fundraising events such as hoagie sales, raffles and car washes to supplement their donations. All money raised is counted as votes for the bartender of that particular bar.

For every week a bartender turns in \$25 or more, he or she is given an ugly T-shirt, along with a certificate that they can proudly hang on their wall.

At the conclusion of the six-week contest, a party will be held Oct. 6 at the Woodlands to honor the bar-

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