

THE DALLAS POST

BRIGHTON BINDERY CO
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BRIGHTON, IA 52540

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Vol. 93, No. 39

Wednesday, October 12, 1983

25 Cents

Dallas Elementary School may become new library

By JANE C. BOLGER
Staff Correspondent

The Dallas School Board, which was meeting at press time Monday night, was expected to approve the sale of the former Borough School to the Back Mountain Memorial Library. The elementary school, located on the corner of Huntsville Road and Franklin Street, was recently appraised at \$26,000.

The appraised price plus costs incurred, which are expected to run an additional \$4,000, would make the final sale price to the library approximately \$30,000. The library is presently housed in two adjacent converted houses on Main Street a short walking distance from the Borough School.

The majority of the school board members were expected to vote favorably on the proposed sale, although earlier there was a preference by some board members that the property be sold to private enterprise for a higher market value.

The fact that the area is zoned residential would seem to preclude selling the property for commercial use as the Dallas School Board did several years ago when the former Shavertown Elementary School on Route 309 was sold to Burger King.

Library Board President Ernest Ashbridge, who is also a member of the Dallas School Board, expressed enthusiasm over the project stating, "The building belongs to the people, now it will go back to the people."

The 16-member Library Board recently appointed a Long Range Planning Committee, headed by Kerry Freeman and Nancy Eckert, to study the feasibility of

converting the former school into a library.

The report was favorable with the size of the school being a plus in most areas but a minus in the additional lighting and heating expenses that would result. As a result, the Board is reportedly considering the possibility of renting a portion of the building for municipal use. In addition, they plan to offer the gymnasium-auditorium facilities to community groups for meetings.

The Borough School is presently being used by students from Gate of Heaven School while their own building is undergoing asbestos renovations. Both the Library and the Dallas School Board are reported to be in agreement that Gate of Heaven may continue to use the property for as long as it is needed.

Moving the entire library and the thousands of books it contains will obviously not be a project that can be completed overnight.

Final auction figures in

The 37th Annual Back Mountain Memorial Library Auction held in July netted a profit of \$40,575.64. The final figures were released by 1983 Auction Chairman Joanne Freeman who stated that the amount was "nearly \$1,000 more than was made last year."

Mrs. Freeman was pleased with the results particularly in view of the economy saying, "I'm glad the auction made money despite inflation." She particularly praised local residents for their support during the auction and for direct donations made to the Ham 'N Yeggs Club.



Dallas Post/Ed Campbell

Up, up and away!

The students at the Dallas Township School celebrated Good Neighbors Day on Sept. 30 on the school grounds. Each child was given a helium balloon with his or her name attached. The balloons were then released. Finders of the balloons may write to the child in care of the Dallas Township School.



Dallas Post/Ed Campbell

Homecoming candidates

Shown here are candidates for the 1983 Homecoming Queen at Dallas Senior High School. From left, Wendy Van Horn, Marie Germata, Karen Evans. Second row, Lorie Handley, Susan King, Cristi Strauser, Polly Kunkle. Selection of the Homecoming Queen will take place during halftime festivities of the Dallas-Pittston Area football game on Saturday, Oct. 15, at 2 p.m.

Gabriel hearings continue Thursday

By JANE C. BOLGER
Staff Correspondent

Another public hearing for Dallas School District Grounds and Maintenance Supervisor John Gabriel will be held this Thursday at 6:30 p.m. Scheduled to be on the stand again is superintendent of schools Dr. Richard A. Shipe, the only witness to date, who is presently being cross-examined on his original testimony.

In the previous three hearings, Dr. Shipe offered evidence to allegedly prove that the School District was correct in firing Gabriel from the \$19,800 yearly post that he has

held for 10 years.

The latest fact to emerge is that the school district has been negotiating with outside custodial firms to do the same work presently being done by the district's custodial staff.

A hearing for another fired custodial employee, John Kundrat, was completed in one session last week in contrast to the Gabriel hearings which have dragged on for weeks with no end in sight. The Kundrat hearing before the Dallas School Board was private, with the employee being represented by two lawyers from the union that represents the school district's non-professional employees.

The school board's verdict on whether or not John Kundrat will be officially fired has not yet been determined, however, with further action being held off until a transcript of the entire hearing is typed. The typewritten report must then be read by three board members, Russell Havey, Joseph O'Donnell and Tex Wilson, who were not present at that hearing.

Exactly when a decision can be expected has not been revealed with some observers guessing it may be a matter of several weeks if not longer. This is partially because of the time involved in the Gabriel hearings, which may even be

stepped up to two a week, and to the impending Nov. 8 local elections in which four members of the present board will be running for reelection against some pretty stiff competition.

It is rapidly becoming a matter of serious concern whether this board or the "new" board, which takes office the first week in December, will be handing down the decisions in these cases. If the task does fall to the newly elected board members, they would then have to read the typed transcripts of the Gabriel hearings which have already run in excess of 10 hours, meaning a further delay in the proceedings.

Fire Prevention Week, Oct. 9-15

Firefighting is a tradition with Shaffers

By JANE C. BOLGER
Staff Correspondent

When two-year-old Bruce John Pitts says he wants to be a fireman, he is following a family tradition started by his grandfather Dallas Fire Chief Donald Shaffer, and continued with his grandmother Blodwen, his mother Donna and countless aunts and uncles.

Don Shaffer has been fire chief for 17 years and a member of the Dallas Fire Company for 35 years while his wife helped start the Ladies Auxiliary 10 years ago and is presently on the Board of Directors after having held the offices of president, vice president and treasurer.

Their daughter, Donna, who grew up with the sound of the beeper, the scanner and the fire phone ringing day and night, joined her mother in the auxiliary two years ago. When there is a bad fire, the ladies are right there on the job supplying the firemen with coffee and doughnuts, however, most of the auxiliary's work is done behind the scenes.

Fund-raising to get money to buy new equipment for the fire company is accomplished by bake sales, rummage sales, the food booth at the fireman's bazaar and the yearly Christmas project of supplying Christ Child Vigil Candles to residents. One specific piece of equipment the auxiliary recently purchased is a Deck Deluge Gun which swivels while in use on the firetruck or can be removed to concentrate large volumes of water on a burning area.

On the line using the equipment to fight fires are Chief Shaffer and as many of the 40 active volunteers and 12 20-year members who are available when the fire siren sounds.

The department answers "an average of 80 to 85 calls a year," says Don Shaffer, warning that brush fires are a problem at this time of the year.

"Use closed containers to burn grass and leaves," he advises, doing his bit to help residents during this Fire Prevention Week. He notes that brush fires "have cut way down in recent years," attributing it to both "growing awareness and burning ordinances" enacted by local governments.

Observing that "most fires are seasonal," Don warns that "chimney fires, which account for 10 to 15 fires a year in Dallas" are something for which we will soon have to be on the alert. He advises residents



Dallas Post/Glenn S. Bodish

Firefighting family

The Shaffers of Dallas have been involved in firefighting for several years. Relaxing for a moment are, from left, Blodwen Shaffer, Donald Shaffer, Dallas Fire Chief; Donna Pitts, the Shaffer's daughter; and two-year-old Bruce John Pitts.

to "have your chimney cleaned before the season, or at least checked" and also "don't burn green wood."

"Automobile fires are on the increase, both electrical and engine fires," he notes. He wonders "if it's the way they're making cars now," but also notes that the vehicles involved in two recent fires had just been repaired.

When it comes to the most serious fires of all - in people's homes - Chief Shaffer advises "use smoke alarms." This is a project in which

the Dallas Fire company has been involved "for the past six or seven years," he explains. "We've sold over 500 smoke alarms to residents at cost."

Another item available from the local fire company are "Tot Finders" which are window stickers that alert firemen which rooms in the home are occupied by small children.

While passing these words of experience on to the people of Dallas, Chief Shaffer also made the

announcement that this is his last year as fire chief.

"I'll be retiring at the January meeting," he said. "I won't be running again; I'm a grandpa now."

The fact that he adds "I'll still be an active fireman, though," makes you realize that Don Shaffer can never really retire after 17 years of the hardest type of volunteer work there is.

This is the spirit that makes the Dallas Fire Company and all its volunteers through the years something of which the whole community can be very proud.

Lehman hosts band contest

Hughesville High School and 10 other high school bands is entered in the second annual "March of Champions" band competition hosted by the Lake-Lehman Band Sponsors Association on Sunday, Oct. 16, at 12:30 p.m.

In addition to Hughesville, other schools entered in the contest are Crestwood, Nanticoke, Dallas, Pittston Area, Blue Ridge, Bishop Hoban, Lackawanna Trail, Wyoming Area, Hanover Area and Montrose.

Judging will be done by the National Judges Association in conjunction with the Tournament of Band Association, and will center on music, marching and maneuvering, band front, and general effects. Trophies will be awarded to the top three bands in each class.

Highlighting an afternoon of quality music will be the Lake-Lehman Band under the direction of John Miliauskas, performing in exhibition.



DR. JOSEPH FINK



DR. JAMES RYAN

College execs discuss impact of education

By WALLY KOCHER
Staff Correspondent

Eleven representatives from area colleges and private schools met at College Misericordia on Oct. 5 to discuss the economic impact of higher education as an industry in the Wilkes-Barre/Scranton area.

Representing the Back Mountain colleges were Dr. Joseph R. Fink, president of College Misericordia, and Dr. James Ryan, executive officer, Penn State University-Wilkes-Barre Campus.

Dr. Fink reminded the media that the conference was held in conjunction with National Higher Education Week, Oct. 1-8, and that the theme for the week was "Mind Power: Our Greatest National Resource." He then explained why he feels College Misericordia is a "major economic force in Northeast Pennsylvania."

"The college has a dual significance in this area," said Dr. Fink.

"The first is the educational, economic, and recreational impact on the Back Mountain." He later stated that the health and educational services rendered by the college may be two of the largest economic impacts on this area.

College Misericordia, which has 305 employees and an annual payroll of \$2,584,017, has spent \$4,461,648 on new construction and renovations in the past 15 years. It is also estimated that the students spend \$1,180,600 in the area annually, while visitors to the campus spend \$123,987.

The second significance of the college, according to Dr. Fink, is that it, "never loses sight of the Liberal Arts."

"We are here to train people for life, not a career," Fink told reporters. "College Misericordia trains the whole person."

Dr. Ryan said that higher education is the second or third largest (See COLLEGE, page 8)

Lehman School Director killed

Vincent Marchakitus, 29, of Lake Silkworth, was killed in a one-vehicle accident on Route 29 in Lehman Township on Oct. 9.

It was reported that Marchakitus was operating a pick-up truck when it went out on control and slammed into a utility pole and some trees.

No further details about the accident were available at press time, however, Lehman Township Chief of Police William Goodwin reported his staff was investigating.

A member of the Lake-Lehman School Board, Marchakitus had been sworn into that position on June 27, 1983. Filling the unexpired term of Kenneth Williams who had resigned, Marchakitus was to continue in the position until December, 1983.

A representative at the Lake-Lehman Senior High School reported that Marchakitus was seeking reelection.

Funeral will be held Thursday, Oct. 13, at 9 a.m. from Swanson Funeral Home, Routes 118 and 29, Pikes Creek, with Mass of Christian Burial at 9:30 from Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, Lake Silkworth. Friends may call tonight 7 to 9 p.m.

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