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At special meeting

John Cleary named Dallas Board member

By PAMELA AARON
Staff Correspondent

In a special meeting conducted by the Dallas School Board last Wednesday, the ninth member of the board was finally chosen.

John P. Cleary, proprietor of Cleary Forest Products, was named as a replacement to former board member Barbara Mead, who resigned earlier this year.

All candidates who had been nominated at the December 10th school board meeting had either been voted down or tied. Specifically, a deadlock occurred between candidates Jim Richardson, owner of L.L. Richardson Autos; and Cleary.

At the board meeting, it was decided that a special meeting would be held on December 12 to, hopefully, avoid the necessity of the decision going to court. If a decision cannot be made within 30 calendar days as to a position replacement, the Luzerne County Judges would have to choose a suitable candidate.

Wednesday's meeting commenced with the vote deadlocked at four

votes each for Richardson and Cleary. Board President Ernest Ashbridge expressed exasperation at this point and remarked, "We are hopelessly deadlocked; I can see no point in going further." Board member Don Jones, however, responded that he felt the board should make the decision if it took them all night, rather than leaving the decision up to the courts. The voting then continued.

On the fourth ballot, the name of Robert Bayer was entered into the voting and Ellen Nagy, a candidate who had been named at the Monday night meeting, was renamed.

On the fourth vote, Ms. Nagy and Mr. Bayer received two votes each and Richardson voted four; however, since the overriding vote requires five board members to vote in the affirmative, again there was no winner.

At that point, Richardson arose from his seat, visibly annoyed at the chaos, and declared, "This has gone on long enough. I can see it's a political thing so, before it goes to court, I'd like to withdraw my name...we've jerked around long

enough on this thing as it is."

With that, the fifth and final voting showed Cleary to be the winner, with all eight votes.

Many people applauded Richardson for his concern in saving the school board and district the problem of carrying a decision into county court.

Cleary, when questioned as to what he thought of Richardson's actions, said he thought it to be a noble gesture; then added that he felt the voting was not a matter of the people voting for one candidate against another. In contrast, Cleary felt, the school board members were truly committed to the candidates of their choice.

When asked what he stood for, as a board member, in terms of philosophy and any changes necessary in the district, Cleary cited four areas of particular concern for him.

The first area concerns the supervisory principal and assistant principals so the board can be sure of just what functions the people in those positions perform. Second is the DEAL program and its efficacy, especially the question of who will

monitor it, when there is only one supervisory principal. Third, he is concerned about contract decisions, such as those of non-professional and professional staff and, lastly, the new board member believes sufficient care should be given in the selection of curriculum director.

When asked what contribution he might make to the board, Cleary revealed the most important characteristic he might bring would be that of an open mind.

Cleary holds a Bachelor's Degree in Economics from Hamilton College in Clinton, N.Y. He has been an active participant in budget meetings of the Citizen Advisory Committee, of which he is a member.

His four school age children attend the Dallas public schools. Erin, who is a sophomore at the senior high school, is a cheerleader and plays hockey; Shannon, a ninth grader at the Junior High, is involved in basketball, hockey and cheerleading; Kelly, age 10, is in fifth grade at the Intermediate level and, along with her interest in hockey, plays piano and will accompany the school's Christmas pro-

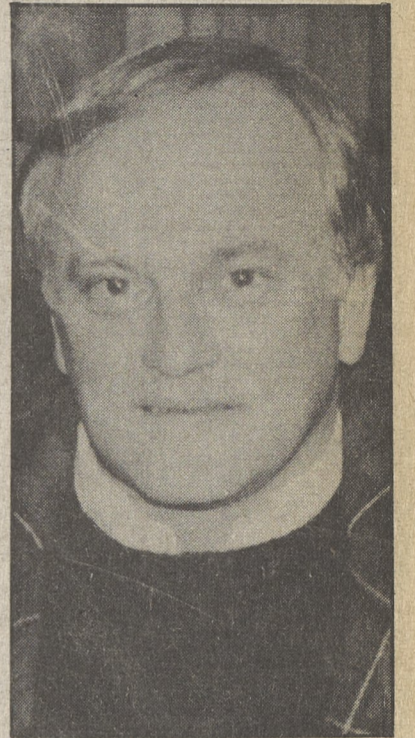
gram; and Pat, 7, attends a special program at Valley West that accepts students from all districts. A fifth child, three-year-old Mike, is waiting his turn to accompany the Cleary clan to school.

Mrs. Cleary is presently employed at her husband's business - a wholesale lumber company. She received a degree in Psychology from SUNY in Oswego, NY. Both Mr. and Mrs. Cleary are avid tennis players.

In his junior year of college, Cleary was sent to Vietnam, after which he returned to finish his degree. The family then moved into the New England area where Cleary worked in the lumber business of Lawrence McCoy and Furman. When the former company decided to send him to Detroit, Cleary decided to relocate to Dallas.

Of his move, Cleary recalls that people told him he would starve, but, he adds, "I never did."

The Clearys reside at RD 1 Aster Rd., in Dallas and Cleary Forest is located in the Back Mountain Professional Building on Route 309 in Dallas Township.



JOHN P. CLEARY

How did the Christmas tree begin?

Few things in life are more beautiful or exciting to us than the sight of a Christmas tree, presents underneath, twinkling with lights and shiny ornaments and strung with tinsel. What can compare with the joy of gathering together on Christmas Eve in a room lit only by Christmas tree light?

But the Christmas tree hasn't always been exactly the way we know it.

The tradition of cutting an evergreen tree (once the symbol of eternal life) and bringing it inside the home at Christmas began several hundred years ago in medieval Germany. In those days a "Paradise tree" was put up on December 24, the feast day of Adam and Eve. Instead of lights, ornaments and tinsel though, the tree was decorated only with communion wafers.

Soon, however, the feast of Adam and Eve and the observance of Christ's birth on December 25 were combined into one holiday - Christmas. The Paradise tree became a Christmas tree.

Shortly after, people started decorating their Christmas trees with cookies and occasionally, candles.

It was now approximately 1500 A.D.

By 1600 A.D., the practice of decorating evergreen trees at

(See TREE, page 8)



Dallas Post/Ed Campbell

Cast members

Shown here are members of the cast of "Computerized Christmas." The program will be presented this evening at 7:30 at the Dallas Junior High School auditorium. From left, first row, Deann Simon, Sam Gorgone, Thomas Heffernan, Leann Simon. Second row, Justin Reich, Kristen Gurdin, Mary Lou Baines, Jane Oh, David Knapp, Emily Russin, Shannon McDonald.

Intermediate Chorus plans musical

The Dallas Intermediate School Chorus will present a one-act musical play entitled "Computerized Christmas" by Jill Gallina this evening at 7:30 in the auditorium at the Dallas Junior High School.

The program depicts Father Time, portrayed by Sam Gorgone, a sixth grader, purchasing a computer because he was informed it would be a time-saving device for bringing in the holidays.

The program is a delightful musical with very up-beat music. There will also be dancers, soloists and 186 chorus members. The program is being directed by Mrs. Marilyn O'Connell, music teacher.

Who's married the longest?

Dallas couple helps Marriage Encounter

By JOAN KINGSBURY
Staff Correspondent

Worldwide Marriage Encounter, an organization dedicated to make good marriages better, is hoping legally to establish the Sunday preceeding Valentine's Day as Worldwide Marriage Day. Although many major Catholic, Protestant and Jewish congregations throughout our country have noted this day for the past several years, only the state of Louisiana has legally established Worldwide Marriage Day as a holiday.

According to Dallas resident Sue Hand, the purpose of Worldwide Marriage Encounter is to teach a married couple a communication technique that they can use to improve their marriage. A 44 hour work weekend is used to convent this technique.

Sue notes that, in our area, Worldwide Marriage Encounter originally started in Spain in the Roman Catholic Church, but now has spread to Methodist, Lutheran and other faith expressions. Locally, Fatima Center is the only place where Worldwide Marriage Encounter is held. It is open to people of all faiths. The program centers only on marriage communication, at no time is anyone pressured into accepting religious beliefs.

Sue and her husband, Joe, owners of Sue Hand's Imagery, experienced their encounter at Fatima Center. The Hands are both Protestant. The couple has been married for 17 1/2 years and has one daughter, Heather.

During a Marriage Encounter weekend, there are 15 separate presentations. In the Catholic

expression, a priest and three married couples give their presentations, while in the Protestant expressions, three couples, a minister and his wife give the presentations. Four basic areas

are covered: possessions, death, sex and God. Following each presentation, couples are given a question which they would write about or discuss privately. At no time is there group discussion.

This is not a counseling session - it is a work weekend.

Couples are taught to express their feelings; to find out what feelings are underneath certain experiences. They are encouraged to share these feelings so that their spouse can understand how they feel.

"Feelings are neither right or wrong, they just are" is a phrase helpful in achieving this communication.

Worldwide Marriage Encounter is funded completely by donations. At the end of the weekend, couples are given a blank envelope and asked to give what they can. The donation goes only to Worldwide Marriage Encounter, not to any church denomination.

The marriage encounter is extremely pleasant. The couple is rejuvenated. Sue says it brings back that feeling of being 'madly in love' like the couple was in the beginning of their relationship.

Since Worldwide Marriage Encounter is dedicated to helping make marriages more enjoyable and helping them to last longer, they hope to find the longest married couples in the Back Mountain to be recognized in February in time for Worldwide Marriage Day.

Residents of Dallas Township, Dallas Borough, Kingston Township, Lehman Township, Jackson Township, Lake Township, Franklin Township, and Harveys Lake Borough - if you know someone who has been married a good number of years, call their name into The Dallas Post at 675-5211. They could be named the longest married couple in your municipality and would be featured in a story in February.



Dallas Post/Joan Kingsbury

Helping 'Hands'

Sue and Joe Hand of Dallas, members of Worldwide Marriage Encounter, are helping to establish a Worldwide Marriage Day. The encounter group, an organization dedicated to making good marriages better, is hoping to establish the Sunday prior to Valentine's Day as a Worldwide Marriage Day.

LL Board approves two new full-time positions

By CHARLOT M. DENMON
Staff Correspondent

Lake-Lehman School Board approved a resolution for a full time English position and a full time math position in the senior high school by a 6-2 vote at its December board meeting held last Tuesday.

Board members also approved upgrading a part time guidance counselor to a full time position. Voting in favor of the positions were directors Gilbert Tough, Joseph "Red" Jones, Daniel Hudzik, Donald Jones, Martin Noon and Thomas Williams. Bing Wolfe and James Keiper voted against the resolution.

Keiper based his objection to the resolution due to the fact that people were not named to fill the positions. He said he feared it could result in the same situation which occurred in past months over the hiring of Thomas Williams as an elementary teacher.

Keiper said if the directors do not agree on an appointment at a meeting, the administration can appoint whomever it pleases and, after 90 days, a long-term substitute can legally claim the position.

This is the situation surrounding

the appointment of Williams, who was a long-term substitute in the fourth grade from September up to the time Williams was appointed as a permanent member at the November meeting.

Wolfe stated he believed all of the directors should have information on all applicants before voting on the positions.

The board also appointed Cheryl Travis as assistant coach for the junior high basketball program. Keiper also objected because of the cost of two coaches being in charge of only 26 students. Travis' salary is \$1,065 which is the same as the senior high assistant girls' basketball coach.

Keiper said he did not believe it necessary to have two coaches in charge as one teacher handles a larger number of students in the classroom every school day.

A three-year contract for Anthony Marchakitus, assistant to the superintendent, was approved by an 8-0 vote of the directors.

Custodian Leslie Sutton's request for leave of absence without salary from Nov. 16, 1984 to May 1, 1985, was approved by the board.

Director Edward Mark was absent from the meeting.



Dallas Post/Ed Campbell

Don't be scared

Three-year-old Andrew Verdekai of Huntsville Road is a bit apprehensive as he meets with Jolly Old St. Nick. Andrew visited with Santa at the Jackson Township Fire Hall Children's Christmas Party held Saturday afternoon at the fire hall.

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