

Book penned

Dallas woman writes book on retarded

By CHARLOT M. DENMON
Staff Correspondent

Elma Major of Overbrook Road, Dallas, is a pioneer in the education of the mentally retarded. Ms. Major, who has her Master of Science Degree in special education is a teacher, administrator and psychologist.

After teaching for more than 43 years, 30 of them in the education of the mentally retarded, Ms. Major has written a book titled "Tips to the Parents of the Mentally Retarded", which was published in May of this year.

The Rev. Ralph Bennett, former pastor of Huntsville Christian Church, aware of her many years experience with mentally retarded children, urged Elma Major to write a book about her experiences. After giving it much thought, Ms. Major decided it would be best to write a book with tips to the parents of the mentally retarded, helping them to deal with their children's handicaps.

"I didn't want to make it too scientific or boring so I wrote it everyday language and at the end of each chapter, I listed five or six of the most important items in that chapter. Actually, the book can be of help to the parents of any handicapped child, not just the retarded," said Ms. Major.

"Most important is that parents learn to accept the child and understand his limitations, know his potential and not push him. I found many parents to be over-anxious about wanting their children to be normal rather than learning to appreciate their capabilities."

Ms. Major's work with the mentally retarded came to the attention of the top educators in Pennsylvania and in 1971, Pennsylvania became the first state to pass a law to educate the mentally retarded and all handicapped. Soon after, special education became a Federal law.

Ms. Major first became interested in special education when she had a student in the fifth grade, older than the others, who could not read nor write. This was her first involvement with the retarded. She started her teaching career in a rural school



Dallas Post/Charlot M. Denmon

Book displayed

Elma Major of Dallas is shown here with a copy of her new book, entitled "Tips to Parents of the Mentally Retarded."

in Jackson Township, then taught fifth grade in Forty Fort. Her first class in special education was in Forty Fort where she taught educable children.

Later she taught in the Laboratory School in Bloomsburg, then in Allentown. While in Allentown, she received the Golden Deeds Award from the National Exchange Club for her outstanding service to the community.

When Ms. Major came to the Wilkes-Barre School District, she was appointed supervisor of the mentally retarded, a position she held for more than 11 years. It was in Wilkes-Barre that she had the first trainable class under the State of Pennsylvania funding. Following her retirement, Ms. Major served as a part-time consultant for the mentally retarded at the Luzerne Intermediate Unit.

While in the Wilkes-Barre District, Ms. Major worked with the below educable and did a pilot program on the severely retarded. This was the program that led the way for the state law to educate the retarded at all levels—the educable, trainable and severely retarded.

She is past president of the Luzerne Association for Retarded, and the Lehigh Valley Association for the Retarded. She also set up a Sunday School Class for the severely retarded at Huntsville Christian Church which is taught by a group of volunteers, who take turns teaching the class.

The severely retarded are educated to become socially acceptable to a degree, to learn basic skills such as feed themselves, brush their teeth, and take care of their personal needs.

The 95-page hard cover book bound in an attractively done cover is written in simple terms for better understanding and is applicable to all handicapped individuals. Published by the Carlton Press, 11 W. 32nd St., New York, N.Y., 10001, it retails for \$7.75, and if it is not on the shelves of area book stores it can be ordered from the publishing company at the address above.

There are also several copies of the book in the Back Mountain Memorial Library for those parents who are interested.

Certificates available

Rep. George C. Hasay recently reminded Luzerne and Columbia County residents about the proper procedure for obtaining copies of birth certificates.

Hasay said a birth certificate with the state seal is needed to obtain a passport, social security, and other documents and legal papers.

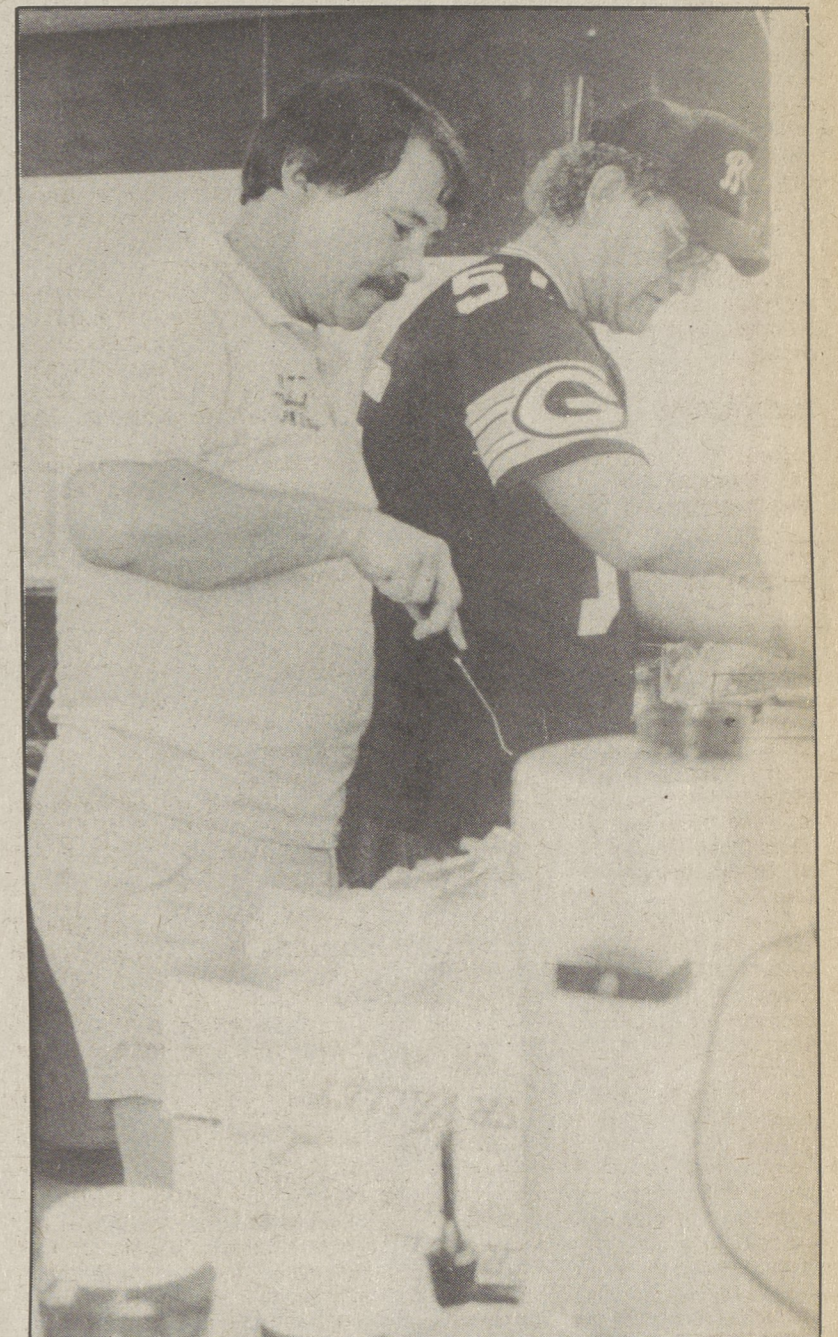
He said that it's a good idea for all individuals to obtain a birth certificate.

Citizens desiring a certificate may

obtain an application by writing to Hasay's office at 2261 Sans Souci Parkway in Hanover Township. The telephone numbers are 542-7345 and 735-2794.

There is a \$4 fee for the certificate. However, veterans and their dependents may receive their copies free.

Hasay said he would be glad to assist individuals who experience difficulty in obtaining certificates.



Dallas Post/Charlot M. Denmon

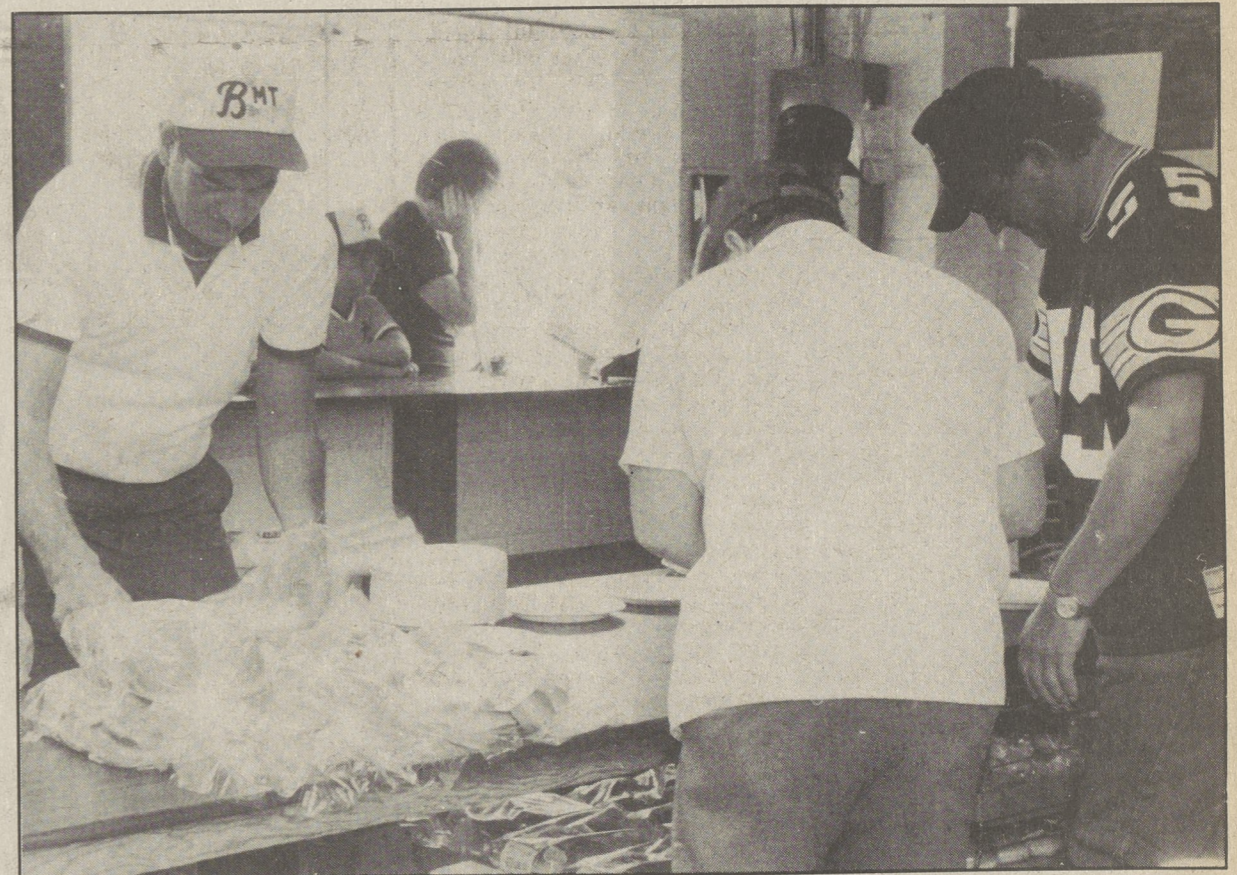
Chief cooks

Jack Tinner and Len Dorrance, members of the Back Mountain Baseball Board of Directors, were kept busy last Saturday preparing hamburgs and hot dogs for the players and their parents at the Back Mountain Baseball picnic held at the Luzerne County Fairgrounds.



Groundbreaking held

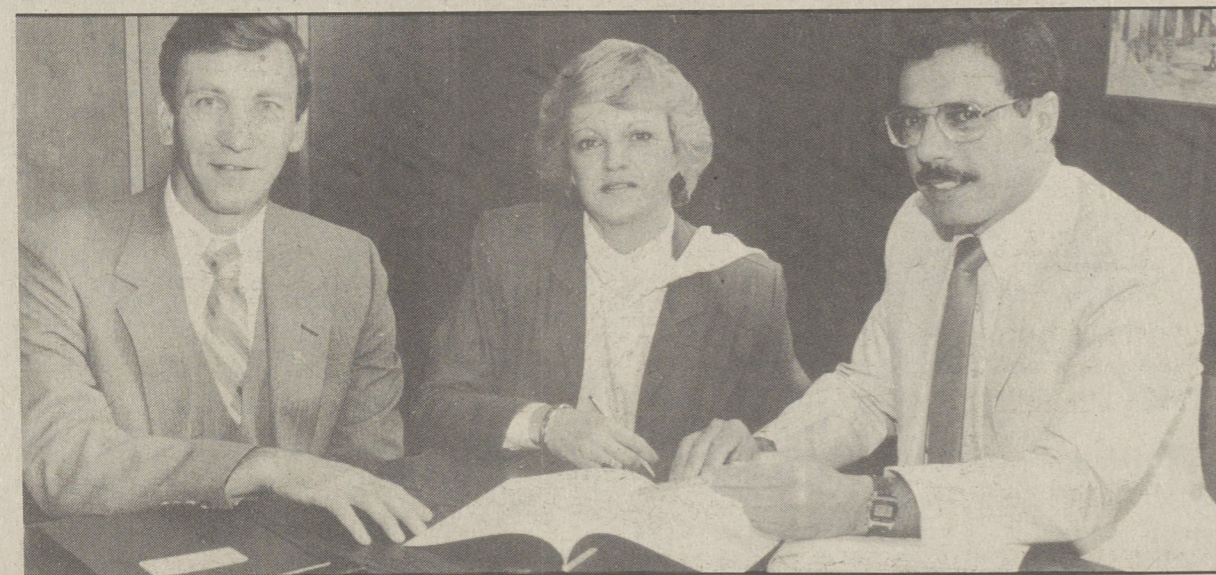
The Board of Directors of Oak Lawn Cemetery Association of Wilkes-Barre recently held a ground-breaking ceremony to mark the start of construction of a public mausoleum within the cemetery grounds. This beautifully designed non-sectarian facility will house 168 dry, well-ventilated, above-ground crypts and 36 cremation niches in a building of solid granite outer walls and roof, on a steel re-inforced concrete foundation. Convenient walkways and attractive landscaping will enhance the beauty of this dignified final resting place. Shown at the ground-breaking are, from left, William Gavin, Sales Representative of Granitbronz Company, Cold Spring, MN; J. Lee Turner, Trucksville; Robert A. Eyerman, F.A.I.A., Bear Creek, project architect; David F. Jenkins, Nanticoke; Gordon R. Kutz, Jr., Mountaintop; John E. Morris III, Esq., Dallas; Robert A. Saul, Dallas; Samuel M. Wolfe, III, Wilkes-Barre; Gail W. Vonderheid, Ashley, Superintendent; Frank M. Henry, Dallas; Earl W. Phillips, Dallas, Association President; and Bert Andrews, W. Nanticoke. Not in attendance were: William N. Hughes, Wilkes-Barre, Chairman of the Buildings and Grounds Committee; and Charles D. Flack, Jr., Havertown.



Dallas Post/Charlot M. Denmon

Coaches or cooks?

Coaches and managers were kept busy keeping ahead of the hungry Little League players at the annual picnic last Saturday. The volunteers in the kitchen worked as a team turning out food for the hungry children and adults.



Bureau organized

If your organization is looking for speakers to present positive, upbeat, informational presentations to your members, look no further. The Community Speakers Bureau is at your service free of charge. Formed by a volunteer group of citizens from Leadership Wilkes-Barre in association with the Path Finder Division of the Committee for Economic Growth, the Community Speakers Bureau provides topics that portray the areas where the volunteer speakers have special expertise and interest. If you want to become a volunteer speaker for the Community Speakers Bureau or wish to request a guest speaker for your organization, you should contact Pat Lenahan, administrator, at 823-2101 between the hours of 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Shown here are, from left, Jim Zaroda, co-chairman; Marcia McGann and John Iannotti, co-chairman of the Community Speakers Bureau. Other members of the committee responsible for developing the Community Speakers Bureau are Priscilla Allison, Mark Lippi, Rita Brody.



Dallas Post/Charlot M. Denmon

Seeking refuge

When the rain came, the Fall Fair pavilion recently constructed by the 4H clubs proved to be a popular refuge for children and adults during the Back Mountain Baseball picnic last Saturday.