

Judy Fitch to pass on title after "fantastic" year



Judy Fitch
Miss Wilkes-Barre/Scranton 1988

Nearing the end of her reign as Miss Wilkes-Barre/Scranton, Judy Fitch of Dallas has nothing but good things to say about the experience. "It's amazing to me that there haven't been any problems," she said Friday. "The reign has been fantastic."

Ms. Fitch said the past year wasn't especially demanding, until recent weeks. In that time, the combination of carrying 15 college credits,

working part-time at a video store in Dallas and preparing for upcoming pageants has caused her to be the busiest she has been since winning the title last March.

Actually, Ms. Fitch said she thought her schedule would be relatively modest once last year's Miss Pennsylvania pageant was over. That proved true until January, as she said she averaged about three appearances a month, mostly on weekends.

Ms. Fitch said competing for and winning the local title had renewed her confidence in her performing ability. "I've always been a ham," she said. "My mother says I used to perform for all my relatives."

A singer, Ms. Fitch had traveled nationwide for several months with a group that sang for hospital patients. But she said the group singing experience had resulted in a fear of appearing on stage alone. Preparing for the competition last year forced her to again work solo. "Now I know I can get up there and perform again," she said.

Judy Fitch, now 21, first entered a pageant at the age of 14. That one charged an entry fee, and offered no scholarships.

Fortunately, Ms. Fitch finished as the fourth runner-up, which she said gave her confidence to go on to scholarship pageant competition. Through the years, she has garnered about \$15,000 in scholarship money at Wilkes College, where she is now a sophomore majoring in communications.

"The scholarships were the prime motivator for my entry into pageants," Ms. Fitch said. "That, and I love to perform."

Ms. Fitch credits her family and the people who have worked with her to prepare for competition with much of her success. "It's amazing that parents can be so unselfish," she said when describing the support she has received from her parents, Ralph and Betsy Fitch. "I grew to learn that through these experiences. They're my biggest fans."

About a dozen people have worked on different aspects of Ms. Fitch's performance and presentation, and she has relied on them for both assistance and friendship. "Some people consider the girl and the support

people separately; I consider them a team," she said in describing their relationship. Included on that team are Gina Major, herself a former Miss Pennsylvania, Jim and Joyce Diemler, who designed the gowns, and Candice Miscavage.

While Ms. Fitch says the overall experience of competing in pageants has been rewarding, she said there are times when it has become extremely stressful. "You are being judged all the time - that's a mental strain," she said. "There are times when I am so involved mentally that I need other people to help me along."

What does Ms. Fitch do to ward off stress? For one thing, she goes to her health club, Odyssey, and tells her trainer to "de-stress me." She says going up to an empty bedroom in her home and singing loud also works. "If that doesn't work, a good cry helps," she said.

But, in the end, Ms. Fitch says the strain is not that great. "I'm finding school to be more stressful than this (being Miss Wilkes-Barre/Scranton) has been."

When her year-long reign ends on March 18, Ms. Fitch plans to devote herself to completing her education at Wilkes College. She expects to graduate with a degree in television production and public relations. At that point, Ms. Fitch says she may spend some time working on her singing, and might even try again for the Miss Pennsylvania title.

And what advice would Ms. Fitch give would-be titleholders? "Be themselves, be genuine. Many competitors think they have to be something they're not," she said. Judging by Judy Fitch's success and outlook on life, that sounds like good advice.

School renovations will take 'til fall 1991

By CHARLOT M. DENMON
Staff Writer

Superintendent Gerald Wycallis told members of Dallas School Board at Monday night's meeting that he, Smith Miller & Associates officials, and members of the property committee would meet with members of the Department of Education in Harrisburg today (Wednesday) to discuss final plans for the approved renovations of district buildings.

In response to Wycallis' request that Smith Miller's Art Thompson give them a time line for completion of the project, Thompson and Don Smith explained the following schedule: The Dallas Elementary building will be completed by the fall of 1990; Dallas Junior High, which has less work to be done, will be ready in the summer of 1989; Dallas Senior High School, where the most renovation is necessary will not be completed until the fall of 1991.

William Runner of First Eastern Bank explained that financing will be available when firm bids are in hand but he could not predict what interest rates might be when the financing is ready by the district.

Jack Wega, computer director, gave a 10-minute video presentation of the computer program used by Neshaminy School District. Wega explained that the curriculum used by the district he visited would integrate well with the existing curriculum at Dallas.

Wega also recommended leasing computers rather than purchasing them since the equipment changes so rapidly.

A short but spirited disagreement occurred between director John George and John Gabriel over statements made by Gabriel in a local paper about the board's consideration of a Dallas employee Dave Richards, who is seriously ill with cancer.

Gabriel said he came to plead for assistance from the board for Richards and presented a petition

which he claimed was signed by 600 people who disagreed with the board's plan to terminate Richards' medical plan paid by the school.

George told Gabriel that the board knew Richards was ill and the district has been taking care of him and that the district will continue to take care of him and his family. Wycallis also told Gabriel that Richards insurance policy was never terminated and his Blue Cross-Blue Shield will continue in effect.

In other business, Wycallis said the administration had drawn up a school calendar for next year as cooperatively as possible with all other districts in the LIU 18 area.

The board members also:
• Appointed Ms. Patricia O'Neill, Dallas, part-time elementary guidance counselor to replace Debra Hadzor, who transferred to a full time position.

• Approved application for a competitive grant for a lead teacher with the Dallas District as the sponsoring agency to operate the program in accordance with the guidelines of the grant.

• Approved application for the Metropolitan Life Foundation Awards for Exemplary Programs.

• Approved applications for federal funds under the Vocational Education Program.

• Approved the proposed budget of the LIU 18 for the fiscal year July 1, 1989 to June 30, 1990, and the Dallas District's share in the amount of \$17,778.27.

• Approved transfer of Floyd Gallup from supply clerk to custodial position No. 1 effective March 3; and transfer of Clark Garris from custodian at Dallas Senior High School to supply clerk at the Dallas Township Central Supply.

• Approved appointment of Robyn Jones as head coach of Dallas Senior High field hockey team for the 1989-1990 school year by a 6-2 vote with Ellen Nagy and Clarence Michael voting no.

Candidates

(continued from page 1)

special reasons but several general ones.

"I am interested in education and believe it is part of my responsibility to serve in some capacity," Yablonski explained. "When I was growing up I attended West Side Catholic (now Bishop O'Reilly) High School and I kept hearing that Dallas was an excellent district with a quality educational curriculum. I believe it is important that quality education continues in the district."

"I have time to give and I feel that I can share some new ideas and new energy. I have no vendetta or grudges against anyone, but want only to see Dallas continue its excellent program."

Yablonski is employed at Wilkes-Barre General Hospital where he works with computers.

Richardson is running for a second term. He said he decided to run because he enjoyed his first term on the board.

"Things didn't always run smoothly but somebody had to suffer the pain, if things are going to be done successfully," Richardson said. "I decided to try it for another four years."

WILLIAMS BACK IN LAKE-LEHMAN RACE

Ken Williams is running for the seat in Region II. Williams served on the board for 12 years before he resigned six years ago.

He has attended every meeting for the last 18 years because he is interested in quality education.

"I have grandchildren growing up and I want them to have the same quality education at Lake-Lehman that there is today," Wil-

Kenneth Williams says he has attended every Lake-Lehman School Board meeting for 18 years

liams said. "I graduated from Lake-Lehman and I enjoyed the years I served on the board until everything seemed to happen at one time, and I didn't have the time to take care of my personal business, so I resigned. I have regretted that ever since."

"I wanted to serve on the board for another four years so I decided to try for it. I believe that I had a good relationship with the administration, teachers, parents and the students, and I hope that I can continue where I left off," Williams said.

Joseph "Red" Jones of Oak Hill is running for re-election to one of the two seats in Region III of the Lake-Lehman School District. Jones said he is running for re-election because during his tenure in office, he has seen many achievements accomplished in the dis-

trict.

"Many of these projects are underway and I would like to stay on the board to see all of the plans we have made successfully carried out," Jones said.

DALLAS BOROUGH CHALLENGE

In Dallas Borough there are three seats which are up for re-election this year, those seats now held by Donald Shaffer, Tim Carroll and Bill Berti. Berti is not running for re-election but Shaffer and Carroll are running for re-election. Patricia Peiffer, Hugh King and Donald Cooper are also in contention for a seat on the board.

Cooper, who lives off Huntsville Road in Dallas, said he decided to run for councilman because he has enjoyed living in Dallas Borough for the past 12 years.

"The present council appears to be doing a fine job but I hope I will be able to make some worthwhile contribution," Cooper said. "I would like to see some progress made in redevelopment on Main Street, Dallas. Dr. Alan Boonin has set a tremendous precedent for the other business places by transforming

his building into a beautiful landmark. It's time others followed in his footsteps."

These are the reasons some incumbents chose not to run for office again, why some new members came forward to run for an office, and why some such as Kenneth Williams, who resigned for a while, decide to come back.

It will be up to the voters in May to decide whether they want experience, new blood, new energy or new ideas to represent them in their communities or in their school districts. Unfortunately, in some cases voters will have no choice for many candidates in communities in the Back Mountain have no opposition.

Dallas Borough, Kingston Township, Harveys Lake Borough, Lake Township, Franklin Township, and Jackson Townships are the municipalities which have more than one person running for supervisor or council. Jackson Township and Harveys Lake Borough are the only two municipalities where there is more than one running for tax collector, and in the Lake-Lehman School District, only Region I and Region III have more than one candidate competing for a seat.

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JOHN P. BRADY, M.D.

glady announces the opening of his Shavertown Office for the practice of Internal Medicine located at Dr. Michael Bucan's office, 8 West Center Street, Shavertown. Dr. Bucan will continue to see his patients at regular hours. Dr. Brady will continue to see patients at his Swoyersville Office. Dr. Brady graduated from Wilkes College and Hahnemann Medical College in Philadelphia. He specialized in Internal Medicine training at the University of Texas and Mercy Hospital, Scranton.

Internal Medicine specializes in adolescence and adult medicine in treating Diabetes, Hypertension, Cardio/pulmonary Disease, Gastro-intestinal Disorders and Arthritic conditions.

Dr. Brady is currently on the medical staffs of Nesbitt Hospital, Kingston and Wilkes-Barre General Hospital. He participates in both Medivare and Blue Cross and accepts most private insurances as payment. Laboratory and EKG services will be offered.

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