

Walter 'Rusty' Anderson ends Children's Theatre run after 25 years

By CHARLOT M. DENMON
Staff Writer

"Winnie the Pooh", the musical presented this year by the Misericordia Players the last week in April brought to an end 25 years of the Children's Theatre directed by Walter "Rusty" Anderson.

"This year's production was dedicated to the late alumna Andrea Bochniowich, who in 1972 appeared in the leading role of Christopher Robin in the college's first production of the play. Shortly after graduation in 1972, Andrea contracted multiple sclerosis from which she died recently," Anderson explained.

"The children loved the presentations," Anderson said, "But it is becoming increasingly difficult to produce them. Higher costs, tight budgets, an inadequate stage and the passing of the theatre arts major are among the reasons for discontinuing the Children's Theatre." But Anderson said this year's production drew an unusually large crowd.

"The last 25 years of directing the students have been very rewarding and something I will remember fondly forever. This year is the second time we presented

Winnie the Pooh, and it was a challenge but it is very rewarding especially when I see former children who came to the early plays now adults and returning to the productions with their children," Anderson said.

Anderson, who is called 'Rusty' by most people who know him because of his red hair, was originally from New Jersey but now lives on Park Street in Dallas. When he first came to the area to teach at College Misericordia, he lived in an apartment over the former Brothers Four and later moved to Davenport Street, Dallas. The last few years, however, he has resided at his present address. In the summer, however, he enjoys vacationing at Rockport, Massachusetts.

"I started my acting career as a child, acting on Broadway," Anderson explained. "Then I left acting to attend Boston University to study theatre arts. College Misericordia used to have a theatre arts major but now with all the extracurricular activities, the students don't have a lot of time for theatre although being coed it makes it easier to find men for the male parts."

Anderson said that every year,

one presentation of The Children's Theatre was dedicated to the benefit of handicapped children.

"I studied with Winifred Ward, pioneer in Children's Theatre," Anderson said. "The children who come to the plays are the most perspective critics. Much as I enjoy the directing, I believe this year was the last production, although who knows, 'it's possible we might do another one, I never like to say 'positively no more'." Anderson said.

Anderson said that over the years, the college received great cooperation from the schools but in today's society there are problems with transportation, scheduling and such things.

"All of the plays have been based on the traditional classics," he said. "In the last 25 years we have repeated only four or five, one of them the 'Wizard of Oz'. The first time we were creative and used our imagination in doing it but the second time we had to do it according to the film.

"In working with the students I try to draw out their innate ability which is in everyone. As a director I am demanding but fair and try to

be as professional as possible. Over the years a lot of my former students have returned to help with the scenery, makeup and costumes," Anderson explained.

Anderson used to work in summer theatre and has many friends in New York whom he visits occasionally. He has been teaching at Misericordia for 25 years and says he has seen many changes, most of them for the better. Since the college has offered continuing education classes, Anderson said some of the adults have taken part in his plays.

One of these adults who took part, sends him an arrangement every year designed after the play. This year's arrangement was designed after "Winnie the Pooh".

"The Children's Theatre was in existence prior to my coming to the college," Anderson said. "At that time it was co-sponsored by the Junior League and King's College.

"Each play I have done over the last 25 years was special. I can't name a favorite. I'm going to miss these productions but who knows, we may be able to do some of them from time to time," Anderson concluded.



LAST CURTAIN CALL - Walter "Rusty" Anderson, Children Theatre director for the last 25 years is shown with the 'Winnie the Pooh' arrangement, sent to him by one of his former players. (Photo by C.M. Denmon)

Republicans outnumber Democrats in Back Mountain

By RICH JOHNSON
Staff Writer

While Democrats outnumber Republicans in Luzerne County as a whole, the Back Mountain is Republican country by a nearly two-to-one margin.

According to figures released by the Luzerne County Office of Voter Registration, there are 145,574 registered voters in the county; 13,393 of them are in the Back Mountain.

Of those, 8,399 are Republicans, compared to 4,442 registered Democrats. There are also 552 voters who are registered as independents or other party affiliates.

At the county level, voter registration figures have dropped over the last six months. There are 86,868 Democrats and 55,602 Republicans registered. Independents and all other parties total 3,104.

Kingston Township Southwest is the largest of the Back Mountain districts with 1,614 registered voters. Dallas Township Middle is the next largest district with 1,566 voters.

Dallas Township North is the smallest voting district with only 219 registered voters. It is followed closely by Kingston Township Northeast which has 290 voters.

The district with the most registered Republicans is Kingston Township Southwest which has 1,001 Republicans.

With 582 Democrats, Harveys Lake Borough has the highest Democratic registration. Harveys Lake has 582 Democrats registered. Jackson Township runs a close second for most Democrats with 579.

Much of this Tuesday's primary election will focus on the race for state representative in the 120th District. However, voters in two Back Mountain polling places will not have to make that decision, as Lehman Township Southwest and Ross Township are in the 117th Legislative District.

BACK MOUNTAIN VOTER REGISTRATION				
DISTRICT	DEM	REP	OTHER	TOTAL
Dallas Borough North	171	528	38	737
Dallas Borough South	138	421	27	586
Dallas Twp. Middle	522	952	92	1,566
Dallas Twp. North	71	136	12	219
Dallas Twp. South	316	794	58	1,168
Franklin Twp	141	424	22	587
Harveys Lake Borough	582	632	33	1,247
Jackson Twp.	579	731	39	1,349
Kingston Twp. Northeast	95	180	15	290
Kingston Twp. Northwest	342	701	67	1,110
Kingston Twp. Southwest	550	1,001	63	1,614
Lake Twp.	240	409	22	671
Lehman Twp. Middle	158	482	23	663
Lehman Twp. Northeast	105	247	11	363
Lehman Twp. Southwest	129	212	8	349
Ross Twp.	303	549	22	874
Total	4,442	8,399	552	13,393

*Part of the 117th legislative district

Candidates

(continued from page 1)

before you can become a chairman of a committee," he concluded.

Anne Vernon said she stands for honesty and integrity. She stated her deepest concern was family which included drug and alcohol, abused children and the lack of state support and said families are the primary victims in prevention and treatment.

Vernon was the lone candidate to profess a pro-choice position on abortion.

"I do not believe in government intervention in the private affairs of the family," Vernon said. "The decision about having a child should be the choice of a family."

She also answered the question on recycling by saying that she believed the plan the state now has in place to make recycling mandatory is adequate.

Phillips, presently a Luzerne County Commissioner said his top priority is the drug problem and that he believes in a death penalty for dealers and banning all drug paraphenelia sales. He also said he would work to change the tax laws and would support even stronger recycling laws than now in the working.

Phillips told the people he opposes abortion with exceptions in the case of incest, rape, or potential serious injury to the mother.

Phillips defended the hiring of his son as a county solicitor, saying, "I did not say nepotism was okay but I believe it is wrong if we are going to preclude someone from

working in public service if qualified." He defended his son's position by saying that he was well qualified for the position and has proven his worth and his son worked hard for him in the campaign for commissioner.

Phillips defended his original support for the county personal property tax by explaining that at the time he did not know how the tax worked so he voted for it.

"In 1987 when the proposition came up, I had seen what was involved in it, so I stepped back and said 'I can't support that' and it was done away with for one year."

Phillips cited his experience in politics, his honest approach and that he is in a position to help the Republicans make progress. "This District is aimed at by the Democrats this year," he said.

Kotch agreed with the other candidates on several issues, but emphasized his priority was more employment in the area saying the area for too long was known as the source for good and cheap labor.

"We need to change this to quality labor. Our workers can't survive on \$5 per hour wages. We need more industry with higher paying jobs and more qualified skilled workers," Kotch said.

Kotch said that PG&W's watershed lands should be kept free of development. "I believe we should have control of the lands that fall into the hands of the new company. There should be restrictions on the land to protect the people in this

area," Kotch said.

Kotch also said he would support legislation to make it easier for children of unfit parents to be adopted by concerned adults. "The overall welfare of the child should come first," he said.

Clarence Michael said he supports all of the issues mentioned by the other candidates but his top priority is 'quality of life'.

"Most of the issues come under the quality of life. What do we want for us, for our children and our grandchildren," Michael said.

Michael also agreed with the anti-drug legislation now on the books and advocates returning some of the drug money confiscated to the municipalities for recreation facilities.

Questioned about his stand on abortion, Michael agreed that it is acceptable in cases of rape, incest and risk of har. "Abortion is a viable alternative" in those cases, he said.

To a question on gambling in bars or clubs, Michael said he would oppose gambling. "Think of Atlantic City, what has happened to that town? It's all right for wealthy people, but the average person cannot live there," he said.

Forum helps the public decide for whom to vote

By RICH JOHNSON
Staff Writer

Going into Sunday night's candidate forum, some 120th District voters had not yet decided for whom to vote. After the forum, they had a better idea of who they would pick on election day.

In interviews after the forum, some of those in attendance talked about their opinion of the forum and the candidates' performances.

"I think it (the forum) was excellent," said Selma Zneimer. "It was very informative."

She added that no candidate really made a great impression on her but did say, "Their statements just confirmed my opinions about the election."

Elizabeth Lloyd also said that her views were strengthened after the forum. "It was very interesting and well organized," she said. "All the candidates expressed their views well."

One person, who wished to remain anonymous, said that more than one candidate caught

her eye at the forum. "I was happy to see all the candidates take their stand on the issues," she said. "(Scott) Dietterick impressed me when he spoke about the accusations facing him." She added that she felt Andy Kotch and Clarence Michael enhanced themselves during the forum.

Some of the public came into the forum ready to support their candidate.

Howard Wiener, a supporter of Ann Vernon, said he thought the forum was a good idea. "Ann really came across good," he said. "It also clarified Scott's position a little and also (Jim) Phillips."

Sally Johnson, a Phillips supporter, also said that the forum was successful. She added that not all candidates came across well. "I think that some of them didn't handle themselves well." She went on to say that Ann Vernon did not appeal to her at the forum.

There were many others who had opinions on the outcome of the forum, but one woman was overheard to say, "I'm sticking with the Democrats."

WHERE TO VOTE

DALLAS BOROUGH: South District - Back Mountain Memorial Library, Huntsville Road. North District - Borough Municipal Building, Main Street.

DALLAS TOWNSHIP: South District - Side area of Township Municipal Building, Route 309.

Middle District - Front area of Township Municipal Building.

North District - Kunkle Fire Hall.

FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP: Orange Methodist Church, Eighth St.

JACKSON TOWNSHIP: Jackson Fire Hall.

HARVEYS LAKE BOROUGH: Harveys Lake Borough Municipal Building, Route 415.

KINGSTON TOWNSHIP: Northeast District - Carverton United Methodist Church, Carverton.

Northwest District - Shavertown Fire Hall, North Main Street.

Southwest District - Trucksville Fire Hall in the Township Municipal Building, Carverton Road.

LAKE TOWNSHIP: Loyalville United Methodist Church.

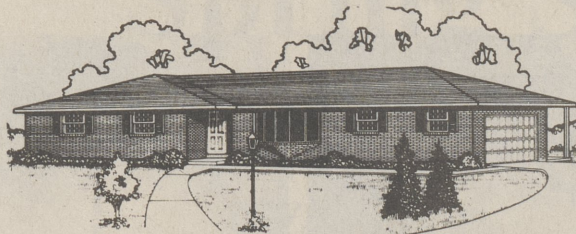
LEHMAN TOWNSHIP: Middle District - Lehman Fire Hall.

Southwest District - Lake Silkworth Fire Hall.

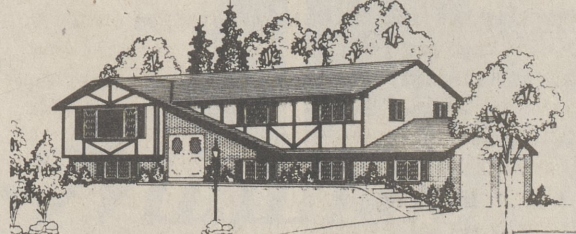
Northeast District - Idetown Fire Hall.

ROSS TOWNSHIP: Sweet Valley Fire Hall.

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