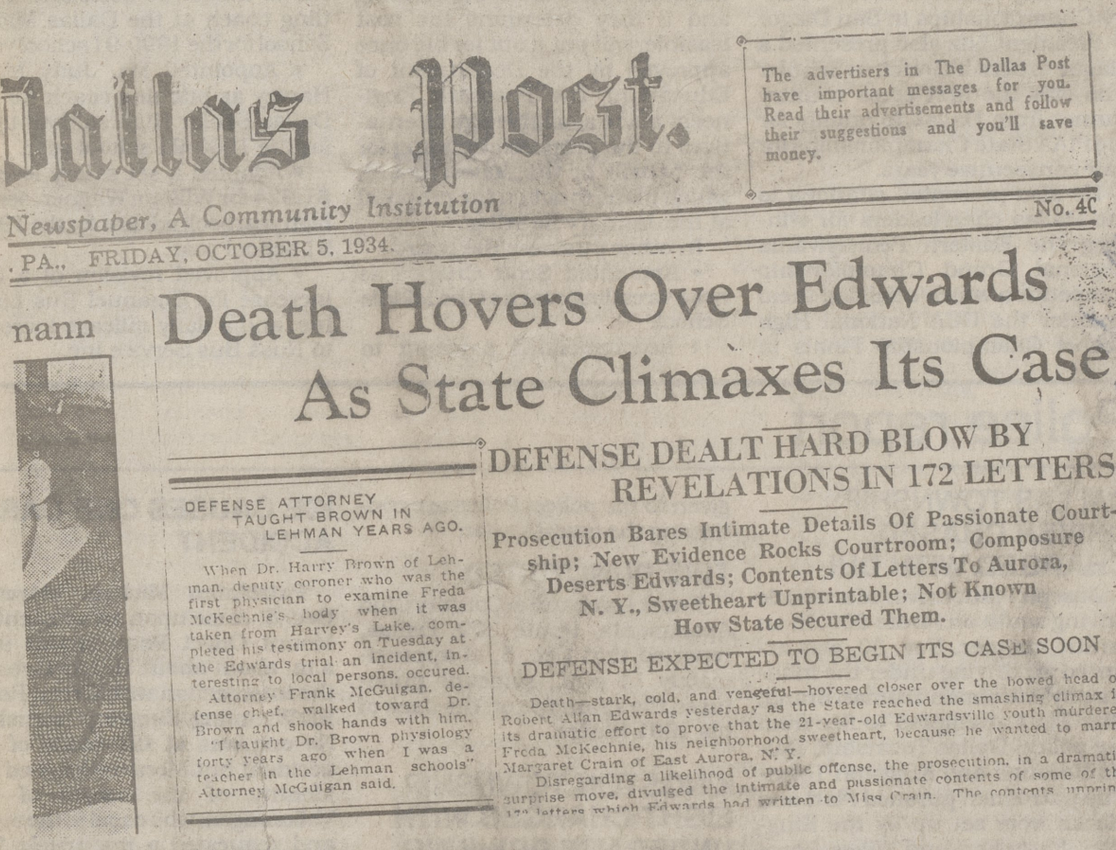
**********MIXED STATES
100 1/1/99 ** 48
BRIGHTON BINDERY
BOX 336 52540
BRIGHTON, IA

ccer Playoff Winners 14

...NG THE BACK MOUNTAIN 1889 1990 FOR MORE THAN A CENTURY

THE DALLAS POST

Vol. 101 No. 49 Dallas, PA Wednesday, December 12, 1990 35 Cents



Dallas Post.

Newspaper, A Community Institution

. PA., FRIDAY, OCTOBER 5, 1934. No. 4C

The advertisers in The Dallas Post have important messages for you. Read their advertisements and follow their suggestions and you'll save money.

nann

Death Hovers Over Edwards As State Climaxes Its Case

DEFENSE ATTORNEY TAUGHT BROWN IN LEHMAN YEARS AGO.

When Dr. Harry Brown of Lehman, deputy coroner who was the first physician to examine Freda McKechnie's body when it was taken from Harvey's Lake, completed his testimony on Tuesday at the Edwards trial an incident, interesting to local persons, occured. Attorney Frank McGuigan, defense chief, walked toward Dr. Brown and shook hands with him. "I taught Dr. Brown physiology forty years ago when I was a teacher in the Lehman schools" Attorney McGuigan said.

DEFENSE DEALT HARD BLOW BY REVELATIONS IN 172 LETTERS

Prosecution Bares Intimate Details Of Passionate Courtship; New Evidence Rocks Courtroom; Composure Deserts Edwards; Contents Of Letters To Aurora, N. Y., Sweetheart Unprintable; Not Known How State Secured Them.

DEFENSE EXPECTED TO BEGIN ITS CASE SOON

Death—stark, cold, and vengeful—hovered closer over the bowed head of Robert Allan Edwards yesterday as the State reached the smashing climax in its dramatic effort to prove that the 21-year-old Edwardsville youth murdered Freda McKechnie, his neighborhood sweetheart, because he wanted to marry Margaret Crain of East Aurora, N. Y.

Disregarding a likelihood of public offense, the prosecution, in a dramatic surprise move, divulged the intimate and passionate contents of some of the 172 letters which Edwards had written to Miss Crain. The contents unprint-

NATIONWIDE COVERAGE - The murder trial of Robert Edwards made headlines across the nation, similar to this one which appeared in the Dallas Post in 1934.

Love letters are reminder of famous murder case

By RICH JOHNSON
Staff Writer

The 172 letters to his lover were key to the prosecution case against Robert Allen Edwards

A 56-year-old Harveys Lake murder case has once again come to light in the Back Mountain as a group of love letters which were instrumental in putting a convicted killer to death have been found by a homeowner.

Recently, a Wilkes-Barre woman found a publication of love letters written by Robert Allan Edwards before he killed Freda McKechnie, a former lover, in 1934 at Harveys Lake. The love letters were an intrigal part of the prosecution's case which convicted Edwards of first degree murder.

The incident took place in July of 1934 when Edwards brought McKechnie to the Sandy Beach area of Harveys Lake on the pretense of taking a swim and discussing their future. Newspaper reports from the time say that McKechnie was pregnant by Edwards, but the Edwardsville man was in love with another woman, Margaret Crain of New York.

According to the newspapers, Edwards told McKechnie that he wanted to marry Crain. McKechnie reportedly fainted and Edwards used a blackjack to kill the woman and dumped her body into Harveys Lake in an attempt to make her death look like an accidental drowning.

Days after the murder, authorities charged Edwards with the crime. In October of that year, Luzerne County became a hot-spot for news as reporters from all over the country flocked to the courthouse to report on Edwards' trial.

Assistant District Attorney Harold Flannery called many witnesses to the stand but it was the reading of the love letters from Edwards to Crain that highlighted the case.

The letters, which were not printed by most newspapers because of their sexual nature, were what many thought helped convict Edwards.

A copy of these letters has now been found in a basement in Wilkes-Barre. The woman who found the letters did not wish to be identified but said that she was "very surprised and somewhat startled" when she read them. The woman now wants to sell the letters, which seemed to have been

See MURDER, pg 18

911 emergency number now in use in Back Mountain

By CHARLOT M. DENMON
Staff Writer

Back Mountain residents now need only to dial three numbers — 911 — for emergency service from fire, police or ambulance personnel.

Commonwealth Telephone Company and the Back Mountain Communications Center announced that the basic 911 emergency service was in effect at a press conference held Dec. 7 at the Commonwealth offices on Lake Street.

Kingston Township Police Chief Paul Sabol, president of the Center, explained to those in the audience that the Back Mountain is the first [illegible] County to install a 911 system.

"The county plans to go to a 911 system in the future and when they do they will have our full cooperation," Sabol said. "Commonwealth has done a wonderful service to our community," Sabol continued. "It will be a lot easier for children and the elderly persons to dial three digits instead of seven."

The system, which will service the 674, 675, 696, 639 and 477 exchanges, went into service Nov. 30. Residents of towns which are not members of the 911 service may also have their calls dispatched by the Comm Center by telephone.

Residents will not be charged directly for the 911 service; it will be supported by the Back Mountain Communications Center.

"This is our Christmas present to the people," said Sabol, as he commended Kingston Township manager Jeff Box, Kunkle Fire Chief Jack Dodson and Joseph Bren for their assistance and cooperation in getting the service off the ground.

EMERGENCY CALLS ONLY ON 911

Sabol also stressed that non-emergency calls should not be made by dialing 911.

"There are alternate numbers for non-emergency numbers," Sabol explained. "These are, in Kingston Township, 696-1175; Dallas Township, 675-5251; Harveys Lake, 639-1620; Dallas Borough, 675-0161 and a general non-emergency number of 675-4650.

"Any person who intentionally calls 911 for any but emergencies commits a misdemeanor of the third degree. The penalty is a fine up to $2,500 and a year's imprisonment.

"Lake Township, Fairmount Springs and Ross Township are not members but we must dispatch to a regular number to get them service. It is important that people stay off the service lines in those areas because if the line is busy it could cost time," Sabol explained.

REFLECTIVE HOUSE NUMBERS NEEDED

Dallas Township Police Chief Carl Miers told the audience, "One of the biggest problems is identifying a person's residence. Since the Back Mountain is a rural area many of the roads do not have name

See 911, pg 3

CHANUKAH - Kristen and Lisa Gurdin of Dallas described how their family observes Chanukah, the Festival of Lights, the 8-day Jewish holiday which began at sundown Tuesday night. (Post Photo/Charlot M. Denmon)

Jewish 'Festival of Lights' began Tuesday evening

By CHARLOT M. DENMON
Staff Writer

The C. Stephen Gurdin family of Dallas, like many other Jewish families in the Back Mountain and around the world, begins the observance of Chanukah at sundown tonight (Wednesday) with the lighting of the Menorah.

Each night for eight nights a candle in the Menorah will be lighted in the symbolic "Festival of Lights."

Chanukah marks the celebration of the Maccabees return in the second century B.C. to the temple which was desecrated by their enemy. The Maccabees (which means Hammer) were named after Judah Maccabee, who was a strong and powerful man who never gave up and kept hammering away at the enemies of the Jews.

When they returned to the descrated temple, the Jews wanted to rededicate it and searched for oil to relight the "Eternal" light. All they could find was one small cruse of oil which was only enough for one night. While they lit the cruse of oil, they sent one man off to a neighboring town to look for more oil.

Miraculously, the cruse burned for eight nights and days and since that time the Jewish people have celebrated Chanukah, a joyous occasion.

Kristin Gurdin, a senior, and her sister Lisa, a junior high student, are the daughters of an interfaith marriage. Although they are raised in the Jewish faith, they celebrate both the Jewish and the Christian holidays.

"My mother makes a large dinner during Chanukah," explained Kristen, "And my grandmother, who is Jewish and moved here from New York to be able to spend the holidays with us, comes for dinner.

"When we were younger we used to spin the Dreidel (a toy like a top) every night and we were given the

See CHANUKAH, pg 18

Dallas High cheerleaders headed for nationals

By CHARLOT M. DENMON
Staff Writer

The Dallas Senior High School cheerleaders won the regional grand championship of Eastern Pennsylvania recently, and qualified to enter the UCA National High School Cheerleading Championship Finals, in Orlando, Fla.

This year marks the third time the girls have qualified for the National Championships although this is the first time they go as the regional champs, having been runnerup in the past. As first place entrants, they will receive more recognition than in past years and their advisor, Mrs. Sheila Bonawitz, is hoping the girls place in the top 10 this year.

The girls are holding several fundraisers to help defray the expense of the trip to Florida, the first of which will be Breakfast with Santa and the Dallas High School Cheerleaders at the Dallas Middle School Cafeteria, Saturday, Dec. 15, from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. A donation of $3.00 will be solicited.

TALKING WITH SANTA - Dallas Senior High School cheerleaders joined in a 'Breakfast with Santa' last week at the high school. Above, first row from left with Santa, are Sara Cuba, Ruth Ann Selenski, Tami Landon; second row, Camille Parulis, Colby Gauntlett, Wendy Vaughn, on Santa's lap; Courtney Gauntlett, on his lap; Jennifer Bryant, Jessica Oravitz; back row, Laura Selenski, Terri Phillips, Jamie Maniskas, and Ginger Williams. Absent Lori Kraynak, Kim Francis and Patrice Shovlin. (Post Photo/Charlot M. Denmon)

Inside The Post

Calendar.....11
Classified.15-17
Editorials.....4
Obituaries.....2
Police report.....2
Property transfers.....5
School.....12-13
Sports..... 14-15

Community Events

Back Mountain Widows Club Christmas Party - Sat., Dec. 15, 11 a.m., Mark II Restaurant, Dallas. There will be a $3.00 exchange gift.

Christmas Musical- "Baa, Baa, Bethlehem," Sun., Dec. 16, 6 p.m., Shavertown United Methodist Church.

Santa visit- Idetown Fire Hall, Sun., Dec. 16, 2 p.m. Free tickets available from fire department members.

Police cooperation helps to catch fleeing suspect

Area police departments worked together Monday, to catch a man accused of stealing $400 from a home in Lehman Township.

Jordan Delevas, 19, of Hudson, was caught Monday afternoon following a two-hour search by authorities.

The chase began Monday morning after the money was reportedly stolen from a home in the Briarcrest section of the township, according to Sgt. William Bockus of the Lehman Township Police Department.

Bockus said that Delevas was staying at a friend's house when he allegedly took the money from a purse in the home. When he was questioned by the family, Delevas reportedly escaped out a bathroom window in the home.

"He could not be found right away," said Bockus. "We received calls from private citizens who spotted the youth and we we kept an eye out for him."

Lehman Township's search for

See SUSPECT, pg 3