DALLAS SCHOOL

DISTRICT

BUDGET MEETINGS

School Auditorium, work ses-

June 29-7 PM, Adopton of

final budget, Administration

June 28-8 PM, Middle

sion open to the public.

bldg., Church St.

THE DALLAS POST

EDITORIALS

Quality education isn't primarily an economic issue

The directors of the Dallas School District will meet later this week to finalize the district's budget for the 1991-92 school year. At issue will be whether to adopt the tentative budget that

includes a 15 mill property tax increase, or to spend less or more than that budget al-

Objections have been raised against the proposed budget as some residents protest that it raises taxes too much and others believe that more spending is needed to maintain quality education. The district's teachers have been among the most

vocal groups supporting the latter, claiming that at least a 22 mill tax hike is needed to avoid the layoff of needed teachers and curtailment of important programs.

Whatever position you support, some facts are unassailable; that state and federal contributions to education are not growing as fast as they have in the past, that over-reliance on property taxes brings hardship to some who can least afford it, and that quality education is important to our society's growth and prosperity. What is not clear is the relationship between the size of school budgets and the quality of education.

Much has been written of late about the superior test scores racked up by students in Catholic schools and other private institutions. An article in the Wall Street Journal focused on the Diocese of Scranton in asserting that parochial school students were receiving a better education than public schools

offered, and at substantially less cost. Certainly private school teachers would be surprised to hear that bigger budgets mean better education, since their compensation is about half that paid to their counterparts in the public schools. The starting annual salary for a teacher with a bachelor's degree in the Dallas School District is now \$20,715. The average salary is \$41,775 (average length of service is 21 years). Add to that the value of summers off and benefits most people can only dream of (including payment for the college courses that lead to a higher salary) and you have a package that far exceeds what most private sector workers will ever

The point isn't that public school teachers are overpaid—the good ones certainly aren't given the responsibility they bear. But they aren't all good; as in any human endeavor, there is a wide range of competence and effectiveness between the worst and the best. There's the crux of the matter and one that money won't solve. If bigger budgets and higher salaries guaranteed superior performance, it wouldn't be hard to justify high taxes. But just the opposite may be true; attention focused on budgets and salaries has distracted everyone in the public school systems so much that their true function—teaching children to be productive citizens—has been displaced by selfcentered concerns.

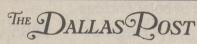
It's time to face up to the facts; our public educational systems have become bogged down in bureaucratic squabbling and their mission to provide a proper education for all children has been compromised as teachers and administrators argue over superficial budget items. No wonder teachers are said to be unhappy; instead of gaining satisfaction from helping young men and women on their journey to adulthood, they're focused on whether or not they got as large a raise as their counterparts across the state. Meanwhile, administrations are unable or unwilling to enforce standards on teachers or students.

"Back to basics" has become a rallying cry among education reformers, but they're missing the point. What schools need most today isn't a change in what is taught, but in the attitudes of administrators, teachers and students. Bring back the basics, yes, but make them basics of behavior and discipline, purpose and pride. Start by demanding that students treat their time in school as more important than anything else they do. Institute dress codes so they don't miss the message that school is not like home or a friend's house. Reward teachers who are able generate a hunger for knowledge among their students and invite those who fall short of acceptable standards to seek work elsewhere. Highlight academic achievement above achletics. It all boils down to changing the value system at work in our schools.

More taxes or less will not turn public education around; higher standards and new values will. That change must begin at home with parents who inculcate an appreciation for learning, and who refuse to accept mediocre performance in the classroom from either their children or educators. Education isn't primarily an economic issue, but failure to achieve academic skill will deal the greatest blow to our society and the individuals within it.

Letters invited

The Dallas Post encourages readers to share their opinions with the community by writing a letter to the editor. All letters for publication must be signed and include a telephone number so that we may verify their authenticity. We will not publish anonymous letters. Send letters to: The Dallas Post, P.O. Box 366, Dallas, PA 18612. Letters received by Noon on Monday may be included in that week's



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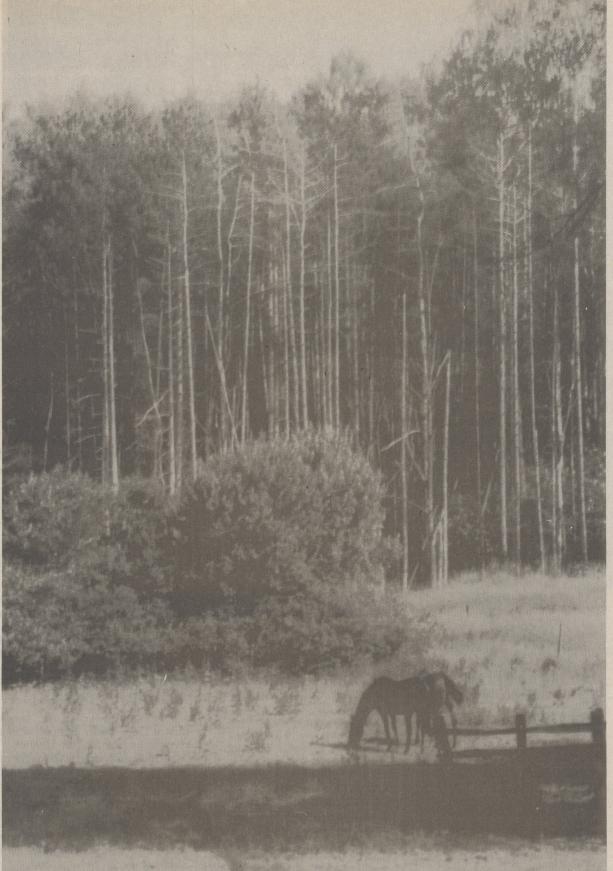
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Horses near Machell Avenue, Dallas

(Photo by Charlotte Bartizek)

Letters

Asks that Dallas music program be maintained

that his thoughts would reach the entire community.

Board of Education Dallas Area School District Dallas, Pennsylvania 18612

Dear Members of the Board:

I am writing to formally protest the news that the secondary choral music program at Dallas is being discontinued.

As a member of the Class of 1974, some of my most valuable lessons were learned under the direction of Mrs. Florence Sherwood, director of this program. As I understand, Mrs. Sherwood is leaving on sabbatical, which in itself is a great loss, however there are many qualified and gifted music educators, some of which are Dallas graduates, who will be willing to try to fill her shoes!

As an active member of the choral program at Dallas, I was and many personal experiences that one can never learn in the regular classroom, such as visit-

Pennsylvania moved a step

closer to passing a living will law,

as the Senate approved a bill al-

lowing residents to choose, in

advance, what type of life-sustain-

ing treatment they would accept in

cases of serious illness, according

to Sen. Charles D. Lemmond (R-

Sen. Lemmond, who voted in

favor of the bill, said passage of

living will legislation is long over-

due and would help to address

many of the difficult legal and

ethical questions surrounding the

right to die. He said work on the

legislation has been underway for

more than a decade, but has been

slowed by differing viewpoints on

how such a law should be drafted.

worked together to get this bill

through the Senate," Sen.

Lemmond said. "It's an issue that

is important to everyone who is

concerned about ensuring that

everyone has the right to death

"I commend all the groups who

Living Will law moves ahead

with dignity."

in Pennsylvania Senate

Editor's Note: The author of this this music program that I learned I am not suggesting cutting sports valuable two years of my life, traveling with the international cast of "Up With People!", for my senior year of high school and first year of

> There is also the valuable lessons that were learned as students throughout the years attended district, regional, state and nationwide choral events representing Dallas. What a remarkable experience that was!

Many Dallas music students went on to further their careers in music, in such fields as music education and music therapy, as well as celebrated professional musicians, such as my friend, Dr. William Cutter of Boston. Also, many people that I work with at local community theaters, are graduates of Dallas, and to this day can still feel the impact this program had on their lives.

I realize economically that times are difficult, however, should not a exposed to discipline, hard work compromise be made? Has the funding for Athletic Programs been affected? Emphasis on sports has always out-weighed the importance ing nursing homes, hospitals and of fine arts, not only at Dallas, but Veterans Homes. It was through many other area schools. Although

Currently, the Commonwealth

is one of only three states that does

not give legal standing to "living

wills," which allow people to deter-

mine what kind of heroic meas-

ures they are willing to accept in

cases of an advanced terminal ill-

Sen. Lemmond said Senate Bill

3 meets the test of the Supreme

Court ruling in the Cruzan case,

which specified that patients must

give "clear and convincing evi-

dence" to allow doctors or family

members to take a patient off life

support. it would apply only to

people who have executed living

witnessed by two people and pro-

vided to the patient's doctor. The

bill includes a sample declaration

that would allow patients to check

a box to the forms of life support

they do not want to be used.

The document would have to be

ness or irreversible coma.

letter asked that The Post print it so about what would be the most programs either, I am asking you to take a look into programs which benefit those whose talents do not excel on the football field or basketball court, and give those students a chance at quality, creative

> Stephen F. Hartman Kingston

Says 'thanks' for the coverage

We at the Idetown United Methodist Church Couples Club wish to thank you and the Dallas Post for the wonderful pre-auction cov-

The photograph and the writeup were tops. It helped to make our auction the best ever.

Henry Bergstrasser

Send The Post to a friend, it makes a great gift. Call 675-5211 to find out how.

Only yesterday

60 Years Ago - July 3, 1931 **BUS SERVICE SLATED** AT HARVEYS LAKE

The Hemlock tree has been declared the official state tree by the State General Assembly.

Effective Monday new bus serv ice will begin around Harveys Lake. Dallas junior baseball team of the American Legion lost its

chances to participate in the state contests by two runs, losing to Forty Fort 2-1 and to Pringle 13-The Secret Six, starring Wallace

Beery, played Friday and Saturday at the Himmler Theatre.

50 Years Ago - July 3, 1941 UNION STARTED AT **NOXEN TANNERY**

Thirty three new names were added Tuesday to the Dallas draft

The U.S. Army invited Mr. and Mrs. David Brace of Dallas to Gettysburg to watch the maneuvers in a mock air raid by the 71st Regiment of which their son Samuel is a member.

Tannery workers organia a union at the Noxen plant.

Fireworks and boat parade highlight July 4 at Harveys Lake. Engaged - Cathlyn Parkinson

and George Lewis.

Wed - Claudia Jones and N.F. Montross; Helen Anthony and William Carr; Mary Alice Johnston and William Kishbaugh, Jr.

40 Years Ago - June 29, 1951 LAKE LIONS CLUB **GIVES FIRE EQUIPMENT**

The Barn teems with activity as goods are delivered but more used goods are needed for the Library Harveys Lake Lions Club buys a

resuscitator to be housed at the Daniel C. Roberts Fire Company building.

Engaged - Bernadine Michael and George Remetz; Elizabeth Decker and George McCue.

Wed - Mary Ruth Robinson and Howard Stillwell; Lenore E. Pascoe and William Dymond.

Jackson Little League is in first place in the league with a 6-2 record with Dallas close on Jackson's heels with a 5-2 record.

30 Years Ago - June 29, 1961 ALEXANDER NAMED ROTARY PRESIDENT

Everybody in the area was led Friday and Saturday at Charlie Gosart's 2-day open house.

Dallas School District will stablish a summer recreation program for children over six in the Dallas area.

James Alexander to be installed as president of Dallas Rotary.

Residents hear report on Dallas School changes to be made this summer to relieve pressure on other schools in the district. Daddow Isaacs team defeats

Duke Isaac team 9-6 in Back Mountain Baseball for Boys. Engaged - Arline Misson and

John Anzalone.

Wed - Barbar Ann Cooney and Larry William Farr; Ruth Marie

Waldow and Joseph D. Stachnik; Marian Theresa Elenchik and John Edward Kern. 20 Years Ago - July 1, 1971

NO MILLAGE INCREASE IN SCHOOL BUDGETS The 1971-72 budget of the Dal-

las School District was approved with no tax increase foreseen.

Residents of Shavertown complain about bad taste of the water. No millage rise seen for Lake-Lehman budget.

Magistrate Frederick Anderson is elected a state director. East Dallas continues to lead

Teeners League. Wed - Pattie Larson and Gre-

gory L. Hicks; Linda Hagenbaugh and Kurt D. Schneider; Myra Berti and Frederick James Gosart; Susan Carol Oppenheim and A. John Dimond. Engaged - Susan Ellen Sipple

and Matthew P. Gillis, III.

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