

Lake-Lehman 6th grader saves friend from choking

By GRACE R. DOVE
Post Staff

Friday, March 13, was a lucky day for 13-year-old John Grady of Noxen when quick action by a fellow student saved him from choking on a piece of candy on his way home from school on the bus.

According to bus driver Walter Chappell, a girl on the bus called out, "John is choking!"

As Chappell attempted to safely pull the bus over and stop, sophomore Michael Tietzel, seated behind Grady, performed the Heimlich maneuver and dislodged the candy from Grady's throat.

"As soon as I saw John choking, I knew what to do."

Michael Tietzel
Lake-Lehman 6th grader

"I was kind of scared for a minute," Grady said. "But my friends helped me out. After the candy came out, a girl in front of me gave me a drink of juice for my throat."

Tietzel said that he had learned the Heimlich maneuver in Ms. Evans' sixth-grade health class.

"This was the first time that I tried it in real life," he said. "As soon as I saw John choking, I knew what to do. I just reached over the seat - it didn't even take ten seconds."

Tietzel added that the two families are neighbors. He helps John Grady learn music on his electric guitar and is friendly with John's older brother, Jason.

"I'm glad that Mike was there to help," Chappell said. "I was trying to get the bus off the road safely and keep an eye on the kids at the same time. By the time I got the bus stopped, Mike had already helped John and he was fine."

Lake-Lehman transportation manager Barbara Ross commented, "I was very impressed, very proud. Mike Tietzel's actions were above and beyond the call of duty."

Tietzel was also commended for his quick action by Superintendent Nancy Davis at the March 10 school board meeting.



ONE OF THE FIRST - Don Weidner, safety and health manager at Offset Paperback, started his printing career with *The Dallas Post*. (Post photo/Grace R. Dove)

Offset

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brations on Monday, May 18.

More than 350 Back Mountain residents work at the plant, which employs 625 people and pumps almost \$20 million in wages, property taxes and other contributions into the local economy.

Maintenance superintendent Bob Pilger of Beaumont was the first local person to be hired in August, 1969, when Offset's predecessor, Valley Publishing, relocated from Phoenix, Arizona, to the vacant Linear, Inc., building on the site of the old Fern Brook Park.

"Our plant had to be extensively renovated, including replacing the maple tongue-and-groove floors with concrete," he said. Pilger formerly worked as maintenance foreman at Linear, which vacated the building in 1964.

Pilger's 25 men maintain the building, grounds and all plant equipment, some of which is very sophisticated. "Our in-house engineers have worked with us to modify our equipment to meet specialized needs," he said. "We also have made some of our own parts and equipment."

Safety and health manager Don Weidner of Lehman Township came to Offset in 1970 from

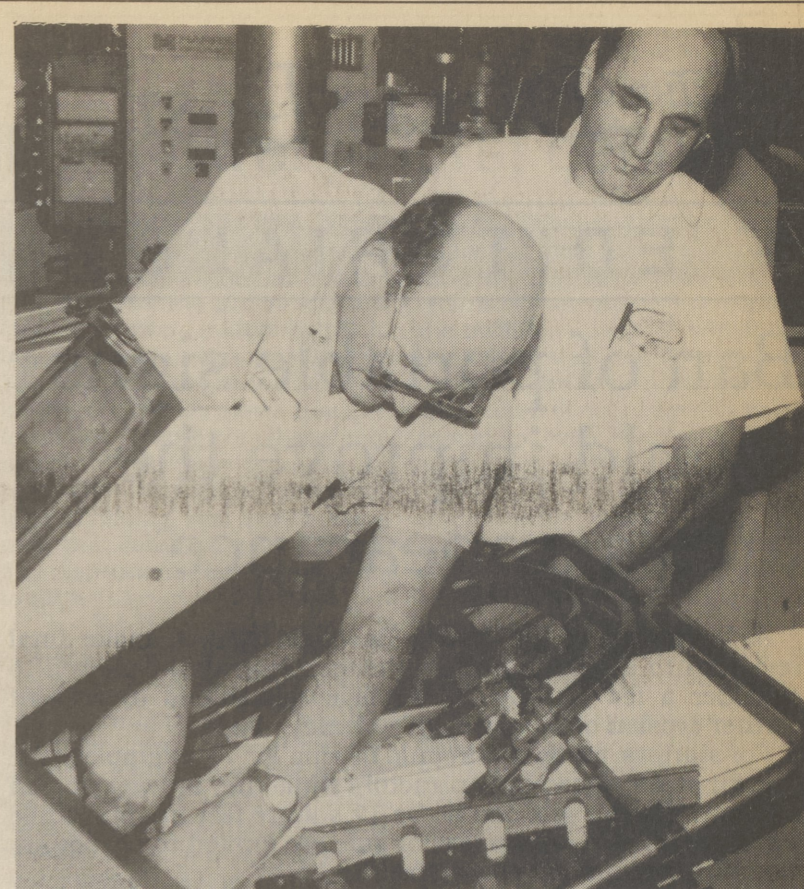
The Dallas Post, where he had operated the newspaper's last flatbed press.

Weidner's responsibilities include supervising the plant's fire brigade, an important task when there are tons of newsprint and cardboard boxes around. "My men train with certified fire instructors and work very closely with the local fire companies, who know the plant's layout," he said.

Tracking accidents, maintaining records, being available to give basic first aid, running the plant's safety training program, staying up-to-date on hazardous material procedures and serving as liaison to area civic and charitable organizations are also Weidner's responsibilities.

Offset's managers are proud of the plant's new safety improvement program, which reduced accidents by 30% in 1991. All employees are involved in the program, which mandates ear protection, steel-toed safety shoes, goggles and other safety practices in the plant's manufacturing area.

In order to produce clear text and pictures, state-of-the-art communications and composing equipment and offset presses are used to print an entire book



CHECKING IT OUT - Rich Long, right, and Larry Chapan, left, check the adjustment on a binder machine that makes paperback book covers. (Post photo/Grace R. Dove)

and its cover from typeset originals.

According to president Michael J. Gallagher, Offset's wages and benefits are competitive with similar jobs in the printing industry. "We have a low employee turnover and have never had a strike," he said.

Company benefits include a good health-care plan, tuition reimbursements for full-time employees who go to school, management courses at Penn State-Lehman campus and a scholarship fund for employees' children.

Offset Paperback evolved from a small company founded in 1966 by Saul Simkin, the son of

a Russian immigrant to Winnipeg, Canada.

The Simkin family had relocated from Winnipeg to Phoenix to start Valley Printing, a company that accepted low-volume, small print runs, unlike most publishers of the day.

Valley Printing was later purchased by VTR and moved to Dallas in 1969 to be close to the New York publishers. Simkin repurchased Valley Printing from VTR in 1972, changing its

name to Offset Paperback. Offset retained its name when it was purchased by Bertelsmann AG of Guetersloh, Germany in

1980.

Being owned by a large German conglomerate has not affected Offset's style, Gallagher said. Offset's parent corporation encourages its companies to function as independently as possible.

Offset Paperback earned the Governor's Labor-Management Cooperation Award from Governor Casey in 1988, as well numerous printing industry awards.

Offset provides financial support to area colleges and universities, fire and ambulance companies, sports programs, health organizations, charities and the Boy and Girl Scouts.

The company's "good neighbor" policy extends to the good of the community, as demonstrated by its offer in 1987 to help fund a traffic light at Route 309 and Main Street. "We have never dropped the idea," Gallagher said. "We just can't get cooperation from the state."

Gallagher agreed with Jim Koutnik of Harvey's Lake, who relocated with the original Valley Publishing crew from Arizona more than 20 years ago.

Koutnik observed, "The Back Mountain is a great place with a good, stable work force and a great community spirit. I'm here to stay."

League of Women Voters poster contest offers students a \$100 prize

In conjunction with its Fourth Annual Youth Forum to be held Thursday, May 21, at the Luzerne County Courthouse, the League of Women Voters will sponsor a poster contest. The contest is open to all high school students, grades 9-12.

The theme for this year's contest is "Take Back the System—Activating a New Generation of Voters." Students entering the contest are encouraged to use original ideas in developing a poster that will motivate citizens to vote.

All posters must be submitted on standard size poster board and

the student's name and home and school telephone numbers should be printed on the back of the poster. Posters will be judged at the Courthouse on Thursday, May 21, at noon. Winners will be notified by phone.

Prizes include a \$100 savings bond for first place; \$50 savings bond for second and third place winners. All prizes will be awarded at the League's annual dinner meeting in June.

For more information, contact Laurie Popson at 675-4130.

Water rate

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left outside the office door.

If the proposed rate increase were to go through, the 1,800 customers of the Dallas Water Company, would see their bills rise 98.90%, or from \$68.93 to \$136.04 for a typical customer quarterly.

The Dallas, Harvey's Lake, Noxen and Shavertown Water Companies, all owned by General Waterworks, have asked the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission to be allowed to consolidate and to increase water rates effective June 30, 1992.

The largest percentage increase would be for the 58 customers of the Harvey's Lake Water Company, jumping 338.94%, or from \$32.74 to \$118.70 a quarter for the typical customer. For the 980 customers of the Shavertown Water Company, the average quarterly bill would rise 27.93%, or from \$99.27 to \$127.02.

Noxen customers would see their bill rise 61.74%, or from \$59.19 to \$95.82.

Company officials say the increases are necessary because of improvements made to the water system.

The proposed rate increase will be examined by the PUC, the state agency which sets rates for public utilities. The PUC can prevent existing rates from changing until it investigates and/or holds hearings on the proposal.

Those wishing to lodge an informal complaint against a water company can call the Public Utility

Commission Bureau of Consumer Services at 1-800-1110.

To file a formal complaint, you can call (717) 787-2395, or write: Secretary, Public Utility Commission, P.O. Box 3265, Harrisburg PA 17105-3265.

Filing a formal complaint against a rate increase allows the person filing the complaint to participate in a hearing at which they can produce witnesses to testify against the increase.

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Parent/Teacher meeting May 19

There will be a Parent/Teacher meeting May 19 from 7 to 9 p.m. in the Middle School Auditorium Alcove.

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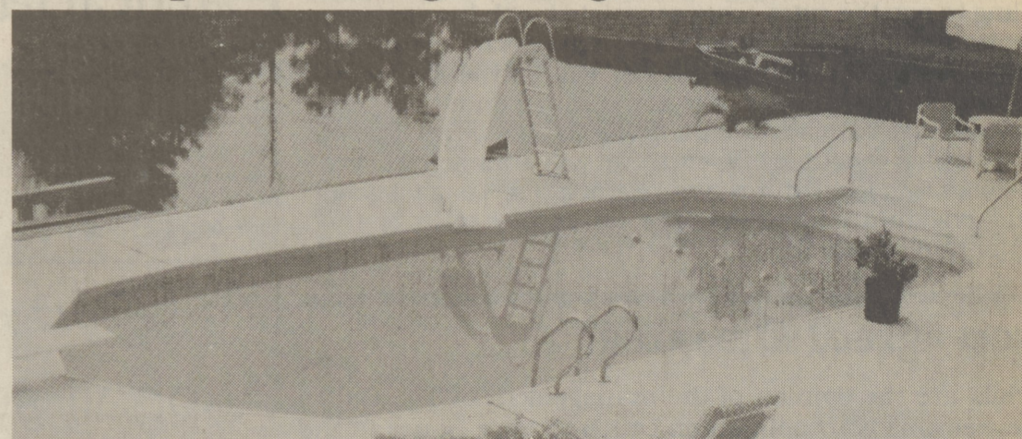
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