

School, community volunteers make Adopt-A-School a success

By BILL HARPER
Post Staff

In what is described as an "ambitious undertaking," the Dallas School District is supported by a group of parents and volunteers in its Adopt-a-School program.

The support drive for Buena Vista Primary Center and Royal Palm Elementary School in Miami Florida began on October 2 and will run through October 9. Both schools were damaged by Hurricane Andrew which struck in August.

"DAMA has donated 100 recycling bins and Burger King and Notariani's have donated boxes to the effort," said Dallas High School Principal Frank Galicki. Galicki said that the boxes will be used to

store the articles which students bring and which people in the community donate.

Galicki said that individuals can donate items at the school district's administration building on Church Street in Dallas.

"Parents and volunteers will be coordinated by Kathleen Savage and Sharon Rondinella, who represent the Dallas Elementary School and Westmoreland Elementary School PTO's," Galicki said.

Mahmoud Fahmy of Dallas said that when he learned about Adopt-a-School he immediately volunteered to help out with the project.

"I am delighted and pleased that the district has become involved in this program because it really presents our schools in a positive light," Fahmy said.

Fahmy said that he is waiting to find out what his part in Adopt-a-School will be and he is encouraging others in our community to participate.

"What this does is gives the community an opportunity to work together on a positive project," Fahmy said.

Fahmy, who is a former member of the Dallas School Board, is now Special Assistant to the President for External Affairs at Wilkes University. He said that he has spoken to people who he works with about becoming involved in the program.

Dallas Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction Gil Griffiths said that the goal of raising \$5,000 is one-third of the way complete. Griffiths said that one

member of the community learned about the program and came in and donated \$50 to the effort.

"We have a commitment from both Back Mountain PTOs and organization's presidents are working hard and contacting area businesses about the project," Griffiths said.

When the items are collected, they will be taken to the high school, where 140 students from Jay Pope's sociology classes will pack and load the material onto the trucks.

"I mentioned the program to my students, and everyone in the class really wants to be involved in this," Pope said.

Pope said that by participating in Adopt-a-School, the students will complete the community ac-

tion requirement for their sociology class. However, the program means more to students than a grade in a class.

"Really you feel as if you need to participate in a program like this because our own community would need assistance if anything happened here," student volunteer Kris Kaleta said. Kaleta is joined by Carey Kitchen and Sean Petricine in chairing the high school students who are involved in Adopt-a-School.

Parents with students at Dallas High School received a letter the week of September 26 which explained the program, and the students are reminded during morning announcements to bring items to the school, Kaleta said.

"There was even a pep rally to kick off participation, and Mr. Pope reminds us about this every day," Kaleta said.

The students will be packing the collected items beginning on October 9th. Kaleta and Kitchen said that the packaging will probably take place in the school's cafeteria or the gymnasium. Griffiths said that the items should be delivered to Miami by the week of October 19th.

Kaleta and Kitchen said that that participants can expect an early wake up when working on the project.

"We will begin packing at 7 a.m. and work until our first class in order to get everything done," Kitchen said.



THEIR PRIDE AND JOY - Kunkle firefighters will show off their new fire engine, complete with state-of-the-art firefighting equipment, at the Kunkle Fire Company's open house, Sunday, October 11, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the fire hall. In addition to the displays of firefighting and rescue equipment commemorating Fire Prevention Week, ambulance personnel will give free blood pressure and blood sugar tests. Free "Tot Finder" stickers, 911 stickers and fire prevention information will also be available. Firefighters include, front row from left: EMT Tom Davis, assistant chief Bill Fedrow, assistant chief Ted King, Larry Hilbert; back row from left: captain Rich Setser, first assistant chief Brian Freeman, captain Bob Smith, Joe Goodrich, fire chief Jack Dodson, assistant chief Karri Dodson, ambulance captain/fire company secretary Dodie Dodson, Mike Freeman and Bruce Biggs. (Post Photo/Grace R. Dove)

Fire

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Dodson estimates that approximately one-fourth of these devices don't work.

"Residents should test their smoke alarms often and change the batteries at least once a year," said Franklin Township fire chief Ron Witkowski. "Ninety percent of major fires can be prevented by an operational smoke detector."

According to a scenario provided by Dallas fire chief Bob Besecker, a small fire in a wastebasket in a two-story home can spread to nearby furniture and carpeting in 60 seconds.

Within 90 seconds, gases leaving the fire's location are more than 190°F; in another 90 seconds temperatures will reach 400°F.

Three minutes, 41 seconds after the wastebasket began to burn, everything in the room suddenly ignites, a reaction called "flashover" by firefighters.

Although the upstairs smoke alarm went off one minute and 50 seconds after the fire started, the home's upstairs hall and stairway have become impassable two minutes later, after flashover.

A fire in a mobile home spreads much faster; within 10 minutes it will burn to the ground, Witkowski said.

He estimated that it takes a volunteer fire company an average of 10 minutes, depending on the fire's location and road conditions, to get to a fire.

Area fire companies answer an average of 40 to 70 calls a year, Dodson estimated. With modern firefighting techniques, fatalities have been cut in half in the past decade.

In rural areas like the Back Mountain, fire companies are manned by unpaid volunteers who spend many hours in training sessions, fire schools and public education. The fire companies are largely self-supporting, depending on the proceeds of fund-raising events to purchase equipment.

Because rural areas don't have fire hydrants, fire companies depend on tankers for a water supply. A new innovation in the area, the Back Mountain Tanker Task Force, was developed by the association to send firetrucks where they are most needed in an emer-

gency, while still keeping adequate equipment on standby in case it is needed elsewhere.

"We won't leave anyone unprotected," Dodson said.

Member fire companies of the Back Mountain Firemen's Association include Dallas, Trucksville, Shavertown, Harvey's Lake (Daniel C. Roberts), Lehman Township, Jackson Township, Lake Silkworth, Sweet Valley, Noxen, Kunkle (Harry S. Smith), Idetown (Jonathan R. Davis), Franklin Township, Fairmount Township and Mt. Zion.

"Firefighting is the most dangerous occupation, and our people do it all year round, for free," said Debbie Jones, whose husband, Howard, is assistant chief at Franklin Township. "What would people do for fire protection if there were no volunteers?"

"Good home fire prevention makes our job a lot easier," Witkowski added.

Correction

Last week, the incorrect date for the ballet "Swan Lake" was re-

ported. The ballet is scheduled for October 10 at 7 p.m. at the Kirby Center in Wilkes-Barre.

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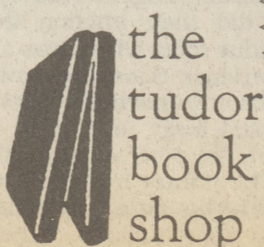
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