

The Dallas Post

50¢

SERVING THE COMMUNITIES OF THE DALLAS & LAKE-LEHMAN SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Vol. 105 No. 29

Dallas, Pennsylvania

Wednesday, July 20, 1994

Bicyclists to help Hospice St. John

By GRACE R. DOVE
Post Staff

Shavertown residents Tom Berezich and Barbara Anzalone plan to ride their bicycles July 24 to repay an area organization for helping their families.

Both are members of Team Dignity, a special racing team of families and friends of Hospice St. John patients, participating in a noncompetitive bicycle race to raise money for Hospice St. John's in-patient terminal care unit.

The 62-mile (100 kilometer) Ride for Dignity will be run in two 31-mile (50 kilometer) legs winding through the Back Mountain.

Berezich, 52, lost his sister, Marion, to cancer in April and is riding the entire 62-mile course in her memory.

"The Hospice people were very good to Marion and to our family," he said. "This is a way in which I can repay them for the many good services which they gave her. Hospice is a great program."

A serious bicycle rider for the past 10 years, Berezich has competed in all three parts of the Greater Wilkes-Barre Triathlon and is training towards the Iron Man competition.

He isn't daunted by the 62 miles (100 kilometers), although he's a bit concerned about getting lost.

"There are so many turns on the course - I hope I don't miss any," he said.

Barbara Anzalone's goal in the Hospice Hundred is "to ride as far

as I can." She is riding in memory of her mother, Maria Woronko, who was a Hospice patient for the last 11 months of her life.

"My mother didn't want to go into a nursing home," she said. "I promised her that I wouldn't do that. She was the most important person in my life and I wanted to do as much for her as possible. Hospice St. John helped me to keep my promises to her."

Anzalone was especially impressed with the religious support which she and her mother found at Hospice St. John.

"It doesn't matter what religion you are," she said. "My mother firmly believed in God and found great support in her faith. This was very important to our entire family."

Her goal is to ride as far as she can.

"I'm a dancer, but it's not the same type of training," she said. "You use your muscles in a different way on a bicycle. I'm hoping that my dancer's stamina will help."

Teams of 10 or more riders sponsored by businesses, social organizations, churches and groups of friends will ride in the noncompetitive event, in which riders won't be timed, allowing them to ride at their own pace.

More than 100 riders on at least nine teams are expected, according to Hospice St. John

See RIDE, pg 14



POST PHOTO/GRACE R. DOVE
RIDING FOR DIGNITY - Shavertown resident Tom Berezich is riding in the Hospice Hundred July 24 in memory of his sister, Marion, who was a Hospice patient until her death in April.

Area child is remembered

By GRACE R. DOVE
Post Staff

Four-year-old Megan Reilly was a very special child who loved going for ice cream and playing with her dolls, especially Snow White.

She also liked playing with her twin brother, Matthew, and her eight-year-old sister, Bridget.

And she loved Bo, the family's friendly pet greyhound.

"Megan always got along well with Matt and Bridget," said her father, Mark. "And she liked to swim. When we visited Ocean City, she had fun playing in the pool."

The Franklin Township child died suddenly July 13 while at a swimming lesson at College Misericordia's pool with her classmates from Little People Day Care Center.

"When you have twins, usually one is the leader and the other the follower," Mark Reilly said. "Until several months ago, Megan had been the follower and Matt the leader. She was always there for Matt. Over the past few months she had become more independent. Megan always cared more about others than herself."

"Megan's death is a very sad tragedy for all of us," said college director of public communications Gail Smallwood. "It has affected the entire college staff - they're all very upset."

The college's pool was closed until Saturday afternoon so that staff members could pay their respects to the Reilly family, Smallwood said.

Little People Day Care Center spokesperson Barbara Kollar refused to comment "out of respect for Megan's family."

According to Dallas Township

police, Megan had been at the college's pool for a swim lesson with other children from Little People Day Care Center.

An instructor had been in the pool and lifeguards were on duty at the time that Megan fell in, according to chief Carl Miers.

"She was sitting on the side of the pool kicking her feet," Miers said. "An instructor moved her back and turned away for a moment."

After hearing a splash, the lifeguard turned, saw the child in the water and pulled her out, Miers said.

Megan had talked with the teacher and said that she was all right, then suddenly arched her back and went into convulsions, Miers said.

Someone gave her mouth-to-mouth resuscitation and had revived her by the time that paramedics arrived, but she went into full cardiac arrest in the ambulance, Miers said.

Luzerne County Coroner Dr. George Hudock has ruled Megan's death undetermined until test results come back in a few weeks.

There was no water in her lungs and no sign of negligence or injury, according to his report to Dallas Township police.

"She was a healthy, normal child," Hudock said.

He said that he is investigating the possibility that Megan may have had QT Syndrome, a congenital condition which causes convulsions, cardiac arrest and sudden, rapid death during some type of excitement.

Reflecting on his daughter's death, Mark Reilly said, "Megan was a typical four-year-old, a typical but special child."



BEST BUDDIES - Megan, Bridget and Matt Reilly recently posed for a photo with their pet greyhound, Bo.

Trolley, steamship were way to travel

Editor's Note: This is the second part of a two-part series about the people and history of Harveys Lake.

By GRACE R. DOVE
Post Staff

If it were possible to travel through time, a person from 50 years ago visiting Harveys Lake wouldn't believe his eyes.

The small community carved from pieces of Dallas, Lehman and Lake Township has grown from a quiet resort with development concentrated at Sunset, Sandy Beach and Hanson's to a bustling residential area with stately homes sandwiched in among older single-family houses, cottages and mobile homes.

When Wayne Smith lived on the Noxen Road in the late 1920's, only 35 people lived on his newspaper route at the lake's Point Breeze section. He delivered the Wilkes-Barre Record for 50¢ a month. Single copies were 3¢.

"Twenty-five years ago there were about 1,400 people living at the lake," he said. "Today there are about 1,400 homes here. There wasn't a big development boom - it came about gradually."

For most of its life as a destination, the lake was accessible only by train, trolley and winding roads through Idetown or Alderson; Route 415 didn't open until 1942.

"It was beautiful, just like Little House on the Prairie," said Smith's

wife, the former Marilyn Williams, who grew up in Idetown.

"On winter nights you couldn't see any lights from other homes."

Travel around the lake on land was often a challenge. It took a fire truck 25 minutes to go from Alderson to Shawanese on the dirt or cobblestone roads.

Smith and his wife met while working at the picnic grounds, later known as Hanson's amusement park.

"I sold tickets and he worked on the roller coaster," Marilyn Smith said. "He came down and flirted with me when he wasn't busy."

She grew up in Idetown, where the trolley came through carrying passengers between the lake and Wyoming Valley.

"When I was seven or eight years old, the biggest thrill of my life was riding the trolley to Kingston," she smiled. "The cars' seats could be turned to face either backwards or forwards. My mother, Ella Williams, would put me on at Idetown and my aunt, Ida Harris, would meet me at Rutter Ave. The fare was about 10 cents."

The Bowman's Creek branch of the Lehigh Valley Railroad also served Harveys Lake, reaching Alderson in just under an hour, and Noxen 14 minutes later.

One of Harveys Lake's main attractions for tourists was the old picnic grounds, established in 1891 by the Lehigh Valley Rail-

Steamboats seem romantic now. But they were noisy and dirty.

road for summer rail excursions.

In 1908 it became an amusement park, eventually purchased by the Hanson family and expanded to include a carousel, Ferris wheel, penny arcade, roller coaster, whip, Dodge cars, fun house and a miniature railroad.

For several years in the late 1940s and early 1950s, Hanson's also boasted a drive-in theater.

A high dive tower and wooden water slide dominated the beach area at Hanson's.

"The water slide - more like a chute which you slid down on small sleds - looked like a big ski jump ending in the water," Smith recalled. "Sometimes you got splinters, though."

The daily trains running through Harveys Lake from Wilkes-Barre to Towanda in the early 1920's ran in front of the Smith family's home near the Alderson crossing. Smith's uncle, Lang Hunsinger, loved to run out to the hill by the tracks and wave to the people in the passenger cars.

"One day when Lang was about five years old, his mother gave him some money and sent him to the store," Smith said. "On the

way, he ran up to the hill to see the trains like he always did, but he must have gone too far. He slipped and fell near the tracks, hitting his head on the passenger cars' steps, and died."

Begun in 1898, trolley service to the Oneonta Hotel in the lake's Sunset section was discontinued in mid-1931, a victim of the Great Depression.

Travelers rode to the end of the line at Idetown, where they boarded a bus for the ride down the Old Lake Road to the hotel.

Later that year trolley service between Dallas and Idetown was also discontinued, replaced by bus service to the lake until 1957.

The railroad line through Harveys Lake met a similar fate in 1963, when the Bowman's Creek branch to Noxen was abandoned after the timber, ice and tannery operations closed.

The lake's other popular transportation was by steamboat.

In its heyday at the turn of the century, the lake boasted four large passenger steamboats, the double-decked Natoma, the king-size Acoma, the Wilkes-Barre and the Kingston, named for two paddle-wheel boats which had once plied the Susquehanna River.

Smith's uncle, Raymond Smith, was pilot of the Natoma, the last big boat on the lake.

"Once or twice I snuck into the cabin and got a ride," Smith chuckled. "Boy, that was great!"

The steamboats' only downsides were noise and pollution. Residents filed a lawsuit against the Lake Transit Company in 1900 to curtail the "screeching" of steamboat whistles and the dumping of ashes from the boats' boilers into the lake.

The case was later dismissed from local court, according to Harveys Lake, by local historian F. Charles Petrillo.

The face of Harveys Lake has changed drastically over the past century, with new homes replacing older ones and fires destroying dance halls, hotels, shops, bathhouses, bowling alleys and restaurants at Sunset, Sandy Beach and the picnic grounds.

Marilyn Smith's favorite places, the skating rink at Sandy Beach and the Girl Scout camp where she was a lifeguard are only memories in books, faded photos and yellowed newspaper clippings.

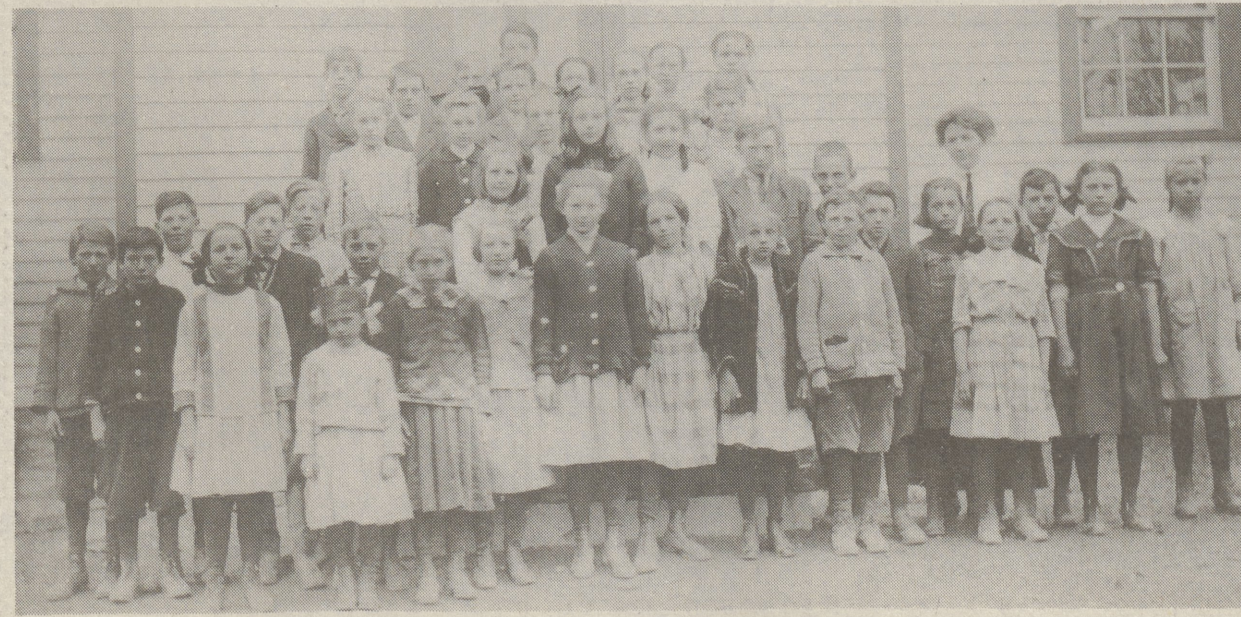


PHOTO COURTESY OF WAYNE SMITH

ONE-ROOM SCHOOLHOUSE AT LAKE - On this old postcard, children from Hourigan Hill School near Sandy Beach gather for a photo.

Related story on page 3

Red Cross blood drive

Tuesday, Aug. 2, 1-6 p.m., Fellowship Evangelical Free Church, Hildebrand Rd., Dallas.

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