

# Michael Davies makes 'Math Count' in statewide contest

By GRACE R. DOVE  
Post Staff

**DALLAS** - Eighth-grader Michael Davies likes math "because it has actual answers instead of ideas."

The son of Sally and Stevan Davies of Dallas, Michael recently finished second overall and third in the countdown round in the Math Counts competition held at Penn State Wilkes-Barre. He will compete in the statewide Math Counts March 15-16 in Carlisle.

"Some of the questions were hard - I couldn't imagine anyone getting the answers," he said.

He attended Math Counts with teammates Norah Krakosky, Amanda Jenkins and Morgan McOwen, alternates Jacob Swartwood and Heather Vodzak, and team coach Kathy Farrell.

The competition, mostly word problems which require the use of algebra to find a solution, consisted of four rounds.

In the Sprint Round, students individually answered 30 questions in 30 minutes, while in the Target Round they tackled two problems every six minutes for a total of eight problems.

The top 10 students from these

*"He's the smartest Math Counts student I've ever coached."*

**Kathy Farrell**  
Math Counts team coach

rounds made it to the Countdown Round, which Farrell described as "a very tense time." The students went one-on-one solving problems projected onto a screen, using only scratch work. No calculators were allowed. With an overall individual score that placed him second, Davies and Morgan McOwen, whose individual score was tenth, competed in this round. Davies finished third in the Countdown.

A sample problem from the team's workbook reads: "A basketball game has 32 minutes of playing time. What percent of the game is over if half of the remaining time is a third of the time played?"

The teams worked together during the Team Round to solve 10 questions in 20 minutes. "We tried to split up but we couldn't do the problems," Davies said. "We ended up working together. I got

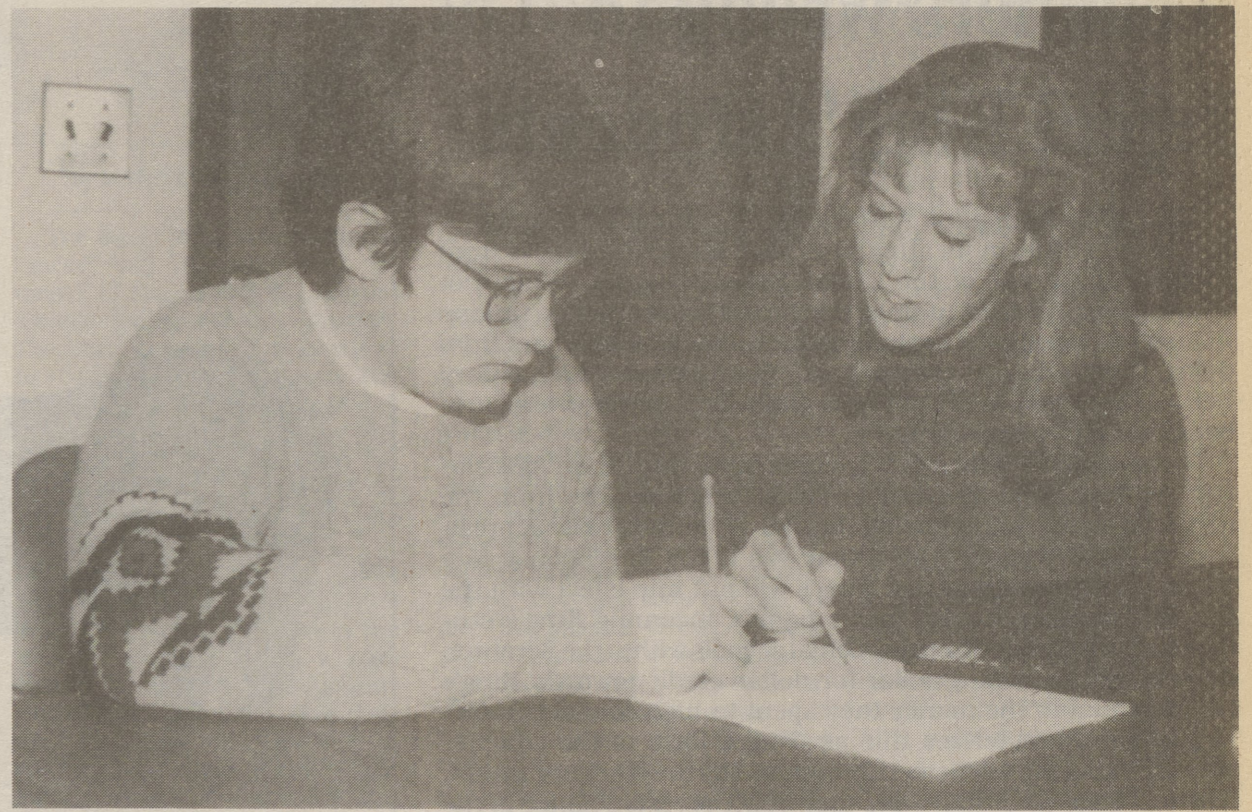
three answers, the other kids got two more and we filled in three more with guesses."

Preparation for the competition involved coming in Tuesdays and Thursdays at 7 a.m. for 45 minutes of practice before school started. For practice, the teams receive workbooks containing questions similar to those in the competition.

Davies, 13, takes high school Algebra 2 with a class of sophomores, holding a solid B average for the year. When he isn't answering his E-mail or working on Netscape or playing the CD-ROM games "Myst" or "Day of the Tentacle" (a cartoon game requiring the player to save the world from the terrible Tentacles) on the family's computer, he enjoys playing soccer and taking acoustic guitar lessons from Jason Santos. He also likes alternative music.

Farrell has coached the Dallas Middle School team for three years and was math team coach at Holy Saviour School for a year before coming to Dallas.

"Mike has a real knack for word problems," she said. "He's the smartest Math Counts student I've ever coached."



Michael Davies and math coach Kathy Farrell work on sample problems to prepare Michael for the statewide Math Counts competition. He came in second at the Math Counts competition recently held at Penn State Wilkes-Barre.

# Large lots back again in Franklin Twp. code

By GRACE R. DOVE  
Post Staff

**FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP** - After a heated discussion during a public hearing before the regular meeting, the supervisors adopted a controversial set of minimum lot sizes March 4 - the second since the new zoning ordinance was passed in December, 1995.

The amendments enlarged minimum lot sizes from two to three acres in agricultural (A-1) districts, from 1.5 to two acres in one-family residential (R-1) districts and from three to four acres in conservation (C-1) districts.

"It's not right when someone can tell me what to do with my land," said Larry Brace, whose family has owned 150 acres for more than 200 years. "You can do whatever you want with my property and I don't have a say in it. How many townships in Pennsylvania have three acres? A good real estate lawyer will chew this up!"

"The township doesn't need larger lot sizes," added Ted Dymond. "We already have some of the largest lot sizes in the Back Mountain."

"You're discriminating against the middle class," said Ann Marie McAvoy, owner of Chadsford Estates I and II. "At \$30,000 an acre, the only ones who will be able to afford land here are those with money, money, money."

Sandra and Bill Race gave the supervisors a letter objecting to the changes because the township didn't make any comprehensive studies justifying them and hasn't prepared a long-range plan defining what is best for the community for the next five to 20 years.

In addition, the township didn't give the residents proper notice of the proposed changes by placing signs notifying residents of the changes throughout the township.

"You are penalizing those who have previously acquired and held onto the largest tracts of land," they wrote. "You are financially crippling those same residents. A government should not confiscate a landowner's constitutional right to subdivide..."

*"At \$30,000 an acre, the only ones who will be able to afford land here are those with money, money, money."*

**Ann Marie McAvoy**  
Land developer

They added that concerns about septic systems contaminating wells can easily be prevented by the township denying building permits to owners of land where on-lot septic units aren't feasible.

"The primary reason for the larger lots is to protect the water from pollution," said Jay Futch, who presented a petition with 300 signatures favoring the larger lot sizes to the supervisors last year. "The last two planning commissions recommended the supervisors approve the larger lots. The majority of the people I spoke to were overwhelmingly for it."

After the meeting Futch said that the 300 signatures were from homeowners, not renters. "The township has about 500 homes. We surveyed about 300, or 60 percent, and only 10 or 12 people declined to sign the petition," he said.

Newly elected supervisor Martin Murray ran for office and won on a platform supporting larger lot sizes and protecting the water supply, he added.

"There are lots of areas in the township where you can build on one or two acres," said David Carpenter.

The supervisors passed the changes with Robert Redmond casting the lone dissenting vote. "This is an illegal action," he said. "When this township gets sued over this, I will hold (township solicitor) Susan Mazza, (planning commission solicitor) Charles McCormick, Martin Murray and Bill Miller personally responsible. Mr. McCormick says he thinks he can defend it in court. I will personally sue the four of you to recover the court costs to the township."



POST PHOTO/GRACE R. DOVE

## Surviving a piano lesson

Cast members of Lake-Lehman High School's production of *The Music Man* rehearsing the piano lesson scene are Kim Gaylord as Marian Paroo, Phillip Pineno as Winthrop, Joanna Oliver as Amaryllyis and Amanda Weber as Mrs. Paroo. Directed by drama teacher Jean Lipski and music teacher John Pineno, the play will be presented March 28-31 at 7:30 p.m., with a Sunday matinee at 3 p.m. Tickets are \$4 for adults and \$3 for children and are available at the door or from any cast member.

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