

Special school aims to save troubled students

By GRACE R. DOVE
Post Staff

DALLAS TOWNSHIP - When he first came to the alternative education program at the old Dallas Township school, Pete had been arrested for selling marijuana and was on probation.

He says he was negative, argued with his mother, yelled or talked back to adults and didn't do his chores at home.

"It's strange," the 14-year-old said. "I'm not like I used to be."

Pete is one of the 44 students enrolled in Luzerne Intermediate Unit, 18's innovative alternative education program, designed for at-risk students in grades seven through 12 who have had discipline and academic problems at their old schools.

"I was having a great time at Crestwood," Pete said, smiling ruefully. "I didn't know the police were watching me because someone had told them I was selling marijuana. They arrested me in school."

He was suspended from school for 10 days, placed on a year of juvenile probation, spent four weekends at St. Michael's School for Boys in Falls, sentenced to community service and referred to the alternative ed program. He performs his community service at the Mountaintop recycling plant near his home.

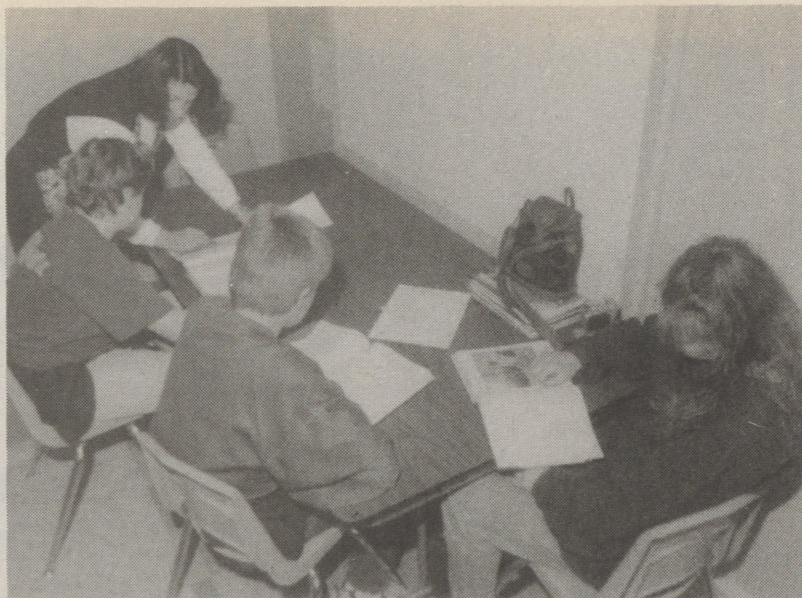
Now Pete has stopped arguing and talking back to his mother and regularly removes the trash at home, runs the sweeper upstairs, unloads the dishwasher and keeps his room clean. "Keeping my room clean takes a while," he said, smiling.

He says his parents are proud of his change in behavior. His four-year-old brother had been praying for him at his church youth group.

As long as he continues to keep his grades up and his behavior clean, he'll be allowed to return to

"First you stop the negative behavior, then change it by building on their positive attributes."

Steve Laidacker
Alternative Ed. principal



POST PHOTO/GRACE R. DOVE

Alternative education students at Luzerne Intermediate Unit 18's program at the old Dallas Township high school review their lessons during a class break.

If students need counseling or other support, they are referred to the appropriate social agencies.

The average student attends alternative ed classes for a semester, which can be extended to a full school year at the request of either the parent or the home district. A full year of classes costs the home district about \$5,000.

"It's money well spent," Laidacker said.

The program services the Dallas, Greater Nanticoke, Hanover Area, Wilkes-Barre, Wyoming Valley West, Pittston and Wyoming Area school districts. Seven Dallas students presently attend.

The three teachers hold valid state teaching certificates and are also state-certified in passive restraint techniques, CPR, first aid, behavioral management techniques and conflict resolution techniques.

Laidacker has expanded the teachers' training, commending the staff for its performance.

"We take a pro-active stance whenever possible," he said. The classes are small and very structured, with each ability group staying together all day long.

"Our students crave structure," Laidacker said. "It makes them feel safe. When they feel safe they can do their school work."

Although his program also has the right to expel students,

Laidacker says he'd rather have them attending school every day. "At least they're not out on the streets," he said.

Laidacker has been principal of the alternative ed program for the past nine weeks. Since he started, cursing in the building has decreased by about 75 percent and there have been no fights or incidents of students leaving school, Laidacker said.

"You must be realistic and expect a major fight, because that's what they are used to doing," he said. "But we let them know we don't tolerate this behavior."

Many of his students have problems because they haven't had stable, trustworthy adults in their lives and have learned not to trust them, Laidacker said.

"They have had very few successes in their lives and often lack even the ability to interact successfully with adults," he said.

His teachers constantly reinforce the students' positives to help them change their behavior.

"First you stop the negative behavior, then change it by building on their positive attributes," Laidacker said.

Ruggles UM to host breakfast May 19

Ruggles United Methodist Church, Rt. 29, behind Harveys Lake, will host an All-U-Can-Eat-Breakfast, Sunday, May 19, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Adults \$4.50, children \$3.50. Free under five years.

Developments on Rte. 118 on county planners' docket

The Luzerne County Planning Commission will consider the following requests at its May 9 meeting:

Sterlyn D. May, RR #3, Box 100-B, Hunlock Creek, PA, requests the rezoning of a property on the northeast corner of the intersection of PA Rt. 118 and Macri Rd., 1.31 acres in Lake Township, from an Agricultural (A-1) District to a Community Business (B-2) District, to build a carwash.

They are also seeking final plan approval for the 2,688 sq. ft. car wash, served by on-lot water and

septic. A performance bond, acceptable to the county engineer and solicitor, will be required.

Jack and Maureen Moran, Developers of the Guaranty Bank Land Development in Lake Township, are seeking final plan approval to convert an existing block building into a bank branch office on 1.23 acres of land at the northwest corner of Rt. 118 and Rt. 29. The site will be served by on-lot water and septic and is zoned Highway Business (B-3) District. A performance bond, acceptable to the county engineer and solicitor, will be required.

Cleanups go through May 11

Area municipalities have scheduled their spring clean-ups to be held May 6-11. In **Kingston Township** the site will be the maintenance garage on East Center Street, Shavertown, Mon. through Fri., 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Sat. 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Residents with full size vans, pick-up trucks and trucks larger than a regular pick-up truck will be required to obtain an admission coupon from the municipal building, Mon. through Fri. 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Coupons for the full size vans and pick-up trucks are free of charge and are limited to one per township residence. Coupons for trucks larger than pick-up trucks, such as U-Haul vans, small dump trucks and stake body trucks, are available for a fee of \$85. Proof of residency such as a tax bill or drivers license is required to receive a coupon.

Washers, dryers, furnaces, stoves, refrigerators, water heaters or other large appliances, household garbage, recyclable materials, commercial construction debris, or medical wastes will not be accepted. Tires are limited to two per residence. No toxic substances such as paint, solvents, fertilizers or automotive fluids will be accepted.

Residents with passenger cars or other vehicles not described above must show proof of residency to police officers on duty at the entrance to the clean-up. Police officers will also collect the admission coupons at the entrance.

For more information call the Kingston Township Municipal Office at 696-3809.

In **Dallas Township**, the site will be behind the municipal building, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. weekdays and 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday. Proof of Dallas Twp. residency is required at time of drop off. There will be a service charge of \$5 for large items such as carpets, overstuffed chairs, couches, dressers, stoves, washers, dryers, TV's, refrigerators, water heaters, tanks, freezers etc.

There is charge for tires: \$2 each, only two per household allowed. There will also be a charge for the following type vehicle loads: pickups with 8 ft. boxes \$20; pickups with 6 ft. boxes \$15; mini pick-ups \$15 and tag-a-long trailers \$20. Larger trucks will be charged according to size.

The following items will not be accepted for disposal: hazardous wastes, chemicals, brush, tree stumps, cinder blocks, animal or human waste, shingles, sheet rock or other building materials, leaves, grass, garbage or newspapers.

In **Dallas Borough**, the collection site will be behind the Borough garage, 25 Main St., between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. weekdays and Saturday, 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. Proof of residency is required.

Acceptable items will include washers, dryers, stoves, water heaters, refrigerators and air conditioners without freon in cooling systems. There will be a charge of \$10 for all "white appliances" brought to the collection site. A \$5 fee will be charged for mattresses and box springs.

Tires off the rims will be accepted at \$2 each. Residents unable to bring large appliances to the site may make arrangements to have a curb side pick up by the Public Works Department by calling the office no later than noon May 7.

Residents with more than one pick up truck full of items will be charged \$15 a load.

Items not acceptable include garbage, yard waste, toxic materials, asbestos, construction debris, paint in cans, sealed containers, batteries and ashes.

Residents having any questions may contact the Borough Office at 675-1389, 9 a.m. to noon weekdays.

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May 8, 1996

Dear BlueCross & First Priority Health Customers:

There is no doubt that today's health care environment is constantly evolving. Rapid consolidation and significant changes in the market for health services require us to explore new and different ways to align ourselves with partners to best meet customer needs.

In response to these challenges, I am pleased to announce that the boards of Capital BlueCross and BlueCross of Northeastern Pennsylvania have entered into an "intent to merge" agreement. We are joining forces to better serve our customers in Northeastern and Central Pennsylvania and the Lehigh Valley. As we proceed, however, please be assured that we remain committed to providing the highest quality of service to all of our customers.

The new organization will build upon our common strengths to continue to provide you with tremendous value, quality, choice and innovative products and services that you have come to expect from BlueCross. Individually, we understand the needs of the people of Northeastern and Central Pennsylvania and the Lehigh Valley, and we will work to combine that knowledge to better serve our customers.

This is an exciting time for all of us and we hope that you share our enthusiasm about this partnership. We have a strong and committed management team supported by a dedicated workforce ready to meet your needs. Let me reiterate that the expertise and service you have come to expect in our organizations will continue throughout this transition and into the future.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Ward
President & CEO
BlueCross of Northeastern Pennsylvania

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• Director, Maureen Judge Devine, BS degree Elementary/Early Childhood Education and former director of Wilkes-Barre YMCA Youth, Preschool and Aquatic programs.

Registration also being accepted for Fall 96-97 School Year Program. Limited Space Available

**183A North Main St.
Shavertown, PA 18708
675-3180**