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

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## New school building will run \$6-\$7 million

By GRACE R. DOVE  
Post Staff

**DALLAS** - If the school board follows through on plans to build a new elementary school, either at the site of the present Westmoreland building or on the 100-acre campus off Hildebrandt Road, it will cost about \$6-\$7 million.

Renovating the existing Westmoreland School could cost \$2 million, of which the state will reimburse only about \$1.4 million, said Paul Degillio of Quad Three Group, the engineering firm

that has been investigating options for the district. The building was last renovated in 1977.

Erecting a new school at the eight-acre Westmoreland site poses several problems, Degillio added. Only about five acres are usable because the site has been carved out of a hillside. The state recommends that a school of this size be built on 14 acres, he said.

Enlarging the site by purchasing or acquiring an additional 6.5 acres from three adjoining parcels through eminent domain could add another \$1.5 million, which includes \$400,000 for site

*"It doesn't matter where you decide to build - it will still cost the same."*

Paul Degillio  
Quad Three Group

preparation and approximately \$800,000 to buy the land, to the tab.

Erecting a new building on the Conyngham Ave. campus, which has enough space for it, would centralize all the schools and give

the district flexibility to rearrange the grades in each building if necessary. "The district would also earn money from the sale of the Westmoreland site," Degillio added.

The district could also consider building an elementary school on the 10-acre site presently housing the administrative offices and the former Dallas Township School, which is now used for an alternative education program by Luzerne Intermediate Unit 18.

"It doesn't matter where you decide to build - it will still cost the same," Degillio said, during

his presentation to the board at a work session Monday night.

The state will reimburse a new administrative building or a swimming pool, as long as they are included in the elementary school building plan, Degillio said. It will also reimburse approximately 38 percent of any necessary land acquisition costs. Present state reimbursement rates for construction average between 25 and 35 percent of the total cost.

Dallas was reimbursed 33 percent of the total cost for its last renovations, according to superintendent Gerald Wycallis.

Of the two dozen people in the audience, many said they preferred not to comment on the figures, at least until the regular July 8 board meeting.

"I think they should build two buildings for kindergarten through sixth grade side by side," said Donna Gurgel.

"No matter what the board decided, we're still pushing for a swimming pool," said Kingston resident Matt Stretansky, the swim coach. "The architects said it's a reimbursable expense."

The board hasn't said when it plans to select a building option.

## DA files criminal charge in tot's death

By GRACE R. DOVE  
Post Staff

**DALLAS** - District Attorney Peter Paul Olszewski charged Monday that Dr. Joseph Mazula was grossly negligent in his treatment of 3-year-old Jonathan Walski, who died under his care two months ago.

Because, according to an arrest affidavit, he failed to provide or use the most basic monitoring equipment while Jonathan was under anesthesia in the office of Dr. William Watkins, Mazula has been charged with involuntary manslaughter and faces the possibility of spending up to 10 years in jail if convicted.

Mazula is the first dentist in the state to face a charge of manslaughter in connection with the death of a patient.

Represented by attorney Thomas Munley, he was arraigned Monday before District Justice James Tupper on one count of involuntary manslaughter, a felony which carries a maximum

See MAZULA, pg 2



## AWESOME SCIENCE

Fred Schaefer, a professor at College Misericordia, had the rapt attention of Girl Scouts during a demonstration for Girl Scouts at

Frances Slocum Park last week. Neighborhood 75 held programs at the park the last two weeks.

POST PHOTO: CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK

## Sewage in yard is a mystery

By GRACE R. DOVE  
Post Staff

**LEHMAN TOWNSHIP** - Oak Hill resident Gert Evans has sewage running through her back yard, but no one seems to know where it's coming from.

She first noticed the problem in early May, when everything in her yard was still soaking wet despite the hot, dry weather. The ground was soggy near her rear property line and water lay in her vegetable garden and under the bird feeder.

"One day I came home from work and found the side of my house covered with huge black barn flies," she said. "I've been around horse barns and know these flies congregate around only one thing. Sometimes you can smell it."

She can't cut the grass behind the swing set because the ground is too spongy. Water covered with a glossy film runs from a white plastic pipe in the lot behind hers across her property line and through her yard and garden.

After she noticed the problem, her dog, Princess, became sick. Gert blames the water in the yard.

See SEWAGE, pg 8



PEL members include, from left, seated: John Levitski, Bernard Banks, Paul Skrzysowski, Robert Edgerton. Standing, Guthrie Conyngham, Eugene Pelesh, Jack Burke, Ron Knouse.

## Working for efficiency in government at all levels

By JACK HILSHER  
Post Correspondent

**BACK MOUNTAIN** - Did you know that the phrase "Looking For a Few Good Men" applies to more than just the Marines? The Pennsylvania Economy League (PEL for short) is also looking, but they'd like a few more than a few, say a dozen or two, and either men or women... particularly from the Back Mountain.

Their '96 membership campaign is now in full swing, and Bob Parker of Oak Hill, PEL's Director of Development, says, "One third of our Luzerne County Committee are from the Back Mountain and we'd like more from that

*"They do their homework, and their costs are always within reason."*

Bob Richardson  
Dallas, PEL member

area. We know what's out there in terms of concern and involvement, and that's what makes us tick."

The League celebrated its 60th Anniversary on June 11 with a banquet in Harrisburg. Nonprofit and nonpartisan, it has more than 1,000 individuals, businesses and institutions who are members of

this state-wide research organization. No public funds are used by PEL. Their efforts are fueled half from membership contributions and half from payment for various projects.

Those efforts are far-reaching. They get results, and the *Citizen's Voice* called PEL "highly-respected" recently, yet sometimes it seems to be a well-kept secret as far as the general public is concerned.

Not so many community levels. Greater Wilkes-Barre Partnership's Stephen Barrouk says, "PEL is different from others. I knew about them even back in my Pittsburgh days. Their data is always good and sound. You get a lot of information, more than your money's worth, and they do a lot of good both statewide and locally."

See ECONOMY LEAGUE, pg. 3

## Lake-Lehman budget could have been lower

By ANN POEPPERLING  
Post Correspondent

**LEHMAN TWP.** - School board members could have knocked off another three mills from the final 23 mill tax hike, but the larger budget passed by a 5 to 4 vote.

The final 1996-97 budget of \$16,385,280 raises the millage in Luzerne County to 213 mills, a 12% increase, and raises the millage in an Inzen Township to 108 mills, an increase of 18 mills, or 20%.

At a committee-of-the-whole meeting preceding the regular meeting the discussion revolved around three possible cuts or com-

binations thereof. They included:

- the elimination of hiring a new elementary guidance counselor at a salary of about \$45,000 including benefits,
- eliminating an elementary gifted teacher at a salary of about \$42,000,
- eliminating the sports training athletic program (STAR) at the high school costing about \$16,000.

"The millage could have been reduced by several combinations, as low as 20 and 17, (Luzerne County and Wyoming County, respectively) by eliminating those three things, to as high as 23 and 18, by keeping everything, which

is what the board decided," said business manager Ray Bowersox later.

"I think their feeling was let's put the money in there and later if we can try to find ways to save through modifying the above three projects as well as others listed on the agenda, then we can put that money in a reserve," he said.

Sandy Rhodes voted yes to the full 23 mill hike along with the majority because he feels strongly about the need for a second elementary guidance counselor and an elementary gifted program outside the classroom. "The STAR program I can take or leave at this point," he said. "However, it's

helped a lot of kids with injuries from getting more serious."

"Another reason I went for the 23 mills is that I know those unfunded 1997 early retirements are still out there and I would like to see a reserve."

Rhodes continued, "I voted yes, but I'm not happy with the process. I need to know what I'm voting for," referring to the need for financial information generated from a computer by the line item method.

"I talked to the board and got the consensus that we feel very frustrated that budget informa-

See BUDGET, pg 8

### Everybody wins

Back Mountain teams off to strong start in District 16 baseball, softball playoffs. Pg 9

### Two-by-two

Lehman United Methodist Bible school learns about Noah's Ark. Photos, pg 8.

### INDEX

14 Pages	2 Sections
Calendar.....	14
Classified.....	12-13
Crossword.....	14
Editorials.....	4
Obituaries.....	12
School.....	11
Sports.....	9-10

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