



Dr. Robert Szulborski examined the eyes of a New Guinea native in the back of a truck. Szulborski spent two weeks in New Guinea performing eye exams and procedures using 40-year-old technology. The area he visited was too remote to allow modern machinery to be brought in.

## New Guinea

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surgical assistant, made it to Port Moresby, the capital of New Guinea. "We weren't sure what to expect," said Szulborski. "You always hear about 'rascals' in the country, but we didn't encounter any of that."

They were now in a completely different place than they had ever been before. "It was a beautiful countryside," remembers Szulborski.

The rough, mountainous terrain along with the dense rainforest keeps people remote from one another. "There are 700 different languages there. Due to the terrain, tribes don't come in contact with each other very much," explained Szulborski.

Yet, there are tribal wars. "They only bury soldiers, everyone else is cremated. I saw a soldier's grave that was dated only a couple months before I got there," said Szulborski.

They visited the small hospital in Port Moresby and picked up medical supplies. "The hospital had to be surrounded with a barbed wire fence. People have so little there and while the hospital doesn't have much more, it does have more," explained Szulborski. An Australian doctor served as their translator at the hospital.

After a short stay in the capital city, the two set out to Ialibu, a remote town in the southern highlands of New Guinea, just south of the equator. "We were up 6,000

*"Due to the wars, many people had been hit in the eyes with spears and arrows in battle."*

Dr. Robert Szulborski  
Dallas

feet in the rainforest. It was very mountainous terrain. Since we were up so high it wasn't too hot, no mosquitos," said Szulborski. He said New Guinea has a population of approximately four million people and has only six eye doctors. Szulborski and Koslosky stopped and checked people's eyes on the road to Ialibu.

"Some people traveled two or three days to see us. Unfortunately, we missed seeing many people due to communication difficulties and time constraints," said Szulborski. "Due to the wars, many people had been hit in the eyes with spears and arrows in battle. Usually the wounds were old, so we couldn't do anything for them."

The number of people who actually received cataract surgery was lower than they expected, but Szulborski says they examined more than 90 patients and taught doctors and hospital staff how to perform their own examinations.

The doctor and assistant performed the relatively low-maintenance

cataract surgery with techniques employed 40 years earlier. "It was interesting to do in those circumstances," said Szulborski of his experience with such simple means.

Szulborski described the people he met as very friendly and always ready to mug for the camera. He also found the mixture of old and new interesting. "We came upon a traditional ceremony called a 'Sing Sing.' It takes place when one tribe pays back a long standing debt to another tribe. It was not staged for our benefit," he said of the week-long ceremony. During the ceremony, certain members of the tribes dress in traditional outfits, complete with brightly colored face paint, colored wigs and exquisite jewelry created from their surroundings.

"It was interesting to see a ceremony that their tribe was doing 500 years ago. When it started to rain a few people pulled out modern umbrellas and one man was drinking a Coke," observed Szulborski.

While in Ialibu, Szulborski stayed in the only metal building in the town. Villagers live in grass huts with no running water or electricity.

## Classes

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year is being looked upon as a year to take less challenging classes as a break.

"Students are taking a significant number of electives that are not preparing them for the next step (college)," Oliver feels. "There are basic skills besides reading, writing, and computing that are necessary to function in an organized manner."

The exception to this rule would be if students have a legitimate academic reason by which they cannot fit these classes in their schedules. For example, students taking a significant number of AP classes or electives geared toward their major will have the opportunity to waive these classes. Oliver

*"The senior year needs to have an academic focus."*

John Oliver  
Lake-Lehman HS principal

explained, "If students have an appropriately challenging schedule, then we will look to accommodate" through case-by-case examinations.

Although the controversy has died down, students still have mixed opinions. "With the classes I'm taking now, the addition of the electives will probably end up hurting me because of the heavy

load I'll have to deal with next year," said junior Val Fiore.

Also opposing the new requirements, Nathan Bendik, a junior, believes that it's not right to force certain classes on people, and "an unjust class is no class at all."

Other students tend to agree with Oliver. "I do think it's a good idea to have Contemporary Issues because people need to know the issues going on today," said Dusty Rhodes. "Also, it's a good idea that you can waive those classes if your schedule is tough."

Oliver will test this new curriculum through a one-year pilot to see how it works. "We're trying to make it a worthwhile experience."

## Belshazzar's Feast

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congregation — a good mix of younger and older people, but you wouldn't know they were older by the way they move around."

Only one person solved the mystery, and that was mostly by luck, Bohm said. In the end, the king was struck down by his own hand. Having poisoned his wife's cup, hoping to continue his lecherous ways, Belshazzar mistakenly picked it up and drank from it.



POST PHOTO/JENNIFER JUDGE  
Doug Yeager, foreground and Andrew Dale provided musical accompaniment for Belshazzar's Feast.

## Vo-Tech honor roll

Elizabeth J. Ellis, Principal, West Side Area Vocational-Technical School has announced the names of Back Mountain students that were placed on the honor roll for the third marking period.

Grade 9 - High Honors: Matthew Pockevich.

Grade 9 - Honors: Melissa Park. Grade 10 - High Honors: Mindy Belles, Stephanie Newton, Roger Park.

Grade 11 - Highest Honors: Nancy Schmidle.

Grade 11 - High Honors: Susan Smith.

Grade 11 - Honors: Michael Ely, Melissa Murphy.

Grade 12 - Honors: Doreen Mouse.

## Propeller

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purchased from them at a yard sale by Gary Evans. The Protective Association purchased it from Evans to use as a monument.

The Natoma was a double-decker coal powered steamship. DeBalko noted that the propeller was handmade. "It's quite large and heavy," he said. "It was cast iron so the junk value is probably very small." DeBalko said he doesn't know why someone would steal it.

The propeller was spotted in the lake soon after it was stolen. A diver spotted it near Our Lady of Victory Church, but before the

Luzerne County Dive Team could be called in to retrieve the propeller, it was gone, DeBalko admits. "It's like looking for a needle in a haystack. The lake is rather large and 100 feet deep."

The board passed a resolution in support of the call for the return of the propeller and pledged support of the Harveys Lake Police in the recovery of the propeller and the prosecution of the thieves. DeBalko urges anyone who may have information regarding the propeller to contact the police department.

## Shavertown Auxiliary to hold bake sale

The Shavertown Ladies Auxiliary is having a Hoagie and Bake Sale Election Day May 20 at the fire hall, Main Street, Shavertown. Deadline for orders is May 12. Call 675-4514.

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