



The Dallas Post

50 Cents

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

Vol. 109 No. 18

Dallas, Pennsylvania

May 6 thru May 12, 1998

Change in state law may save taxes on school construction

By KYLIE SHAFFERKOETTER
Post Staff

DALLAS - Three weeks after the Dallas School District agreed to pay a 45 percent commission to a company that recovers sales taxes improperly paid on construction projects, the State Legislature has passed a bill that could avert payment of the taxes in the first place.

Neither Gil Griffiths, superintendent of schools, or Dave Munroe, a tax consultant for Chartwell Advisory Group, was aware of the change in tax collection,

which has the potential to make Chartwell's services unnecessary. But Griffiths said the district would continue with the agreement.

"I don't think it will change anything because of the contingency. A lot of the contractors won't know (about the bill). By the time our building is built, we will probably make a significant amount of money (from Chartwell's services)," he said.

The district broke ground on the \$10 million Gerald J. Wycallis Elementary School Monday. Quandel Group Inc. is

"The contract prices would be lower. It would save the district and the taxpayers money."

Joe Chicora
Project manager, Quandel Group Inc.

the general contractor.

Joe Chicora, a project manager for Quandel, was not aware the bill passed,

but said it would give districts a six percent reduction in construction costs. "The contract prices would be lower. It would save the district and the taxpayers money," said Chicora, who is not the Dallas district's project manager, but works with other districts.

Chicora said approximately 50 percent of the districts he works for use Chartwell or similar companies to get their sales tax refunds. "There is a lot of paperwork involved. Getting the money back isn't easy on a big project. The administrators use these companies be-

cause they just don't have the time," he said.

Chicora, who knew the bill was under discussion, said Quandel will probably take advantage of the bill's provisions once the company is formally informed of them.

Contractors are charged sales tax on items that will be a permanent part of a building, such as boilers or bricks. Munroe said Chartwell serves 230 school districts in the state.

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POST PHOTO/CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK

Wow!

John Thompson, left, was astounded by a rotating solar system model at the Dallas Elementary School science fair, sponsored by

the school's parent-teacher group. Behind John, from left, Max Spencer, Kaitlin Evans and Anthony Macri. More photos on page 8.

Ground broken for Wycallis elementary school

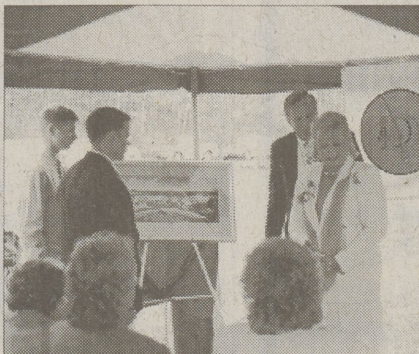
By KYLIE SHAFFERKOETTER
Post Staff

DALLAS - The long-anticipated groundbreaking for the Gerald J. Wycallis Elementary School, held Monday night, was an emotional event. The large group made up of administrators, board members, faculty and parents, remembered the former superintendent, who lost a battle to cancer in January, 1997 at the age of 51.

"Tonight is a night of celebration... The site is within the confines of the campus and is an addition we will be proud of," Gil

Griffiths, superintendent of schools told the crowd.

"It gives me great pleasure to be here tonight with Mrs. (Judith) Wycallis and family. Gerry was a very important person in my life and the Dallas School District's. The



Judith Wycallis, right, spoke during Monday's groundbreaking ceremonies. Her children, J.J. and Matt, stood at left.

greatest honor is that his name will live on forever and that the direction of the building is overseen by a gentleman whose name is on the building," he said.

"We've gone through the sad times. Now we start renewal and look forward to the

completion of the Wycallis building in Aug. 1999."

Board president John Litz said that Wycallis was a real leader and the district was very fortunate to have had him.

Gerald Wycallis spent 25 years in the district, serving first as principal of Dallas Elementary School. He was appointed interim superintendent in 1984, then elected to the post by a 5-4 vote. But he was known as much for his public service as his work, volunteering with youth sports

See SCHOOL, pg 2

Dallas math students are tops in national contest

By KYLIE SHAFFERKOETTER
Post Staff

DALLAS - After four grueling tests, the scores are in and Dallas High School's math team is ranked number one among 200 private and public high schools in the entire United States.

"This is the first time the math team competed in a national contest. They secured first place in the advanced math test by a solid five points. "It's a great way to end my senior year," said Jeff Faneck.

Although the test scores are posted on the Internet, the results were not confirmed for about a week. Jeff's mother, Jeanne, was concerned. "I keep worrying they're going to find some glitch in the score. I wish we knew for sure," she said.

But, Scott Saba, math team supervisor, confirmed the score. "I thought we would rank high,

"I'm so excited for the kids. They were the ones who put in the work."

Scott Saba
Dallas math teacher

but I didn't think we would get number one," said Saba, with a grin on his face. "I'm so excited for the kids. They were the ones who put in the work."

There are almost 30 juniors and seniors on the team. They met once a week with Saba to study for the tests.

"It gives them a sense of accomplishment and pride. They are the best," Saba said.

Two hundred schools from all

See MATH, pg 8



Dallas High math team, from left, first row; Beth Carey, Michelle Jayne, Stacey Wagner, Sarah Williams, Aileah Kvashay, Stephanie Potisek, Virginia Leah Sarti. Second row; Thomas Swartwood, Jacey Peterson, Jennifer Vodzak, Rose Alaimo, Michael Cleary, Kristyn Race. Third row; Anthony Luizza, Jeffrey Faneck, William Piasta, Amy Samuels, Janine Chalk, Segun Millington, Scott Saba, instructor. Fourth row; Brian Blase, David Williams, Chad Newell, Erik Steltz, Jason Vodzak, Ken Hoover, Chris Schneider. Absent, Brenda Karavitch.

Mundy wins hike in women's health funds

By KYLIE SHAFFERKOETTER
Post Staff

BACK MOUNTAIN - The numbers are not adding up for health care programs designed to help "working poor" women in Luzerne County and across the state. With a continual increase of poor patients and annual decrease of funds, women's health care and family planning for those hovering around the poverty line are in a crunch.

State representative Phyllis Mundy is making family planning and women's health care a priority. After the House voted down Mundy's \$6 million dollar budget proposal for women's health care and alternative to abortion programs, she renegotiated and won \$1 million for each.

"It's remarkable we got the additional money," said Mundy. Remarkable because there are many people who oppose funding for family planning for many reasons.

"There are people who do not believe in birth control. There are people opposed to any money going to such groups as Planned Parenthood because one of the services they provide is counseling and one of the options (included in the counseling) is abor-

"If women and children are a priority, this should be a priority in the budget."

State Rep. Phyllis Mundy
D - 120th District

tion. Others were concerned about taking money from tourism and marketing and putting it into family planning," she explained.

When designing a budget, representatives must take money from a line item to finance other items. Mundy chose tourism and marketing because Luzerne County received only \$22,000 for tourism last year.

"A lot of areas of the state rely on tourism. If I thought Luzerne County relied heavily on that money I would have taken it from somewhere else," said Mundy.

Mundy believes there is a large number of working women who simply cannot afford health insurance or a doctor's care.

"I see women who are trying to get off welfare and trying to be responsible. Maybe they've found

See WOMEN'S HEALTH, pg 5

Neighbors oppose office in R-1 zone

DALLAS TWP. - People who live on Center Hill Rd. are petitioning against the issuance of a special exception for Edward Hartman who wants to move his insurance office to an existing house on an R-1 lot. Despite the fact that professional offices can be in a residential area with zoning board approval, the neighbors want to keep their street strictly residential.

"Everyone I talked to does not want an office there. We want to keep it all residential," said Eva Ryan, who lives next door to the house and lot that are for sale. "Since it's an insurance agency, you know people will be coming and going."

Ryan said a petition has just started circulating to homes around the neighborhood.



Edward Hartman wants to put his insurance office in this house on E. Center Hill Rd.

See ZONE, pg 2

Looking good

Dallas and Lake-Lehman Indoor Color Guards place well at championships. Pg 2.

On track

Lake-Lehman boys track team is having an outstanding season. Photos, pg 9.

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