

52nd Annual Back Mountain Memorial Library Auction
 Thursday-Sunday, July 9-12
 Special Section Inside



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Teens work together to learn tolerance

By KYLIE SHAFFERKOETTER
 Post Staff

DALLAS - With the drum beats pounding in the air, students tried their best to learn traditional African dances. Some got it right away, others found their feet going in opposite directions. After tripping and turning red in front of each other, they became friends.

Forty students from 10 area schools participated in the Diversity Institute Leadership Camp at College Misericordia the last week in June.



JACKLYN WALKOWIAK

Four students from each school were chosen by an application process and each school paid \$1,000 to participate. Students stayed on campus for the week of June 22.

Wyoming Seminary students Jaelyn Walkowiak and Veronica McRipley were the only Back Mountain students to take part.

The dance the first day played out as a metaphor for the week to follow. As students discussed issues — everything from awareness of their own prejudices to conflict resolution and how to communicate — some understood right away, others tripped over ideas a bit, sometimes to their own embarrassment. But, they stayed together as a group of friends working through problems, even if awkward at first.

This is the camp's first year. Dr. Linda Trompeter, asst. academic dean of College Misericordia, is also the director of the Diversity Institute, which holds seminars to promote multicultural relations all over Northeast PA. She said the camp has been in the works for a couple of years.

"We really wanted to do something regionally. There are so many issues in northeastern Pennsylvania. We are losing many talented people because they don't feel (wanted) here," said Trompeter.

"Students were exposed to all diversity in the camp. Everything from class and race to physical/mental abilities and sexual orientation," she said.

During the six-day camp, students participated in interactive programs with titles like, "Four Questions, Cycle of Oppression," "Workshop on Diversity," "Leadership and Critical Thinking Skills," and "Conflict Resolution Peace Center."

"These help in eliminating prejudice and increasing

See DIVERSITY, pg 12

Garden sets scene for stories, strengthens a neighborhood



POST PHOTO/CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK

Dr. Anthony Mussari and Kathleen "Kitch" Mussari relaxed in Windsor Park, which they created on a vacant lot next to their home.

By JENNIFER JUDGE
 Post Correspondent

DALLAS TWP. - What do you do when the lot adjacent to your house is used as a neighborhood dump? Just ask Dr. Anthony and Kathleen "Kitch" Loftus Mussari, residents of Windsor Drive in Orchard View Terrace.

The couple bought a nearby lot, previously used for dumping by a contractor and developed Windsor Park, a series of flower gardens that one visitor to the park called "a living memorial."

Visit Windsor Park and stand in the top garden completed in 1996. Daylilies sway in the wind. Black-eyed Susans cluster in a circular bed next to purple coneflowers and ornamental grasses. Honeysuckle bushes heavy with berries provide refuge

"There's an old saying, 'To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow.'"

Dr. Anthony Mussari
 Co-creator of Windsor Park

for the numerous varieties of birds that call Windsor Park home. A few strategically placed benches provide places to just sit and watch. From the upper garden, there is a breathtaking view of the valley below.

"The idea was that you have an incredible collage of colors," Tony Mussari explained. "It's a peaceful, serene place where people can collect their thoughts." Tony and Kitch designed the garden themselves,

with the idea that it would look like an English country garden, made up of "rooms."

Achieving this goal was no easy task. The Mussaris took out 22 truckloads of refuse. Only one tree grew on the site, which they chose to leave in place. The lower gardens were completed in 1997.

"We took what was an eyesore and made it beautiful," he said. And what began as one family's attempt to beautify a neighborhood has provoked the interest of the community. "Any neighbor who wants to plant something leaves it in a paper bag with their name on it near the spot where they want it planted and we plant it for them."

So why would anyone take the time to

See WINDSOR PARK, pg 12

Too soon to consider tax reform

By KYLIE SHAFFERKOETTER
 Post Staff

DALLAS - The Dallas School Board now knows what its options are with regards to newly implemented state tax reforms, the optional local tax system and the Homestead Act. But it's much too early to say board members will recommend changes in how taxes are collected.

The new system could eliminate nuisance taxes, such as the per-capita tax and occupational privilege tax, and increase earned income tax up to 1.5 percent. To offset the income tax increase, up to half the value of primary residences in the district could be freed from property taxes.

At its regular meeting Monday, the board heard a presentation by

See TAX REFORM, pg 3

Fields deal still in works

By KYLIE SHAFFERKOETTER
 Post Staff

DALLAS - The compromise agreement between the Dallas School District and property owners who opposed construction of two athletic fields behind the high school is getting the final touches.

"We have reached an agreement in principle. Now we are trying to put together a stipulation that wraps up the agreement," said Atty. Bruce Phillips, who represents the majority of property owners.

"It's not all spelled out yet. I hope we will wrap it up in the next couple of weeks. There are a lot of particulars that need to be spelled out."

In the agreement, the district will leave many existing trees to provide screening for the fields. Also, a chain link fence will surround the fields.

About 20 neighboring property owners, including Phillips, who represents most of the group, filed a lawsuit in December, 1997. Atty. Ted Krohn also represents some of the property owners.

The action stated that the township did not properly advertise or post the property informing residents of the possible interpretation of the zoning ordinance. Also, it questioned whether a variance on the setback was handled correctly. A setback of 100 feet is indicated in the zoning ordinance, but the school district was granted a variance to build the fields closer to the property line.

After the neighbors opposed the field, it became known that some of them had built gardens and structures on district land.

New pastor joins Dallas United Methodist 'family'

By KYLIE SHAFFERKOETTER
 Post Staff

DALLAS - Rev. William D. Lewis has wasted no time easing into his new job. On his first day, the new pastor of Dallas United Methodist Church conducted a funeral and visited members of his new congregation in the hospital.

On July 1, Rev. Lewis officially was moved to Dallas after Rev. Michael Bealla, who was with the church for 10 years, was moved to the Binghamton area. The Bishop decides when changes should be made and moves pastors accordingly.

Rev. Lewis admits it's difficult to leave the Forty Fort United Methodist Church where he has worked for 12 years. But, he looks forward to meeting his new

congregation and forming relationships.

"Being a pastor, you're deeply involved in people's lives. After 12 years you get to know everyone. You're a pastor of the people of that church. It's like leaving a family for a new family," he explained.

He recognizes that these feelings are similar for everyone involved. "This particular congregation is feeling the pain of losing a pastor they've had for 10 years. They wonder, 'Who is this fellow?' It's sort of like an arranged marriage. They wonder what I am like and I wonder what they are like and we know it has to work out because it's already been arranged."

See DALLAS UMC, pg 3



Ready for the auction

Amanda Rose Carson, granddaughter of library auction volunteer Ernie Ashbridge, tried out a carousel horse that will be sold at the 52nd annual event. The auction takes place Thursday through Sunday. See the special section inside for all the details.

POST PHOTO/CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK

■ **Too noisy?**
 Sutton Hills resident says barking dogs are a nuisance, asks for ordinance, Pg 2.

■ **Uphill racers**
 Dave Beccaris and Dr. Alan Boonin race for glory ... and for charity, Sports.

INDEX

32 Pages, 2 Sections
 Calendar.....8
 Classified.....10-11
 Crossword.....8
 Editorials.....4
 Obituaries.....10
 School.....7
 Sports.....9

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