



# The Dallas Post

50 Cents

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POST PHOTO/CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK

## Smack!

Westmoreland School Principal Kathleen McCarthy kept a promise she had made to students when she challenged them to "Turn Off The TV" last week. She said if the students turned off television for the week, she would kiss a horse. About half of them met the challenge, and she paid up Tuesday by laying a smacker on Navajo, a pony owned by Mike and Bev Hollack, Trucksville. It was also Hat Day at the school. See page 5 for photos.

## Dallas hopes to save on insurance

*Blue Cross bill was up 22% this year, joining buying group may help*

By KYLIE SHAFFERKOETTER  
Post Staff

**DALLAS** - In an effort to get lower insurance rates, the Dallas School District is interested in joining a consortium with the other 11 districts and two vocational schools that make up the Intermediate Unit 18.

Gil Griffiths, superintendent, told the school board Monday that Blue Cross/Blue Shield would not yet give any specific cost figures for the buying group. Griffiths said no other insurance company has the types of rates Blue Cross/Blue Shield has.

Dallas, which is currently with Blue Cross/Blue Shield, paid a 22 percent increase this year for insurance coverage for its faculty, support staff and administrators.

Dallas has hired Plan 3, a consulting corporation, to guide it through the process. "Plan 3 took

all the usage for all the school districts as separate entities and came up with a standard plan to benefit everyone," said Griffiths. "They have presented information to Blue Cross/Blue Shield. They will engage in some negotiations with them."

Dallas paid its insurance company \$1.2 million to cover employees for the current school year. Griffiths has no idea how much the district could potentially save from the consortium. He did say that Plan 3 recently saved King's College a significant amount of money.

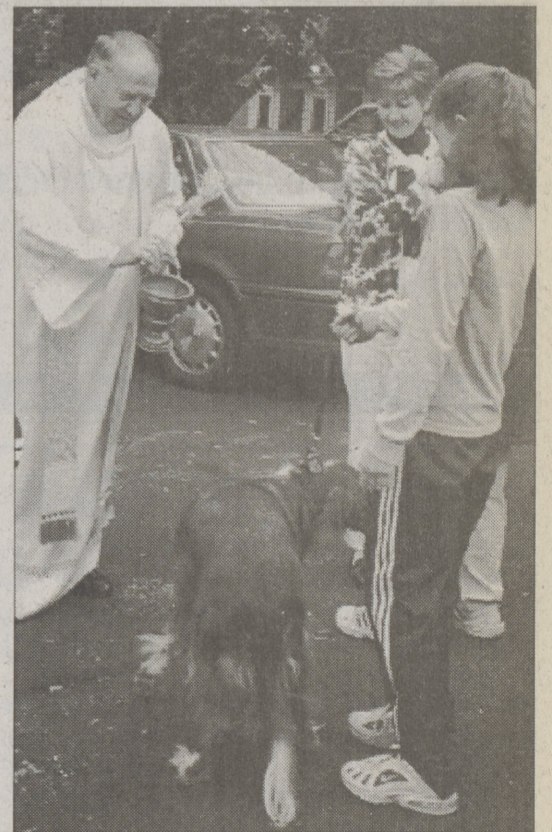
"Blue Cross/Blue Shield would maintain rates of 1999-2000 and possibly lower them the next year," said Griffiths. He said the district's insurance debt would be offset by the positive side of a pool. He hopes to have a plan by January that everyone can agree on.

## Pet owners flock to St. Therese's for blessing

By MEIRA ZUCKER  
Post Correspondent

In honor of the Feast of Saint Francis, the patron saint of animals, St. Therese's Church in Shavertown held their annual Blessing of the Animals Saturday. Parishioners brought their beloved furry friends for the ceremony, which included a prayer by Father Peter Crynes, a reading from Genesis by Sister Marilyn, and a sprinkling of holy water. The animal audience intently observed the ceremony and behaved with utmost decorum.

"Pets" does not describe these creatures; better to call them "family members." Children cuddled rabbits shivering in the damp morning air. Labradors and Lhasa apsas were adorned with bandanas and bows. Springer spaniels and shar peis socialized. Both adults and children brought out their dogs, cats, bunnies, hamsters, and even one intrepid lad dragged out his snake. "It's like the food chain here," commented one participant. Why did they come?



"We must always live in peace with all of God's creation."  
Father Peter Crynes

Please turn to page 8 for more photos of pets and owners.

## Teachers honor their own with 'The Scholar's Garden'

By KYLIE SHAFFERKOETTER  
Post Staff

**DALLAS** - Most people have a special teacher in their life, whether they are still in school or not. The teachers of Dallas High School are no exception. In honor of their own teachers and mentors, they have created a beautiful memorial garden to honor deceased Dallas High School teachers.

Last year the teachers knew they wanted to memorialize those who came before them. Cathy Wega came up with the garden idea and it stuck.

The tiller was fired up last spring, and the organizing committee got busy and dirty. Within a couple months, the small group turned a plain, grassy area on the high school's campus into a peaceful and pretty garden that serves as a perfect tribute to such colorful people. It was aptly named,

The Scholar's Garden.

"This is a quiet little way to remember what they did for us," explained Wega. The garden was planted and paid for by the teachers themselves.

Staring at a plaque of names placed inside the school to commemorate the teachers, Wega said, "There are things that stand out about each one of these people. These are people who were here for 35 years of their lives. There is a little piece of each of them here. Things each one did made us who we are today. They instituted programs that their names are not attached to. These people made a difference."

The eight names listed so far are: Robert Somerville, math; Joe Rashys, shop; Donald Evans, history; Lester Lewis, band; Thaddeus Stemplewski, Gerald Kolman, shop; Gerald Stinson,

See GARDEN, pg 8



POST PHOTO/KYLIE SHAFFERKOETTER

Sally Kennard tidied up The Scholar's Garden at Dallas High School. Teachers created the memorial to their predecessors.

## New elementary reading curriculum drawing praise

By KYLIE SHAFFERKOETTER  
Post Staff

**DALLAS** - Dallas Elementary School has a new book series this year that utilizes a new way to teach children language arts. The new Signatures series, published by Harcourt Brace & Company, combines phonics, reading, grammar and spelling into one integrated program.

The series was chosen by a group of 14 Dallas Elementary teachers after they tested it for a year. Before it was implemented into everyday use this year, the teachers of each grade level were trained by a Harcourt Brace & Company consultant.

Sam Barbose, Dallas Elementary principal, said he is happy with the teachers' decision. "It was time to change. We want to keep up to date," said Barbose, who used to work for a textbook publishing company himself.

*"The children love the literature. There are great stories."*

Betsy Cannon  
First grade teacher

"The literature in these books is outstanding. I have not been able to determine that we have skipped a beat with this," he said.

Bill King, a Harcourt Brace representative, explained how the series integrates all language arts subjects.

"The series is set up for each grade level, kindergarten through fifth grade. In the past, a child would have English and would write on one subject. Now, all the assignments come from the story (the class is reading). It's efficient. The children are writing

See READING, pg 8



POST PHOTO/KYLIE SHAFFERKOETTER

Sarah Muldoon points to a page from one of her favorite stories. Sarah is in Betsy Cannon's first grade class.

### ■ Crafty soccer supporters

Dallas Soccer Club held its annual craft show. Photos on Pg 3.

### ■ Oof!

Lehman loses first football game, 40-20 to Hanover. Sports.

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