

1998 in review

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scapers had been working there all week, but because it was raining, had taken the day off.

Bruce Davies was honored for 70 years of contributions to Boy Scouts. "I like kids," he said in explaining his dedication to scouting. The Dallas United Methodist Church created the Bruce E. Davies Endowment Fund in his honor.

Jan. 21: What customers called a leak, National Utilities Inc. called a new spring at Midway Manor, as residents fought to get a water leak that was flooding yards and basements fixed.

Jonathan Meehan, 17, a Trucksville Eagle Scout candidate, was putting the finishing touches on the new periodicals room at the Back Mountain Memorial Library. He chose the room as his Eagle project.

The Contemporary Issues class at Lake-Lehman High School received a reply from President Bill Clinton, responding to their letter asking Clinton to condemn the Chinese government's siege of Tibet, sent three weeks earlier.

Jan. 28: Ruth Evans, 89, joined her friends at Back Mountain Bowl for the "Thursday's Girls" league. She is one of 24 women, age 55 to 89, who meet each week for fun and friendship.

Harveys Lake Borough Council passed an ordinance that bans the use of phosphate fertilizers. The move was taken as part of an effort to combat growth of algae and other unwanted plants. The ordinance carries a stiff penalty of up to a \$1,000 fine per day of violation.

Back Mountain police departments reported that stepped up efforts to combat driving under the influence have resulted in more arrests. The enforcement is combined with work with schools, to try to prevent abuse in the future.

Feb. 4: Ruby Elston died at age 101. The Huntsville woman was a descendant of Rev. Jacob Johnson, the first permanent minister in the Wyoming Valley. Her father and grandfather were signers of the charter that made Dallas a borough. Her marriage to Clarence Elston in 1924 united two of the Back Mountain's oldest families.

Visitors to the monthly meeting of the Jackson Twp. supervisors criticized the handling of an escape from the state prison in Chase. Warning sirens weren't distinctive enough, they said, and roadblocks were not clearly identified.

Rev. Pat Collady returned from

turned up nothing. "At least the students knew they were there, and that we were not fooling around," said Frank Galicki, principal. "It gives us credibility."

Volunteers turned out to move shelving and books into the new children's wing at the Back Mountain Memorial Library.

Feb. 18: You could make millions, said the letters that showed up in the mail at local businesses. They were part of a nationwide scam run out of Nigeria, that seeks to gain access to business bank accounts.

Eric Pimm and Matt Hinton added a new dimension to the Lake-Lehman High School cheerleading squad. They are the only boys cheering in the entire conference.

Kingston Twp. officials prepared to move into the new municipal building on E. Center St.

A dispute over pay scales led to the shutdown of an in-school suspension program at Dallas High School. The district hired a certified teacher at \$60 per day, with no benefits, but the union wanted a salary of about \$25,000 plus benefits.

Feb. 25: Lake-Lehman school board members disagreed on whether or not to try to retain Dr. William Price as superintendent of schools, after he abruptly resigned the previous week.

The Rite Aid Corp. proposed to build a new store at the intersection of Rts. 309 and 415 in Dallas, where KW Carpet was located. The plan would call for construction over Toby's Creek, which would have been routed through a large culvert under the parking area.

Planners in Kingston Twp. said they were considering new regulations for the siting and appearance of radio and cellular phone towers.

March 4: R.J. Barna was working on his Eagle Scout project, which involved mapping the burial sites in the Cedar Crest-Trucksville Cemetery, near the Trucksville United Methodist Church. The plot started in 1844, but records have been lost over the years in fires at the church.

Part-time Jackson Twp. police officer Barry Stubeda will have to chill out for a while longer, since the supervisors said the budget

for winter clothing has been spent. Chief Donald Jones requested a winter jacket for the officer, who works about 32 hours a week.

Jeannette Manorek wrapped up another successful season at College Misericordia. The Shavertown resident was named honorable mention all-conference in basketball after being named to the first team all-stars in soccer in the fall.

March 11:

It all added up

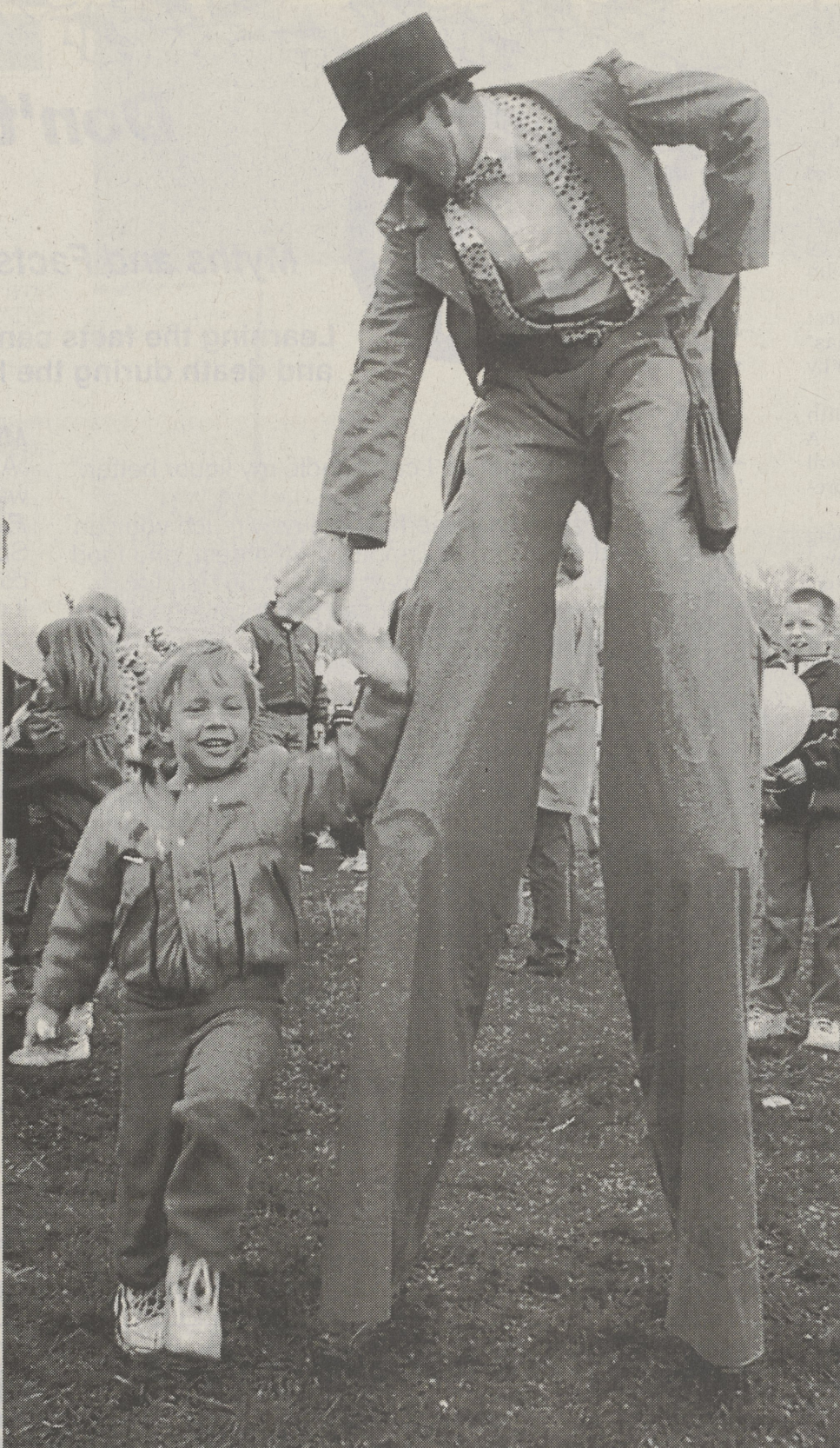
for a group of Dallas High School students who were leading a national competition among high school math teams. The 13 juniors and 14 seniors were coached by Scott Saba, math supervisor.

Silowette Halle may sound like the name of an exotic singer, but it's really a Persian kitten from Harveys Lake that licked all comers at the Cats International Cat Show held at Madison Square Garden. Albert Switzer, the kitty's owner, is shooting even higher. "Our goal is for her to become a grand champion," he said.

Sue Hand, renowned Dallas artist, was nominated for the Arts Leadership and Service Award, one of the 1998 Governor's Awards for the Arts. The nomination was sent by State Rep. Phyllis Mundy and State Sen. Charles D. Lemmond.

Eric Maciejczak took fourth place in the 135 lb. division at the state wrestling championships, held at Hersheypark Arena.

Matt Schweitzer and Stephanie Potisek were excited at the chance to compete in the state meet at Penn State. Schweitzer qualified by winning the 200 freestyle and



"Cosmic Sam" reached down to grasp the hand of Michael Comiskey at the Easter egg hunt sponsored by the Back Mountain Business & Professional Association.

finishing second in the 500 free at districts. Potisek took gold in the diving competition.

March 18: Supporters of Dr. William Price, Lake-Lehman Superintendent of Schools, turned out in force to rally for his retention. At the end of the night, the school board voted 6-3 to renew his contract.

Back Mountain Baseball was thrown a curve when the school district warned that it may have to use the fields Little League plays on for middle school teams.

Members of Dallas Fire and Ambulance moved equipment into the new firehouse on E. Center Hill Rd. The new facility offers more space and easier access to more of the area the department serves.

March 25: For the first time in 12 years, State Rep. George Hasay would face a challenge for re-election. Will Conyngham, owner of Hillside Farms Dairy, announced he would seek the Democratic nomination for the 117th District.

Commonwealth Telephone was waiting for word from the state Public Utilities Commission on the company's request for a rate increase. Commonwealth originally asked for a "restructuring" of rates that would have resulted in an increase of \$3.50 per month per customer. The new request scaled that back to \$2.45.

Health insurance was a big sticking point between the Lake-Lehman school board and teachers, as they tried to reach a new contract. The board wants to go to a managed care system, but the union likes the Blue Cross/Blue Shield policy now in place.

April 1: The Kingston Twp. supervisors approved the construction of a cellular phone tower behind the old municipal building, even though the planning commission had recommended against it. The township's attorney felt the supervisors could not legally turn down the tower.

Howard Ehret of Lehman, Marge Mottern of Sweet Valley and Marie Weir of Dallas got together with friends at the Dallas Senior Citizens Center, as they do most every week. The center on Rice St. provides companionship, food and support.

A Lake-Lehman team was headed for the state competition in the Science Olympiad, after qualifying with one first and two third-place finishes at a regional meeting. Their "Scrambler," safely carried an egg as close as possible

to a wall without touching it or breaking the egg.

April 8: Tara Matlock-Puchalsky led a group of Dallas Middle School students on a mission to spruce up Main St. in Dallas Borough. She was insisting that hers is "strictly a student group. We wanted adults to supervise our activities, but not to lead the group."

Property owners adjoining Dallas School District land got eviction notices for the structures they had built on school land. It was part of a continuing dispute in

Deer Meadow subdivision in Dallas Borough was shocked to learn that a Wilkes-Barre attorney, Raymond Hassey, had filed a claim of ownership right to the land their houses are built on. But few observers thought the claim had any merit.

Horse owners and horse lovers gathered at the Peaceful Valley Equestrian Center in Beaumont to rally for a proposed state law that would make liability insurance more affordable for stable owners. They fear the cost of operating riding stables is shutting many people out of the activity.

The principal of Lehman-Jackson Elementary School asked the school board to budget four more teachers. Robert Kunkle said classes were too large in the lower grades.

April 29: A golf tournament, a raffle, and a dance were among the events scheduled to raise funds to help Rikki Sue Shotwell, the 5-year-old girl seriously burned in a fire at her home April 5. She was receiving treatment at St. Christopher's Children's Hospital in Philadelphia.

Harveys Lake fire chief Frank Lutinski looked west, and liked what he saw. He proposed renumbering houses as it is done in Colorado, using a system that breaks each mile of road down into 1,000 segments.

Judy Rimple, who has spearheaded the Anthracite Scenic Trails Association project, hosted a kickoff luncheon for the Back Mountain Trail, which will run from Luzerne to Trucksville. ASTA must raise \$200,000 for trail construction.

May 6: The Dallas High School math team did it! After four months of testing, the group finished first among 200 public and private schools taking part in a nationwide challenge.

Only three weeks after the Dallas School District agreed to pay a 45 percent commission to a firm that promised to recover improperly paid sales tax on construction of the Wycallis Elementary School, the State Legislature passed a law that could avert the payment of the taxes in the first place.

May 13: Frank Henry of Dallas was serving as general chairman of a \$5.3 million campaign to renovate the Wilkes-Barre YMCA building. George Sordoni of Dallas, whose grandfather's company

built the building in 1933, was vice chairman. They were joined by other Back Mountain residents Paul Lumia, Joe and Pat Persico, George C. Conyngham, Ronald D. Ertley, Jack Smith, Richard Maslow, Durelle Scott and Wallace Stettler.

John Dawe, a junior at Lake-Lehman High School, won first place at the PA Science Olympiad, held at Juniata College. His entry was titled "Surfing the Net."

College Misericordia officials broke ground for the new Mary Kintz Bevevino Library, a 37,000 square foot building that will include state-of-the-art information technology.

May 20: An antique wooden cigar store Indian, stolen from a building in Shavertown, was found at a house in Haddonfield Hills in Dallas.

The Dallas school board voted to accept a new budget that contained a 15 mill tax increase, the first since 1990. The biggest reason for the hike was construction of the new elementary school.

Fr. Peter Crynes, pastor of St. Therese's Church in Shavertown, was given the honorable title of Monsignor by Pope John Paul II. But he saw the honor accruing

to the entire congregation. "I see it as an affirmation of what we do as a parish," he said.

May 27: Harveys Lake Borough Council members voted to raise the minimum fine for dumping and littering to a minimum of \$100 and a maximum of \$300. Council members said people have been dumping household trash in borough receptacles.

After many delays, the county 911 system was scheduled to begin operations in June, and the Back Mountain Communication Center was to be shut down.

The Lake-Lehman girls soccer team won its first district title, beating Wyoming Valley West 4-3. Kelly Spencer scored three of the Black Knights' goals.

June 3: A series of violent storms ripped through the Back Mountain Sunday night, downing trees throughout the region. Several trees struck homes, but fortunately no one was hurt.

The top 10 students at Dallas High School are a diverse group, but they share a love of learning. "The more you do, the more doors open up for you," said Jen Vodzak, ranked third in the class.

June 10: Finally, a deal was struck between Dallas School District and neighboring property owners, allowing construction of new fields to go forward.

Residents of Hemlock Gardens at Harveys Lake were fighting to have the dirt roads in the subdivision repaired and maintained. They said every heavy rain washes out the streets, which haven't been in good condition since sewers were installed in 1990.

Doreen Davis, a 1971 graduate, inspired the Lake-Lehman Class of 1998 with her commencement speech. A partner in a Philadelphia law firm, she charted the way to success.

The Lake-Lehman girls soccer team became the first form the conference ever to play for the state championship, but lost to Council Rock 3-1.

June 17: The Lake-Lehman school board decided to get more involved in teacher hiring. The board will receive a list of the top three candidates for each job, a written justification, and a list from administrators ranking the candidates. Previously, the board had received only a recommendation to hire a particular teacher.

Headlines in the Post are "accurate, appealing and tell the stories well," wrote a judge in the Keystone Press Awards contest, giving the paper first place among weeklies.

June 24: Kingston Twp. police and residents of the Meadowcrest area said an increased presence of officers brought down incidents of crime and vandalism. The officers also are developing a better relationship with the families. "Kids aren't running away now when we come down the street," said patrolman Martin Maransky.

The third generation of the Spencer family is still running

Lehman Golf Club, a 9-hole track that's a favorite for Back Mountain golfers. The club was founded in 1953 by Sam Spencer, after he had worked at Irem Temple as club pro.

July 1: Judy Brokenshire returned from a whirlwind tour of the American West that included a close encounter with a buffalo in Yellowstone National Park. She got the idea after a broken wrist kept her from visiting Italy.

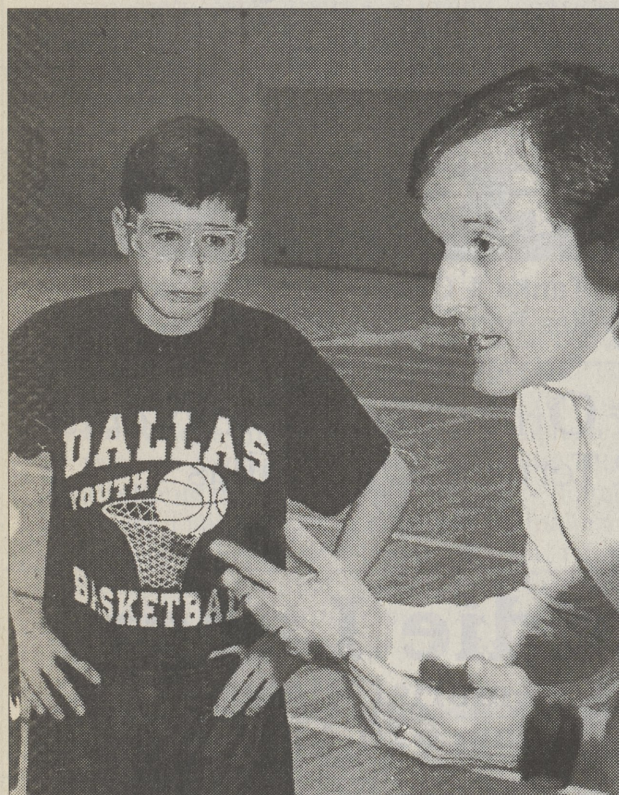
Business owners in Dallas Borough asked the town to create a parking lot that would replace the seven spaces that will be lost when a turning lane is added to Main St.

Lake-Lehman school directors pulled a rabbit out of a hat, passing a budget that adds seven teachers but leaves the tax rate unchanged. Cuts will be made in the building and grounds budget.

July 8: Dr. Anthony Mussari and his wife, "Kitch," have created an oasis of calm in the Orchard View Terrace subdivision. They bought a vacant lot and developed Windsor Park, which they use as the setting for "Windsor Park Stories," a series of documentary interviews that air on WVIA-TV.

Rev. William D. Lewis was off to a fast start as the new pastor at Dallas United Methodist Church. His first day included a funeral service and visits to hospitalized parishioners.

Mike Metz of Dallas won two firsts at the AAU Grand National Wrestling Championships, held in Orlando. He was named the most outstanding wrestler of the AAU Mid-Atlantic Wrestling Association.



Dr. Jack Ellis coached his team in the boys grade 7-8 division of Dallas Youth Basketball.

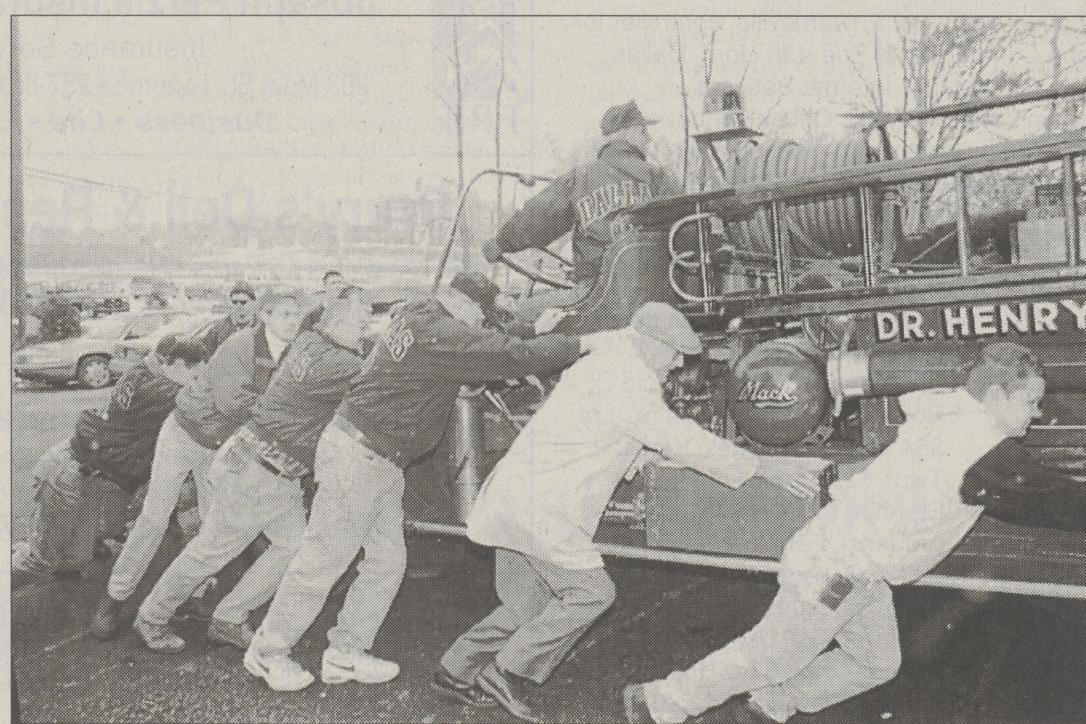
upstate New York, where he had volunteered his services to help people affected by a massive ice storm. "When we drove into town, we saw timber twisted like toothpicks, trees 'topped' and homes abandoned," he said.

Lehman's wrestling team was handed a victory when Berwick was forced to forfeit a meet they had won because a wrestler was misclassified. What had been the Black Knights' only loss became their sixth win in conference meets.

Feb. 11: Energy Converters Inc. (ENCON), which was founded in Dallas in 1973, was sold to Watlow Electric Manufacturing Co. of St. Louis. The sale was expected to have no effect on ENCON's 230 employees, since the plant would be considered a separate division.

Another proposed cellular phone tower drew protests, this time in Kingston Twp. Cellular One proposed a 150 ft. tower behind the municipal building, but neighbors complained that it would lower property values, and could pose threats to health.

The first search of Dallas High School by drug-sniffing dogs



Dallas Fire & Ambulance members pushed the company's 1927 Mack into the new firehouse on E. Center Hill Rd.

which the land's neighbors are fighting construction of new fields. One person's fence was 30 ft. onto school property, said Mark Kraynak, superintendent of buildings and grounds.

April 15: More than 200 years after he helped found the nation, Benjamin Franklin was still contributing to good works in his adopted home state. Daylene Burnside, executive director of the Luzerne Foundation, told members of the Back Mountain Business & Professional Association that her organization had received \$22,000 from a trust fund Franklin had established in the late 1700's.

Retiring Dallas Twp. police officer J. Elliot Ide reminisced on his 27 years on the force. He said it is a tougher job now than it was when he started.

Rebecca Kaufman and Tony Lumbis, juniors at Lake-Lehman High School, were selected as semi-finalists in the "Profiles in Courage Essay Contest," sponsored by the John F. Kennedy Library Foundation. It was the first time two students from the same school have been among the 10 semi-finalists.

April 22: Homeowners in the