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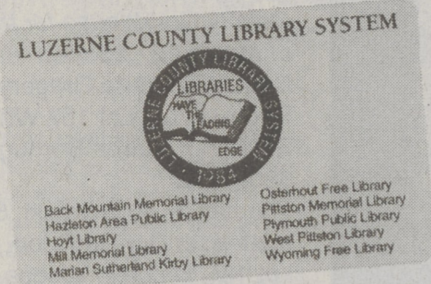
March 31 thru April 6, 1999

Library converting to hi-tech card system

By KASIA McDONOUGH
Post Staff

DALLAS - Students with reports to prepare and mothers with rambunctious toddlers seeking a peaceful story hour were out of luck if they visited the Back Mountain Memorial library last week.

The library was closed for three days as employees and volunteers worked feverishly applying bar codes



New library cards will be valid throughout Luzerne County.

to thousands of books. The marathon session is the first step in the transition to a new computerized inventory system.

Approximately 20 volunteers donated their time to assist library employees with the massive project. Cassie Munzing is a regular among library volunteers and she was on hand Friday to help. "I have been

See LIBRARY, pg 8

Paul LaBar: a good life in a small town

By KASIA McDONOUGH
Post Staff

DALLAS - Pauline Roth once said that her cousin "was born on one side of the street, and would die on the other." She turned out to be right, but between the beginning and end of Paul LaBar's life were years of hard work, trust and love, both given and received.

Dallas was like many of the small towns in America in the 1920's; life was frequently difficult and neighbors depended upon one another.

Mayor Paul LaBar, who died Sunday, grew up in that era and he learned at an early age that friends and family can ease the hardships.

Paul LaBar was born on the north side of Main Street, near the present barber shop. When he was only 10 his mother, the former Lila Shaver, was involved in a sledding accident, and a resulting blood clot took her life. The death came as a shock to the LaBar family. They were expecting the young wife and mother to return home after spending a night at the hospital.

Pauline Roth is a cousin of Paul and Doris LaBar. She describes her uncle as distraught over the loss of his beloved wife. "Lila and Clyde were very close and it was difficult for him to lose her like that," she said.

Clyde moved to New Jersey to find work and to cope with his grief. While he was away, the responsibility of caring for the young LaBar children fell to family and friends. Paul spent a year at the home of his aunt, Mildred Drake. His young sister Doris was sent to stay with Jerry and Eva Machel.

In 1931, when Paul was 12, his father returned to Dallas and rented a small apartment on Main Street. Paul left the Drakes to join his father. He took a job at France's General Store which was located just a few doors from the LaBar home.

"Paul did all sorts of jobs at the store. He cleaned out the pickle barrels and he cut blocks of ice for the cold cellar. He swept the floors; delivered the milk and butchered the chickens," said Sue Hand, his daughter-in-law.

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Paul LaBar looked over a family calendar earlier this year.

'Dedication' comes to mind for friends

By RONALD BARTIZEK
Post Staff

No matter what role he played — as father and grandfather, Mayor of Dallas Borough, secretary of Dallas Fire and Ambulance, or leader of the police department — Paul LaBar gave his all to the task.

"He was really something," said Bob Besecker. "There's only good things anyone could say about Paul LaBar."

Besecker described LaBar as a strong, quiet, gentle, helpful guy. "I never saw him get mad at anyone," he said, but LaBar was tenacious in his dedication. "He saved our tail for a good many years, because we could always be guaranteed a driver."

Bob Richardson has been president of Dallas Fire and Ambulance for 30 years, and always valued LaBar's contributions

See FRIENDS, pg 5



POST PHOTO/CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK

Egg . . citing times

Taylor Hodle proudly displayed her project at Little People Preschool at the Back Mountain Memorial Library. The children each made their own Easter chick popping out of a paper egg.

Happy egg hunting

"It's big, it's fun, it's the Easter Egg Hunt sponsored by the Back Mountain Business and Professional Association. The 3rd annual event is scheduled for Saturday, April 3, at 1 p.m. at Penn State Wilkes-Barre. In addition to racing to pick up eggs and collect candy, children will be eligible for 50 special baskets that will hold large chocolate figures, Beanie Babies and other prizes. There also will be gift certificates, Disney figurines and other prizes. Charlie Hayes will provide musical diversions and will announce winners of special baskets and prizes. Popcorn will be available free of charge, and Domino's will be on hand to sell slices of pizza and soda. In photo, Jessica Hiscox got up close and personal with the big bunny last year.



Local activists will demonstrate against death penalty

By KASIA McDONOUGH
Post Staff

BACK MOUNTAIN - Two Back Mountain activists will take their opposition to the death penalty to a demonstration Friday in Wilkes-Barre.

The Peace Center's Committee to Abolish the Death Penalty and the local chapter of Pax Christi will sponsor a public event at the Luzerne County Courthouse on Friday April 2, at 10:30 a.m. Those in attendance will have an opportunity to sign a "Declaration of Life." This notarized document states that an individual, in the event that he/she should be the victim of a violent crime, does not wish the perpetrator to be executed.

The courthouse rally is designed to focus public attention on this contentious issue as Governor Ridge recently signed death warrants for George Banks. Mark

"We are not a bunch of unrealistic bleeding hearts who think that criminals should go unpunished."

Mark Harper
Pastor, Trinity Presbyterian Church

Spotz and Gerome Gibson. Pennsylvania currently has 213 people on death row.

"We hope this gathering will increase awareness among the general public and generate discussion about capital punishment," said Ann Marie McNulty, Shavertown, coordinator of the local Pax Christi chapter. She became involved in the fight to end capital punishment following the reinstatement of the death penalty in Pennsylvania. "The execution of Keith Zettlemyer, on May 2, 1995 had a profound effect in my life," said McNulty.

Mark Harper, Pastor of the Trin-

ity Presbyterian Church in Dallas, is a member of the Peace Center's Committee to Abolish the Death Penalty. "My involvement grew out of a deep, personal conviction that the death penalty is wrong on a number of levels," said Harper. "On the practical level, capital punishment has not proven to be a deterrent to crime and it is costly to taxpayers in terms of the appeals process."

A Luzerne County Assistant District Attorney confirms that capital cases can result in a lengthy period of appeals. "For example the George Banks case has been in the appeals process

for 15 years or more," said ADA Dan Pillets.

Pillets' primary concern is the public misconception that prosecutors are eager to pursue the death penalty. "Only a small number of homicides are first degree murders. Only a small number of those first degree murders have the aggravating circumstances which warrant a prosecutor seeking the death penalty. Only a small number of those cases actually result in the jury imposing a sentence of death," said Pillets. "Personal feelings aside, the prosecutor faces a huge legal burden, and these cases inevitably involve the most difficult decisions we make," said Pillets.

Harper is aware that the public's preconceived notions can be harmful to both sides. "We are not a bunch of unrealistic bleeding hearts who think that crimi-

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History comes alive

as local students compete in National History Day. Pg 3.

Talented

Dallas Middle School students show off a little. Pg 10.

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