

The Dallas Post

50 Cents

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

Vol. 110 No. 19

Dallas, Pennsylvania

May 12 thru May 18, 1999

'Stax & Co.' will offer unique dining decor

By MEIRA ZUCKER
Post Correspondent

DALLAS - The new Twin Stacks Center may appear to be just a large construction sight when viewed from Route 415. The fractured appearance of the facade, however, disguises the fact that the renovation continues on schedule for a summer opening. Many tenants have already leased office space, and the new restaurant, Stax and Co., plans to open in mid-summer.

Tenants that have already signed on include Tele-media, Dr. David Madeira, epix, Quality Coatings, The Personalization Station, Collection Specialists, and the restaurant, Stax and Co.

Stax and Co. is raising the most interest. Run by the same team that operates Hops and Barleys in Luzerne, Stax and Co. will provide many of the features that have made that spot so popular: good food, casual atmosphere, and affordable prices.

Scott Snider, and his partner Rich Lukasavage, have decided to build on their success with Hops and Barleys by expanding into the Back Mountain. "We need a place like this," says Scott Snider. He cites the paucity of similar places in the Back Mountain as helping make the decision. "We have a large Back Mountain clientele at Hops," says Snider.

"I love the building and I live in Dallas," he adds.

The factory history of the site inspires the decor. High ceilings and exposed pipes, weathered brick and huge windows complete the look. The bar, with its own entrance, will be located below the level of the L-shaped dining room. An additional outside bar, patio, and deck overlooking the pond will be added.

Stax and Co. hopes to open in mid-July or August reports Snider. It will offer a banquet room, catering, and "a little bit of everything," remarks Snider.

As for the front of the building, Banta reports that "the last thing you do is put glass in." Sidewalks are going in this week, and the

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POST PHOTO/CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK

She's got her eye on him

"Marilyn Monroe," or perhaps a cardboard facsimile, kept watch out the back door of the former Dallas Bike Shop as construction workers continued work on widening Rt. 309 in front of the post office. The building is now owned by Atty. Bernard Walter and his wife, Roberta. Atty. Walter confessed to placing the standup figure in the window in a moment of mischievousness.

Lake-Lehman will bank year's \$200,000 budget surplus

By KASIA McDONOUGH
Post Staff

LAKE-LEHMAN - The school district expects to have about \$200,000 left over in this year's budget, as planning begins for a new budget year. "That money has been invested and the interest earned will be carried forward to next year's budget," said

Kathleen Williams, business manager. "The principal will be used for new construction in the district."

The school district is cautiously optimistic about the formation of a health care consortium, scheduled to begin July 1, that will help hold down costs in the future.

The consortium will unite all Luzerne County schools for the

purpose of reducing health care costs or maintaining current rates. County schools will purchase health insurance packages as a group, instead of as individual school districts thereby enabling them to receive a better rate.

Lake-Lehman does not anticipate an increase in the cost of health care coverage for the 1999-2000 school year but has tenta-

tively allotted \$160,000 in a budget reserve for unexpected expenses. "No one that I have talked to is planning to spend more money for health care coverage for the upcoming school year," said Kathleen Williams. "We do have money set aside, if for some reason the consortium does not go into effect and our rates increase."

Secretary to superintendent calls it a day after 27 years

By KASIA McDONOUGH
Post Staff

DALLAS - Janet Evans will take fond memories and lasting friendships with her as she embarks on retirement after 27 years as an employee of the Dallas School District.

Evans, who is secretary to the superintendent, initially worked with students in the middle school library and cafeteria. "I began working in the school district as an aide in September, 1972," she said. "New employees were needed to help deal with the influx of students following the Agnes Flood."

As a youngster, the former Janet Stahl attended Shavertown Elementary School and Westmoreland High School. She

"I guess you can say that I literally grew up with the Dallas School District."

Janet Evans

Retiring after 27 years in district

recalls the upheaval of combining Shavertown and Dallas High School. "I was in seventh grade and a member of the first class to attend the high school after the Dallas and Shavertown secondary schools merged," said Evans. "Naturally, neither high school wanted to relinquish its identity to the other, so the district decided to rename the school

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POST PHOTO/KASIA McDONOUGH

Janet Evans will occupy her familiar post in the Dallas School District administrative offices for only a few more weeks. She is retiring with 27 years' service.

Dallas budget has 7 mill tax increase

By KASIA McDONOUGH
Post Staff

DALLAS - The Dallas School Board voted unanimously to accept a tentative budget for the 1999-2000 academic year which includes a tax increase of seven mills, to 177 mills.

The preliminary budget, presented to the board by Albert Melone, CPA, allocates \$19,714,081 for anticipated expenditures, nearly \$1 million higher than anticipated revenue. Last year's spending total was \$19,218,830. After adding in \$500,000 of the district's surplus funds, the budget still shows an operating deficit of \$452,144 for the year. The fund balance would be reduced from \$3.27 million at the beginning of the new budget year to \$2.3 million at the end.

Most of the increases are contractual expenditures and there is little hope of reducing the amount prior to the adoption of the final budget. "The problem is not that costs are going crazy but that revenues are not keeping up," said Melone. "In this school district, expenditures are not incurred frivolously."

"The problem is not that costs are going crazy but that revenues are not keeping up."

Albert Melone, CPA
Acting Business Manager

Local sources, which include real estate taxes, earned income taxes and per capita taxes account for the bulk of the district's revenue. "Local sources produce 62 percent of our total revenue which will amount to approximately \$11,663,297 for the next budget year," said Melone. That is an increase of 2.3 percent over 1998-99.

The state government will contribute 36 percent of the school district's revenue. Pennsylvania will pay \$6,771,640 to Dallas in the form of a basic instructional subsidy, special education and transportation funding, a reduction of about \$78,000 from the present year.

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Board candidates choose not to be interviewed

By MEIRA ZUCKER
Post Correspondent

BACK MOUNTAIN - In a race that is nothing little than a rubber stamp, five candidates are running for five open spots on the Dallas school board. Ernest Ashbridge, Jr., John Litz, James Richardson, Deborah Ruckno, and Thomas Russ, barring an act of God or a write-in vote, will shortly be elected to direct the goals of the Dallas School District.

Following is a brief report on interviews, or attempted interviews, with the candidates.

Ernest Ashbridge, Jr.

Incumbent Ashbridge, 68, has served for 28 years on the Dallas School Board. He is a Kingston Township resident, a previous vice president of Hanover Bank, and has been a Back Mountain resident for 38 years.

"I think now we have to concentrate on curriculum and other current items of concern," said Ashbridge, now that the major building projects of the past few years have been completed. Dallas academic goals "are the best in the valley," boasts Ashbridge, and he is pleased with the job the schools are doing in preparing children for their futures.

John Litz

After failing to return messages, Litz, an incumbent, declined to be interviewed, citing time restraints.

James Richardson

"I will never speak to the press," Richardson refused, quite politely, to be interviewed, citing problems he had with the press in the past. Richardson previously served on the school board, and is now returning.

Thomas Russ

Russ, an incumbent, failed to return messages.

Deborah Ruckno

Ruckno, 47, is the lone new face in the race. She is a lifelong Dallas resident, and Assistant Principal of the Wyoming Valley West Middle School. "I have worked in schools my whole professional life," says Ruckno. She previously taught in the Dallas School District.

"I really feel I need to give back to society and the schools," says Ruckno. She is in favor of the new centralized campus, citing the cost savings, economical use of space, and more cohesive environment. Ruckno "supports the teaching of conflict resolution and would like safety issues further addressed."

Where to vote, who's on ballot

List of candidates and polling places on page 2.

Over the net

Dallas High volleyball team performing beyond expectations. Sports.

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