

Pharmacies

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away three years ago, ran this place for 15 years and I sort of grew up thinking I would, too."

Like several other local drug stores, the Trucksville Pharmacy is a family business. "My mom owns the store and my younger siblings all help out behind the counter," said Billek. "No one else plans to be a pharmacist though; they don't want the long hours."

The customers are like family, too, and the loyalty they've shown is a source of comfort. "I think that is why I, personally, don't feel threatened by the big chains," said Billek. "We have strong community support and luckily we see new customers all the time as the Back Mountain continues to grow."

The Medicine Shoppe seeks to differentiate itself from other pharmacies in the area. "We don't sell motor oil or any of that other stuff," said Karwaski. "I think that makes us a little more professional."

As managed care continues to dictate changes in the health care industry, many pharmacists find their roles have expanded to bridge the gap. "We provide blood pressure checks, hearing and diabetes screenings to our customers which is important because many health care providers just don't have the time to do that today."

Michael Fino, who can recall his father's stories about life as a



Sherri Conrad, pharmacist at Cook's Pharmacy in Shavertown, handed a prescription to Marie Gardner. While Cook's has four stores in Wyoming Valley, it is a family-owned independent pharmacy competing with large national chains and thriving.

"We have strong community support and luckily we see new customers all the time as the Back Mountain continues to grow."

Kristen Billek
Trucksville Pharmacy

pharmacist years ago, thinks many of the changes are for the better. "When my father first started, he didn't even put labels on the bottles - it was just like 'This is what the doctor wants you to take and this is how often you should take it.' - so things are really different now," he said. "I spend a lot of my time answering questions about side effects and interactions, that doctors don't necessarily explain."

Soon, Fino's will be remodeled to improve this interaction. A desk, computer and sitting area will be available so the pharmacist will be more visible and accessible to his customers. "Ten years down the road, the techs will be filling prescriptions and the focus of my job will be primarily health screenings, blood pressure checks, and things of that nature."

In addition to expanding re-

sponsibilities, managed care has resulted in other changes for area pharmacists. "I think the major gripe of anyone in this field is that insurance companies really dictate what we are able to do," said Billek. "Often the doctor prescribes a specific medication and I have to tell my customer, 'I'm sorry, but your insurance company won't pay for it.' Sometimes that means substituting a generic drug for the name brand one but sometimes it means paying out of pocket."

Those restrictions have serious repercussions for an aging population and the problem has led Congress and the White House to consider expanding Medicare coverage to include prescription plans. "I don't know all the details of what is being proposed but I think it's a great idea," said Karwaski. "Seniors certainly deserve a plan which enables them to afford the medications they need."

"They told us in school that when the baby boomers begin to mature this field will explode."

Michael Fino
Fino's Pharmacy, Dallas

Disque receives diploma

Leigh Ann Disque of Mountaintop is a member of the Class of 1999 which graduated from Crestwood High School on June 11.



Leigh Ann is the daughter of Richard H. Disque II of Dallas and granddaughter of Katherine Disque of Dallas. Her mother is Lois Warner, Mountaintop.

She will continue her education at Luzerne County Community College.



The old Dallas Borough High School, later turned into an elementary school, no longer stands, but former student Bette Stoner-Zaboski retains fond memories of her years there.

Old school

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were permitted to return home for a mid-day meal. "The teachers would stay behind and eat lunch with the children who lived too far away," recalls Stoner-Zaboski. "My house wasn't quite a mile away, so I would go home to eat every day."

It was pleasant to return to the warmth of the old schoolhouse

after walking through the cold and snow of wintry afternoons.

"It is something how those memories have stayed with me all this time," said Stoner-Zaboski. "I can clearly recall the smell of the wooden floors, which were oiled, not varnished, and the comfort of those little rooms."

Grace Community plans Bible school

Calling all children ages three through sixth grade to attend Vacation Bible School at Grace Community Church. This year's theme is a castle adventure set in merry old England. The week will include Bible studies, lively songs, skits, crafts, games and snacks. The children will discover their unique abilities and learn how to use them to serve God and others. This year's program will be held July 12-16 from 6:30-8:30 p.m. For more information call 675-3723.

Andrusis graduates from Susquehanna

Mark J. Andrusis of Dallas earned a bachelor of science degree in accounting and business administration with an emphasis in finance from Susquehanna University.

He is the son of John and Martha Andrusis.

Andrusis's other activities in Susquehanna included membership in Theta Chi fraternity, the Rugby Club and Investments Club.

Piloski earns degree

Vito Pilosi of Dallas earned a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering from Bucknell University. He is the son of Vito and Diane Pilosi.


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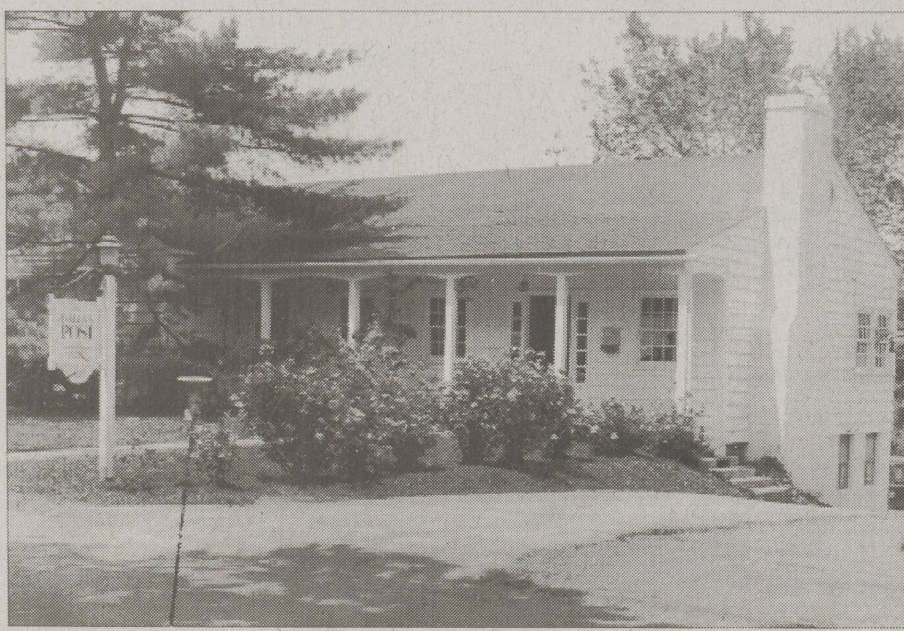
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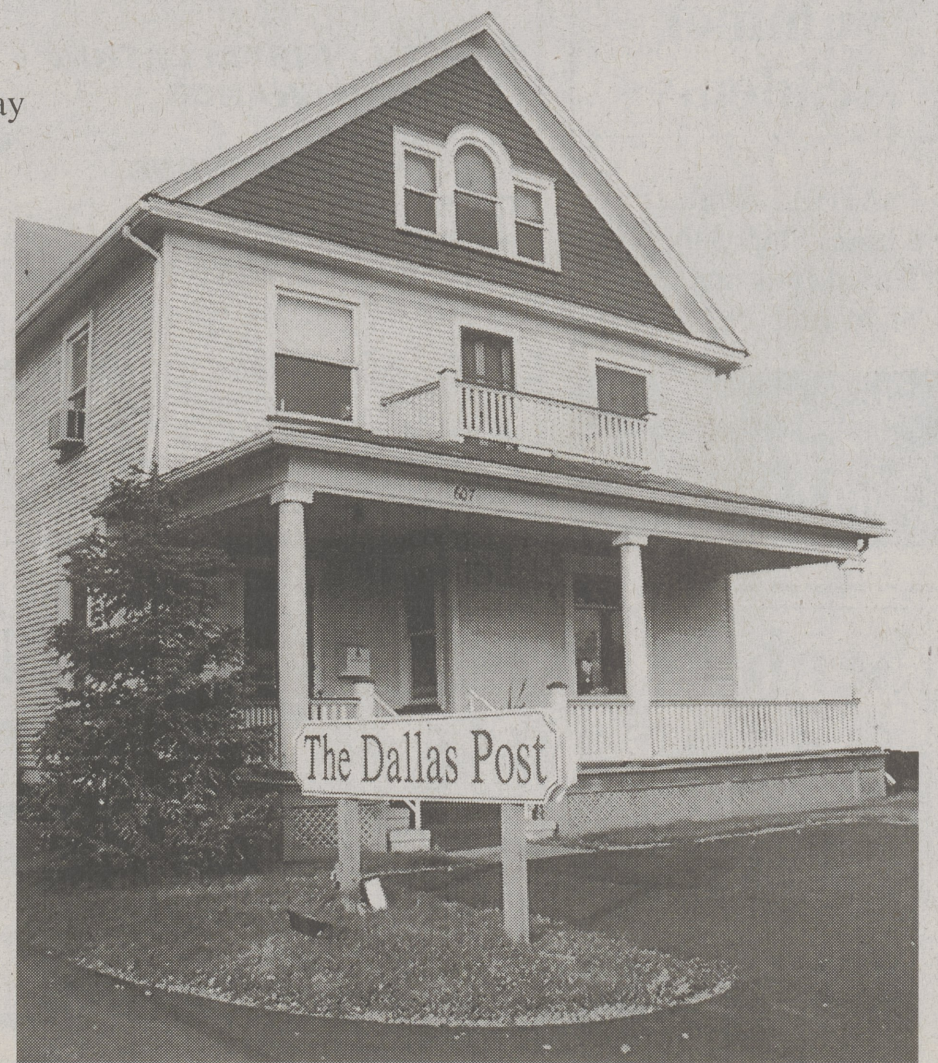
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