



POST PHOTO/CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK

Charlie Stajewski put the finishing touches on one of the 15 picnic benches he made for his Eagle Scout project.

15 benches later, he's ready to soar

By KASIA McDONOUGH
Post Staff

TRUCKSVILLE - Charlie Stajewski is a busy guy but he has not forgotten what is really important.

While preparing for his freshman year at Dallas High School, this 14-year-old is practicing for the fall football season and working on his Eagle Scout project.

Stajewski, a member of Boy Scout Troop #155, is building 15 picnic tables at the Trucksville United Methodist Church. "The actual construction is done but right now I'm putting a clear coat seal on the tables and benches to protect them," he said.

The tables and benches, which are part of a newly constructed pavilion, will provide churchgoers and community groups a place to gather, learn and worship. "The area will be used by Sunday School classes, vacation Bible School groups, the Boy Scouts from Troop #155 and a nursery school program," said Reverend Chuck Naugle of the Trucksville United Methodist Church. "Of course, the tables also make an ideal place to hold outdoor services in the summer months as weather permits."

Several of those who regularly visit the church have indicated they were interested in purchasing the picnic equipment. "Every-

"After this, I think I'm prepared for the rank of Eagle Scout."

Charlie Stajewski
Troop 155

one who has seen the tables has been impressed with the workmanship and a few have asked about buying them," said Naugle. "Unfortunately, I think Charlie has had enough of building picnic tables for a while."

Completing the project has been more difficult than Stajewski anticipated at the start. "I have over 130 hours in so far," he said. "My dad works in construction so I had an idea of what it would be like to do this, and I knew how to use most of the tools, but it's hard work."

Stajewski's father helped build the first table to use as a model for the other 14 but then Charlie was on his own. "He was most capable and he was very patient in helping the other younger fellows use the tools," said Naugle. "It was almost like he was showing up for a job as he arrived each day wearing his red Troop #155 t-shirt and started to work right away."

While Charlie supplied most of the equipment and the brawn for the project, it has been a family

affair. "My grandfather donated all the lumber," said Stajewski. "I guess he just wanted to help me out. I'm really grateful; it was a generous thing to do."

Having adults to admire has been a positive influence in Charlie's life but he is modest about his own role model status in the troop. "I feel I am maturing and becoming more of an adult myself," he said. "I know some of the younger scouts look up to me and stuff. It's a little strange but I think it's good."

Stajewski has been involved with scouting since he was six years old and feels the training is an integral part of his successful completion of the picnic area project. "You're kind of in charge of everything so you need all those leadership skills and you have to be ready to handle something unexpected. After this, I think I'm prepared for the rank of Eagle Scout."

His hard work, dedication and willingness to be involved in his community indicate that Stajewski is prepared for life. "I have a feeling of satisfaction. It's nice to know you can do something like this and make a difference."

Lake-Lehman gears up for new school year and beyond

By KASIA McDONOUGH
Post Staff

LAKE-LEHMAN - The first day of school for kindergarten students in the Lake-Lehman School District has been pushed back until September 7 in order to accommodate four days of teacher in-services.

Kindergarten staff and administrators will use the extra days to become familiar with a new language development curriculum being introduced this year. The "Letter People" program, designed by Head Start, is an alternative to traditional teaching strategies.

School board members authorized the calendar change despite some concerns about disruptions for working parents. "The only thing that worries me is the effect this will have on families with more than one child in school," said Ron Payne, school board director. "I'm lucky that my wife doesn't have to work, but for some parents there could be problems arranging day care."

Dr. William Price, Superintendent, explained the administration is aware the late start may create difficulties but he said the additional time is needed to familiarize teachers with the new language development curriculum. "I'm confident we're going to get calls on this but I think this is one way we can insure the money we have invested in the 'Letter People' is not wasted because the teachers have to spend a year learning the system," he said.

This approach encourages hands-on projects, which educators believe stimulate learning. "Through the 'Letter People' we're trying to encourage the staff to move away from a static environment, in which a student is given a picture of an apple to color, to an activity-rich system in which the class may be outside looking for things that begin with the letter 'A,'" said Dave McLaughlin-Smith, principal of the Lake-Noxen and

"We want to make sure we don't have kindergarten students sitting at a desk all day and then going home with 50 papers."

Dave McLaughlin-Smith
Principal, Lake-Noxen and Ross elementary schools

Ross Elementary Schools.

Reducing paper consumption was an extra benefit that appealed to district officials, who estimate each sheet costs approximately 19 cents to produce. "We want to make sure we don't have kindergarten students sitting at a desk all day and then going home with 50 papers," said McLaughlin-Smith.

In addition to changes in the kindergarten curriculum, the district is also investigating ways to upgrade computer, security and utility systems in each of its schools. "Mr. McLaughlin-Smith and I have been preparing a grant application which provides money to help combat school violence," said Dr. Price. "The grant could be used to upgrade computers, purchase surveillance equipment or for staff development."

Offering students access to cutting edge technology is high on the list of district priorities. "With the present set of computers, which are three years old, we have a need to start looking to upgrade. I have been in contact with several hardware suppliers regarding options available to us, but unfortunately as soon as you buy something it becomes obsolete."

The school board also listened to a presentation from C.B. Siebe, a performance contractor, which would work with the district to make improvements to major sys-

tems in the schools in an effort to make them more efficient. Modernization of lighting, water conservation measures, window replacement and upgrading mechanical systems are changes the district may consider.

Siebe guarantees the cost of these improvements would be funded by the resulting savings in utility costs associated with more efficient systems. "Basically, you're spending the money anyway, it's just a matter of do you keep the old stuff and pay higher utility bills or do you invest in new stuff and cut them," said John Hollister. "We're not saying we're going to make the classrooms colder and darker to save money—all of these things are done to make the environment more comfortable for students."

The Ross Elementary School project has moved a step closer to groundbreaking as the board approved a resolution in accordance with the PA school code and Act 34. The resolution authorized a maximum project cost of \$3 million and a maximum construction cost of \$1,838,000 for the expansion and renovation of the 50-year-old school.

Improvements made to the grounds of the Lehman-Jackson Elementary School were the subject of controversy at the August board meeting. Landscapers from Chamberlain Nursery installed several trees, shrubs and decorative items around the school and the work was paid for through the district. "We often provide matching funds to the PTA for projects of this nature," said Dr. Price. "In this instance the PTA purchased some playground equipment which cost \$4,000 and we paid \$3,800 for the landscaping."

Several school directors felt the request should have been brought before the board. "This is how things get misconstrued," said Payne. "I'm not saying anything inappropriate was done here but this leaves room for speculation."

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Hospice Saint John, a program of Visiting Nurses Northeast, will be holding its monthly grief support group meeting on Friday, Aug. 27 from 10:30 a.m. - 12 noon at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Shavertown.

The meeting which is free of charge and open to the public, will be facilitated by Rev. Peter Kuritz, chaplain.

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