

Dissident board members suggest cost-savings possible

By BILL GOODMAN
Post Staff

LEHMAN - The Lake-Lehman board of school directors discussed vendor search policies, authorized the preparation of five-year contracts for transportation providers, and filled several extracurricular positions at a meeting held on August 24.

Angelo DeCesaris called for the district to be more aggressive when searching for contractors. "It's our responsibility to get the best services we can find," he said.

After spending an hour or two in the internet, DeCesaris said he had found a company that provided a lower bid on transportation software in the same category as what was currently being considered. He said national companies that could provide better services that find and forward these advertisements.

Kathleen Williams, business manager, said she talked with the company DeCesaris had contacted, and discovered they were the same price as companies that offered bids. DeCesaris still wanted to wait on awarding the bid to Advanced Management Systems (AMS). Although DeCesaris, Lois Kopcha, Robert Allardyce, and Joseph Kapitula voted to wait, the other five board members voted to award the contract.

DeCesaris brought up the same issue when the board was to vote on awarding Epix Internet Services a contract for the 2000-2001 school year. "I'm stuck now," he said. DeCesaris said Epix may be the only provider that covers the area, but he felt options should be looked into. The board voted unanimously to approve the contract, but Allardyce said he did so only to keep service to the schools from being interrupted.

In other business, the board authorized Attorney Peter Savage, the district solicitor, to prepare five-year contracts for bus contractors as well as van and car providers. The board was supposed to award the contracts as well, but many members did not

"We haven't even gotten into change orders yet. God knows what this will cost."

Robert Allardyce
School director

want to do so without reviewing the contracts first. Jim Barrall thanked the board for their confidence in the providers. The longer contracts will allow transportation companies to secure loans for equipment and plan for the future more effectively. Many of the transportation providers have worked with the Lake-Lehman school district for years.

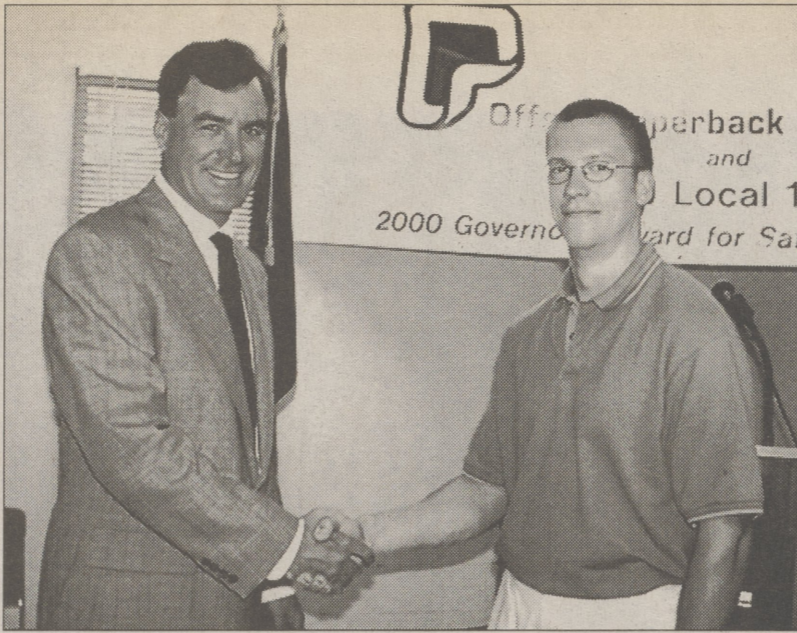
Repairs to the middle level building roof are underway. The roof of the gym was finished on Friday, and Robert Roberts, interim superintendent of schools, said the shop and cafeteria areas would be done while school is in session without any safety risk to the students.

Douglas Trumbower, the district's architect, said that bids have come in for the renovations of the Ross Elementary school building. "It was a pretty good set of bids," he said.

If the district would choose the lowest bidders in each category, the price totaled almost \$3,500,000, about \$1 million over original estimates. Allardyce was dismayed at these new numbers. "We haven't even gotten into change orders yet. God knows what this will cost," he said.

In most categories, which included general contracting, ventilation, plumbing, electrical and food service construction, the bids did not vary widely. The bids for asbestos removal ranged from \$45,844 to \$106,325. Trumbower said he was not sure why the difference in those numbers was so great.

The school board also awarded several extracurricular positions, including Anthony Richard Gorgone as athletic director and Thomas A. Williams as assistant athletic director. Sandra Reno as girl's volleyball coach and Michael Tribendis as assistant volleyball coach. The board also appointed eight substitute teachers, two teacher associates and three volunteer golf assistants.



Lt. Governor Mark Schweiker, left, shakes hands with **Chris Cave**, chairman of the day shift Safety Committee.

Safety award

(continued from page 1)

Employees are also excited by the award. "It's nice to be recognized for the hard work," said Dave Baloga, chairman of the Safety committee on midnight shift. "Other companies that won the award have been larger."

The Central Safety Committee helps maintain the safety program and keep employees involved. The committee acts as a sounding board for the employees, and the board even addresses issues not directly related to safety. Members of the safety committee also perform plant inspections once a month on each

"The award is a boost to employees. Everyone had to participate to earn it."

Michael Gallagher
President, Offset Paperback

shift. Employees at OPM attend monthly training sessions, and learn about topics such as fire-extinguisher use, hazardous materials labeling identification, and safe equipment maintenance.

Fieldhouse

(continued from page 1)

people two years ago. At that time, the district developed athletic fields on land that it had owned for decades, but had not used. In the intervening time, neighbors had used the land for gardens and other personal activities. "Now everybody is up in arms that Dallas School District can't use property in a manner in which they intend," Jones said.

Dr. Gilbert Griffiths, superintendent of schools, said Monday that UGI has completed the work behind the fields and power had been routed away from the stadium area. UGI was removing the old poles on Monday.

Because power has been rerouted, construction of the fieldhouse is progressing. The steel for the front entrance has been put up, as well as some of the trusses for the roof of the fieldhouse. Griffiths said seating

for the bleachers will be installed on Tuesday, August 29, and the roof trusses would be finished Tuesday as well.

Attorney Bruce Phillips said he and the neighbors were moving forward with their lawsuits. "We're preparing two different lawsuits at the state level, and a single, if not multiple lawsuit at the federal level," he said. Phillips is focusing on the state lawsuits first, and he said they will take another week to prepare. The new lawsuits involve 20 owners along Westminster Drive. Almost all those named in the upcoming lawsuits were part of the original

Telethon

(continued from page 1)

events we do," said Patty Vergetti, District Director of MDA. "Sean was chosen because he has a great personality and temperament. He's only eight years old and he does a terrific job. We've had him all over the place this summer. We visited all of the local fire departments and so many other places. He has a great temperament to handle all of this picture-taking," she added.

Although Sean Ziller is frequently the center of attention, Brian doesn't mind. "Brian has a wonderful, positive attitude and has found his niche as an MDA volunteer," Wilkinson noted. "He brings sunshine to all he touches as they work together to find a cure for this neuromuscular disease," she added.

Brian, who is an eighth grade student at Dallas Middle School, is a member of the Emerald Isle Step Dancers from St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Wilkes-Barre. "Last year I put up a sign and a lot of the kids volunteered to dance. So, we performed at the telethon," said Brian. "It was a lot of fun," he added.

Brian has helped out with other MDA benefits over the years. "We had a carnival a few years ago. Brian also ran a car wash at our home one year," said Mrs. Ziller. "He's always been terrific with his brother."

Brian and Sean are not the only Zillers who are prominent volunteers. "We have a lot of nieces and nephews who also help

"Brian has a wonderful, positive attitude and has found his niche as an MDA volunteer."

Patty Vergetti
MDA District Director

out," said Susan. "It's a real family affair."

In addition to that, Alfred Ziller, the boys' father, is one of the local telethon coordinators this year. "Alfred and Gary Mullen, who are strictly volunteers, are in charge of recruiting and coordinating volunteers for the telethon. They schedule the phone workers and all the behind-the-scene workers. It is a lot of work," explained Vergetti. "We're still scrambling for volunteers for this year. We need people to work the phones for the Monday morning and evening shifts," she added.

Last year the telethon raised \$421,209 locally. "It was a terrific year," noted Vergetti. "Our goal every year, as Jerry Lewis says, is one dollar more."

You can still be part of this year's Muscular Dystrophy telethon activities by calling 1-877-632-6955 or you can tune in and make a donation.

The telethon will be televised live on WNEP Channel 16 from 9 p.m. Sunday through 6:30 p.m. Monday.

Financing

(continued from page 1)

more advantageous to the district," he said. The district currently has a surplus of about \$3 million.

The additions to the Ross Elementary Building and moving the middle grades to the high school are currently estimated to cost \$11,230,000. Bids for the Ross Elementary addition are almost \$1 million more than expected. Kopcha had said the school may need to borrow than \$10 million if the construction does not come in on budget.

Last year, the school board heard presentations from four banks, including PNC Securities. PNC Securities provides services to several other school districts in the area, including Dallas, Hanover, and Nanticoke.

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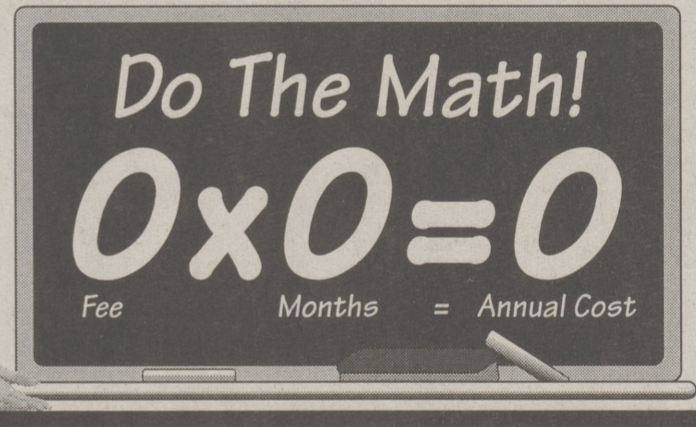
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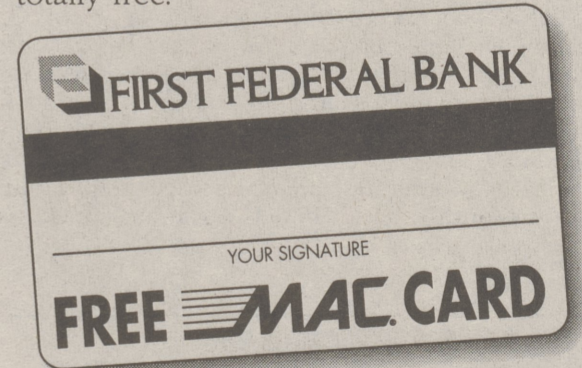


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