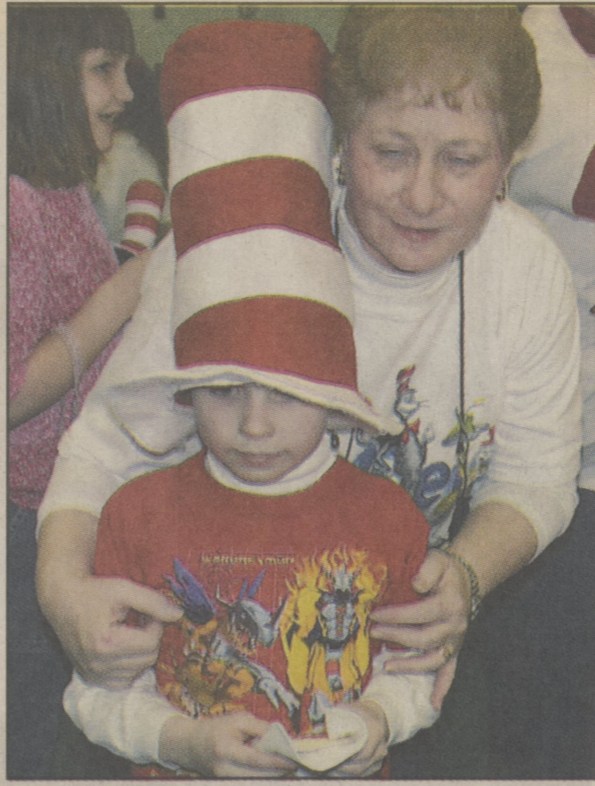
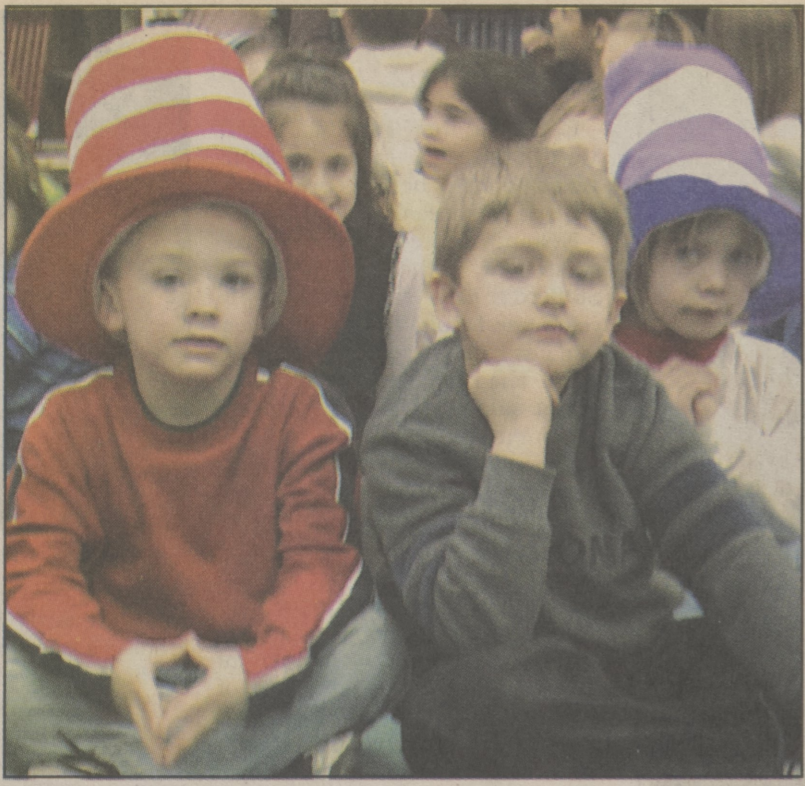


Eager to hear
Students waiting to hear a story, right. Far right, Dallas first grade student Jonathan Weaver with Mrs. Hartshorne at the Cat Café. In lower photo, Mr. Paul Reinert, Dallas Middle School assistant principal, is surrounded by hat-wearing students at Dallas Elementary Read Across America Day. In front, from left, are Sean Ziller and Brandon Butler. In rear, Jeremy Stair, Justin Ellis, Rachael Alles and Ashley Whittle.

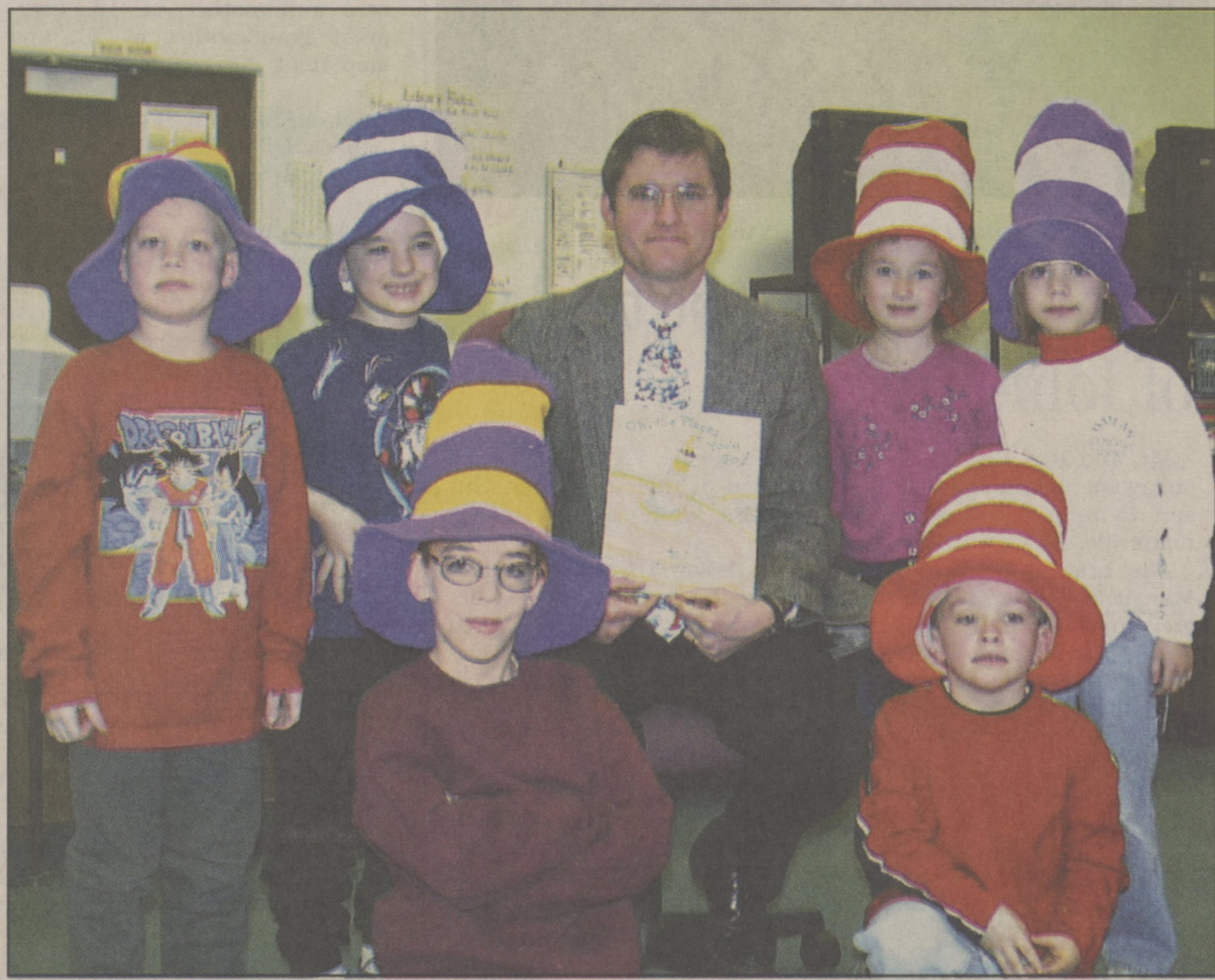


POST PHOTOS/M.B. GILLIGAN

Dallas students celebrate reading

By M.B. GILLIGAN
Post Correspondent

DALLAS - Dallas Elementary School celebrated Read Across America Day by bringing in a series of guest readers. Each guest read Theodore Geisel's (aka Dr. Seuss) last book entitled "Oh, The Places You'll Go" to a group of students from mixed grades. The children gathered in the library for the event. Mrs. Hartshorne, Reading Specialist; Mrs. Bunney, Instructional Support Teacher, and Mrs. Jerome, Guidance Counselor, organized the reading event. In addition, they transformed a section of the school library into the "Cat Café." "We ran out of green eggs and ham," said Mrs. Bunney, "so we're offering cookies and milk to the children instead." The Dallas PTO provided the treats for the students. Teach-



ers were welcomed into the cafe during the readings for special treats brought in by the three organizers. Norm Swithers, Home and School Visitor, was the first reader of the day. He was warmly welcomed and first grader Ian Peters, told him, "After my mom reads a story we have a chat about school." When Paul Reinert, assistant principal at the Dallas Middle School, started the story his listeners all agreed "they were off to great places." The mention of the

"Boom Band" brought out the drummers in the crowd when Mr. Reinert allowed the children a few seconds to make the sounds of the band. Other guest readers included Tony Spitale, School Psychologist; Diana Löwe, secretary to the director of special education; Allison Lord, secretary to the principal of the Dallas Middle School, and Frank Galicki, principal of the high school. The children were in for another surprise before their session was finished. A raffle

was held and one student in each class won a \$5 gift certificate to the Tudor Book Store to further encourage their interest in reading.

Land

(continued from page 1)

which was created to manage the land. PEI was sold to Southern Union of Austin, Texas in 1999, and about three months later Theta and the roughly 40,000 acres of land, including 28,500 acres of watershed land mostly in Luzerne and Lackawanna counties were sold for \$12.3 million.

U.S. Rep. Don Sherwood, R-Tunkhannock, has since identified Dunmore businessman Louis DeNaples as the owner of the watershed land.

Conservationists worry the new owner will develop the property, polluting land that acts as a natural buffer around water reservoirs and erasing the rural nature of surrounding communities.

"It's striking the amount of money they've made on this land," said Charles McPhedran, senior attorney for Citizens for Pennsylvania's Future (PennFuture), a statewide environmental group studying the PG Energy land sale.

"Some of this Theta land was taken from residents of Northeastern Pennsylvania for the purpose of a clean water supply," McPhedran said. "Now that it's been taken from this use, if this land is going to be sold it should first be offered back to the families who owned it — for the same price paid."

Stories similar to Johnson's run deep in the Lehman Township's countryside. One local legend is about a man whose family is no longer in the area. He was a poor illiterate farmer in the early 1920s, Johnson said. The man, a neighbor of Johnson, unknowingly signed his lease to the water company, she said.

Even though Russell Ide groused daily about the water company "taking his land," Johnson is grateful that it has

"They took all of those trees down. I don't think we'll see any wolves or that cinnamon bear."

Ruth Ide-Johnson
Lehman land owner

"Some of this Theta land was taken from residents of Northeastern Pennsylvania for the purpose of a clean water supply."

Charles McPhedran
Senior attorney
Citizens for Pennsylvania's Future

remained relatively untouched for 74 years. From her window, she can still watch coyotes, deer and bear and a thick canopy of trees has shaded her land for years.

Now, the oldest and thickest trees are on the forest floor, as Theta is harvesting timber from the land. Light and traffic noise from Route 118 invade Johnson's 24 acres for the first time.

The Lehman Township land up for sale is the latest group of land that Theta has put on the market.

Former watershed properties on the market have a combined asking price of \$8.9 million. Those properties include Dunn Lake, a well-known fishing spot in Ararat Township, Susquehanna County, for \$3.6 million; Lowe Lake, Herrick Township, for \$550,000; Ball Pond, Ararat Township, for \$600,000; Mud Pond, Ararat Township, for \$2.8 million; and most of Fiddle Lake, Ararat Township, for \$305,000. The Lehman land is reportedly for sale at about \$3,300 per acre, more than 10 times the average price paid for the entire land package.

For sale in Scott Township, Lackawanna County, are Hart Lake for \$450,000 and Chapman Lake for \$600,000.

Johnson still loves her home and the land that surrounds it, carrying the story of the first family to settle in Lehman.

"A lot more cars go by, but it's still nice," Johnson said. "You can look out the window and see the deer."

She paused, reconsidering. "They took all of those trees down. I don't think we'll see any wolves or that cinnamon bear."

Dallas High Class of '77 to meet

Members of the Dallas High School Class of 1977 will meet Thursday, March 15 at 7 p.m. at Grotto Pizza, Harveys Lake. Anyone interested in planning a 25th reunion is welcome to attend.

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