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Graduates recall 'good old days,' look to life after high school

By NANCY LEVINSON
Special to The Dallas Post

Editor's Note: The Dallas Post asked an incoming senior at Dallas High School to write about this year's graduation.

DALLAS - For the 88 girls and 94 boys who comprised the Class of 2001 from Dallas Senior High School, Thursday, June 7, 2001 was both a happy and a sad day. Endings and beginnings were all a part of the evening.

The 40th Commencement of the Dallas Senior High School was the first Dallas Senior High School graduation to be held at

the Anderson Sports and Health Center at College Misericordia. Graduation festivities began when shuttle buses transported chorus and band members, National Honor Society ushers, teachers, friends, and family members from the high school to the ceremony facility.

The graduates were the last to shuttle over. They made a grand entrance as they descended the staircase to the gymnasium while the Dallas Senior High School Band played the traditional "Pomp and Circumstance." An audience close to 2,000 people watched the procession proudly.

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Holly Keefe listened attentively to a speaker at the 2001 Dallas High School graduation.

By STEF BENDIK and DAN BLIDNER
Special to The Dallas Post

Editor's Note: The Dallas Post asked members of the incoming senior class at Lake-Lehman High School to write about this year's graduation.

LEHMAN - The Lake-Lehman graduating class of 2001 gathered Friday to celebrate their transition from childhood to adulthood. This rite passage was greatly anticipated and now finally realized. Entering the real world, the graduates were armed with the lessons they had learned at Lake-Lehman and the courage to face the un-

known.

At the ceremony the graduates, family and friends had the pleasure of listening to speeches from class President Gordon Stransky, Janel Janiczek, President of Student Council and Salutatorian, Valedictorian Sarah Davis, and a guest speaker from the Lake-Lehman graduating class of 1972, Barbara E. King, the Associate Dean of Student Affairs of Wilkes University.

Gordon Stransky spoke of taking risks. He spoke of such great men as Columbus and Ben Franklin who overcame adversity. He expressed his wishes for class to "...

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State \$\$ to help with rec complex

By HEATHER B. JONES
Post Staff

BACK MOUNTAIN - The Back Mountain Recreation Association (BMRA) received a huge boost from the state Thursday in helping make the Back Mountain Sports and Recreation Complex a reality.

In the middle of a hayfield in Lehman Township, a virtual who's who of the Back Mountain came out to celebrate BMRA's \$500,000 grant from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR). The grant will provide the majority of the funding needed to purchase two parcels of land — a total of 130 acres — for a sports and recreation center. The land is located in Lehman Township along Outlet Road and Firehouse Road.

The grant is funded through DCNR's Community Conservation Partnership Program, made possible, in part, through Governor Tom Ridge's \$650 million Growing Greener Program, the state's largest-ever environmental investment.

Dave Sutton, BMRA President, said the additional \$200,000 of the purchase price should be raised by August. He said the money has been committed, but is not in-hand at the present time.

Finishing the recreation park will cost approximately \$15-16 million, Sutton said. When complete the park will include two basketball courts, two tennis courts, a Little League complex

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POST PHOTO/HEATHER B. JONES

Twister girls

Molly Savage, Heather Harmen, and Laura Loeffler started their night at Dallas High School's Grad 2001 lock-in with a little Twister. Story, more photos on page 3.

Penn State student on a mission in Venezuela

By SANDY PEOPLES
Post Correspondent

DALLAS - Dallas resident Kevin Burkhardt arrived in Caracas, Venezuela last week as part of the Global Intern Program. This is his second trip to South America, having worked in El Salvador in 1999. Burkhardt is a senior at Penn State working on his degree in psychology. He plans to get his master's degree in economic development.

"I have three goals for this trip," said Burkhardt. "I want to learn more about their language, experience as much of their culture as I can in eight weeks, and help some of the people find alternative sources of income. Venezuela is the only country in the Western Hemisphere that is part of OPEC, and there is much affluence associated with that. However, some of the people are still refugees suffering from the aftermath of the floods a few years ago. They still need housing and can't seem to get back on their feet."

Burkhardt has fond memories of his

previous trip to a Latin American country. "I really like the warmth of the people. They are very hospitable and welcoming." He hopes to make a difference and to help them pave the way for future development and to gain some relief from their current plight. "I don't know exactly what I'll be doing, but that doesn't matter," he said.

"When I went to El Salvador, I had expectations that I would do great things for the people of Colima. What really happened was a major advancement in my own personal growth. That experience gave me much more than I think I contributed."

Kevin said he now has a greater appreciation for the way people live in Dallas. "In the future I would like to work for an international company or the government and live in South America for a few years," he said.

Burkhardt's parents, Linda and Richard, are very supportive of their son's goals and mission, but like all parents, are a little apprehensive. "They worry



KEVIN BURKHARDT

about me," he said, "but I want to come home to tell the story of the needs down there, and they helped me do that when I returned from El Salvador."

Renovation of middle school is underway

By HEATHER B. JONES
Post Staff

DALLAS - After 32 years, a complete overhaul of the Dallas Middle School has begun. Asbestos abatement began at the school building Monday at 7 a.m., and the Dallas School Board approved bids for the additions and alterations to the school at its meeting Monday night.

The price tag for the project is \$13,159,578, which includes all alternatives that went out for bid except the plaster swimming pool. The extra items which were approved include

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Rossi quits Act 50 group over deadline

By HEATHER B. JONES
Post Staff

LEHMAN - As promised, school board member Moderno Rossi has resigned from the Lake-Lehman Act 50 Tax Study Commission.

At the JUNE 4 Lake-Lehman School Board meeting Rossi said since the commission could not make the June 8 deadline with ITS recommendation for the 2001 municipal election ballot, he would resign.

"My last day on the commission will be June 8," Rossi said at the meeting.

Angelo DeCesaris, school board president, said anyone resigning from the Act 50 Commission must present a letter of resignation to the board. Jacqueline Moran, school board secretary, said Rossi did submit a letter of resignation.

Rossi's fellow members on the commission weren't pleased with

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