

THE POST

50¢

SERVING THE COMMUNITIES OF DALLAS AND LAKE-LEHMAN SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Gate of Heaven grads

From basement gym to state title

By RONALD BARTIZEK
Post Staff

The state basketball championships were played before a crowd of more than 6,000, in the spotless Giant Center in Hershey. But some key players who helped bring the Class A trophy home to Bishop O'Reilly High School began their careers in a much more modest place, the basement gym at Gate of Heaven School in Dallas.

O'Reilly starters Matt Flanagan, Tim Crossin and Josh Aciukewicz spent many an hour on the linoleum floor of the spartan space, where hundreds of children as young as kindergarten-age have tried gamely to put a ball through a hoop. They were joined on the championship team by GOH graduates Chris DeRojas and Conor Judge.

When they reach fourth grade, Gate of Heaven students can play on boys and girls Gators teams that compete in the Wyoming Valley Catholic League. A whole lot of them do, in part because the small school has no athletic facilities except the gym, which itself is used for many activities outside of sports, serving as the cafeteria each day and the site of assemblies, parties, concerts, auctions and a host of other events.

The cafeteria part presents an unusual challenge for basketball. Before the space can be used for a game, the tables have to be folded up and put away, recalled Art Flana-

See GATORS, pg 7



Return of the kings. Five members of the state champion Bishop O'Reilly boys basketball team returned to where their basketball careers began — the gym at Gate of Heaven School. Standing in front of a wall painting of the Gators mascot, from left: Matt Flanagan, Josh Aciukewicz, Chris DeRojas, Tim Crossin and Conor Judge.

FOR THE POST/
CHARLOTTE
BARTIZEK

Dad/son EMTs help plug a volunteer gap

By M.B. GILLIGAN
Post Correspondent

The Dallas Fire and Ambulance Department has four newly certified Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT), but there is always a need for more.

"It is a relief to have the new volunteers but there is still a lot of time we have to cover," said Megan Palmer, Ambulance Chief.

Dallas Ambulance has paid personnel on duty Monday to Friday from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. and on Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. The other 100 hours in every week are handled by 13 volunteer EMTs. Ambulance calls cannot be handled by a single person, so usually two EMTs or an EMT and other qualified person respond.

See VOLUNTEERS, pg 2

L-L seniors help, learn with grad projects

By CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK
Post Correspondent

LEHMAN TWP. — The 150 seniors who will graduate from Lake-Lehman Senior High School this June were required to spend at least 25 volunteer community service hours on their senior projects.

Most spent much more time than that, some raised significant amounts of cash for community organizations, and all came away with a better insight into their interests, strengths and weaknesses.

And some produced the volunteer hours and benefit for the community, but not always in the expected ways.

Ashley Peterson and Carol Jones wanted to paint something "very large" for their project.

See PROJECTS, pg 9



FOR THE POST/CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK

Jake Riddle organized a car show at Harveys Lake to benefit the Harveys Lake Fire Dept.

Annual library appeal expands by 3 times

By ERIN YOUNGMAN
Post Staff

DALLAS — Since the Back Mountain Memorial Library was hit with a 40 percent reduction in state funding, a lot has changed. The number of new books and materials being purchased has been slashed and staff members have gone without raises.

For the time being, however, two things remain constant, said Martha Butler, the library's director, "We've been fortunate not to have to cut back hours."

And while other libraries have had to cut staff,

See LIBRARY, pg 3

Downtown revivals

Grant funds will revitalize Tunkhannock's center

By ERIN YOUNGMAN
Post Staff

TUNKHANNOCK — By this time next year, downtown Tunkhannock could look significantly different. After 10 years of planning, a major downtown beautification project is set to go out for bid.

The recent award of a \$250,000 state grant means the borough now has nearly \$500,000 to make major improvements to four blocks of its

downtown. Two blocks of Tioga Street and two blocks of state Route 29 will reap the benefits of the undertaking.

Historic lights, new sidewalks and curbing are all a part of the downtown streetscape program set to begin this summer. The local tree association is also in the process of gathering grant money to coordinate new plantings in conjunction with the project.

Judy Mead, a member of the borough's three-person streetscape

committee, said the improvements are a long time coming and important for a number of reasons.

"We want to enhance the community; we also want to enhance pedestrian safety."

She said overgrown trees have broken aged sidewalks. Curbing is battered and the absence of street lights makes the downtown dark and unsafe for pedestrians.

"A lot of areas have lost their historic downtowns, so we want to maintain ours," Mead said.

The hope is the enhancements will further the positive trends already occurring in town.

"The central business district is much more of a hometown again. We're getting a lot of visitors. The storefronts are full — finally, I see a lot of things coming together," she said.

The streetscape committee began discussing how to enhance the area in 1994. The first grant applications went out in 2000 and the

See DOWNTOWN, pg 3

Dallas counts successes

By ERIN YOUNGMAN
Post Staff

DALLAS — The borough began its own downtown revitalization process in 2002 and is well on its way to seeing the fruit of its efforts bear out.

"A tremendous amount of things have happened in a short period of time," said Dallas Borough Council President John Oliver, who has been with the process since it began. "There are so many things being done as we speak."

Several action items have already come out of the Our Dallas — Today and Tomorrow visioning exercise, said Oliver. The largest of which is PennDOT's commitment to fund a \$400,000 roundabout feasibility study for the congested five-points intersection.

The borough has also applied

for and received an \$18,000 grant to plant trees along Main Street and other highly traveled areas. Some have already been planted at the post office and recreation center on Burndale Avenue.

Last year's very successful Dallas Harvest Festival was another outgrowth of the visioning process.

Still in the planning stages is an urban greenway trail along Toby's Creek that would start at the five-points intersection, meander behind businesses and homes that front on Lake Street and end at College Misericordia. The borough is planning to spend a significant portion of the tree grant on lining the trail.

Oliver attributed the project's success to the borough's residents. "We've just had a wonderful outpouring from the community," he said.



Jen Hindman from Aquaterra Technologies, a West Chester-based company hired by Sunoco, tested the ground and water as tanks were taken out of the closed gas station at the center of Dallas. The station is being removed to make way for improvements at the busy intersection, which will allow the developer of land in Dallas Township to proceed with a project there.

FOR THE POST/CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK

King and Queen of Valentine's Day at Meadows Nursing Center

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March Madness 1959

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Math stars shine at O'Reilly and Wyoming Sem

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