

Former Gators lead O'Reilly to another state title.

7



# THE POST

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SERVING THE COMMUNITIES OF THE DALLAS & LAKE-LEHMAN SCHOOL DISTRICTS



FOR THE POST/CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK

## C'mon bunny, hurry it up

Samantha Banks, Erica Van Etten and Katelyn Van Etten, Dallas, wait patiently for the Easter bunny, otherwise known as Dan Neff, from College Misericordia's Education Club, to start Dallas Borough's annual egg hunt that drew over 50 children. More pictures on page 2.

### SCHOOL BOARD ELECTIONS

## Experience is best teacher for candidates

By RONALD BARTIZEK  
Post Staff

Dave McLaughlin-Smith spent 27 years as a teacher and administrator in the Lake-Lehman School District.

Richard Coslett, a Shavertown dentist, has spent nearly as long becoming educated in his profession.

Both men now want to bring their unique experiences to their respective school boards.

McLaughlin-Smith, who calls himself "nearly a lifetime resident of the district," attended Lake-Lehman schools before going to college, then returned in 1978 as teacher. In the course of his career, he has dealt with a number of important aspects of public education.

**A challenge knocks one candidate off GOP ballot. Others fail.**  
Page 2.

"I think I bring a lot to the table," he said recently, including serving as a principal, curriculum director and grant writer. His skill in the last area has been enhanced, he said, by his most recent experience, as assistant superintendent in the Crestwood School District.

He took that job after being very publicly passed over for the superintendent job at Lake-Lehman after he requested a contract include his retention in an administrative position if things didn't work out in the top post.

McLaughlin-Smith says his candidacy has nothing to do with that incident, nor does the fact that James Mahon, board president during the episode, will not run for re-election. "I'm not politically motivated," he said, but wants to fulfill a career aspiration to make Lake-Lehman one of the best school districts in the state.

The new board will face the daunting task of negotiating a new contract with the teachers' union. The present board has asked the teachers to share the cost of health insurance, which has

See CANDIDATES, Page 2

## Young and old pitch in to help Honduran poor

Mark Evans, 15, and many others build medical and educational facilities in Central America.

By M.B. GILLIGAN  
Post Correspondent

Would you sign up to do manual labor in the sweltering heat of a third-world nation for a week without pay? That is just what 15-year-old Mark Evans and a group of builders with Operation Honduras did in February.

"I think it's a great experience to go to a foreign country to do some volunteer work," said Mark, a freshman at Dallas High School. "I laid some cement block and I carried cement blocks. It was in the 100's every day"

Operation Honduras began in 1996 in answer to a call for help from one former Peace Corps member to another. "Jim Davenport (of Dunmore) mentioned it at our weekly poker club and a few of us decided to

do it," said Back Mountain resident John Prokopchak. "I've probably been there about 14 times since then."

He is one in a group of volunteers that helps with some of the medical and educational needs of the many orphanages in the area of San Pedro Sula, Honduras. Prokopchak and Mark Evans Sr. travel to Honduras to build schools and medical facilities.

"We go down a week earlier than the main group to coordinate the construction. It takes time to get all of the building supplies," said Prokopchak, whose son Jonathan has gone along on two of the trips. "The main group works on the construction project for a week and we do as much as we can. Then we purchase everything that is needed to complete the job and the local people finish it."

Operation Honduras runs on a very tight budget and all donations go right to the projects. No money is taken out for administra-

See HONDURAS, Page 3



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Mark Evans, Jr., 15, held an iguana while standing near a stand with the ubiquitous Coca-Cola sign.

## Merit Scholarship finalist eager for an answer

By JENNIFER JUDGE  
YONKOSKI  
Post Correspondent

Skye Nickalls might have more to be anxious about than the average high school student. Not only is the Lake-Lehman High School senior waiting to hear about college admission decisions, she also has been waiting for more than a year to find out if she will be

named a National Merit Scholarship recipient.

Nickalls is one of 15,000 finalists in the program. The National Merit Scholarship program awards 8,200 scholarships, through a selection process that begins with roughly 1.3 million student entrants each year. Students are considered for awards based on PSAT scores, but Nickalls explains she had to also

fill out an application and write an essay. "I wrote about literature and English, how it is my passion," she said last week.

Nickalls is deeply involved with writing and English at Lake-Lehman. Co-editor of the literary magazine and a staff writer for the newspaper, Nickalls hopes to pursue those interests in college.

See MERIT, Page 3

## Both school board ballots are crowded

The May primary election ballot will be dotted with new names in both the Dallas and Lake-Lehman school districts. In Dallas, former directors Rich Coslett and Karen Kyle will be joined by current board members David Usavage and Maureen Matiska and newcomers Todd Buckley, Dick Orlovski, Thomas Stearns and Joyce Dombroski-Gebhardt in the contest for four 4-year terms. Usavage and incumbent Dennis Gochoel are running for the two years remaining in the term of Daniel Nulton, who was appointed to the board in 2004 but is not seeking election. Also not seeking re-election is Frank Natitus. All Dallas elections are at-large.

The Lake-Lehman School Board is divided into regions. Dave McLaughlin-Smith, incumbent Charles Balavage and Charles Crane are competing for one seat from Region 1. John Oliver III is the lone candidate for a seat from Region 2. Two seats are open in Region 3, with incumbent Sheila Gionfriddo challenged by David Paulauskas, Harold Grey and Andrew Salko.

Incumbents James Mahon (Region 1) and Moderno Rossi (Region 2) are not seeking re-election.

### Inside The Post



Award for Major Walsh 9

#### 12 Pages, 1 Section

- Calendar .....12
- Church .....11
- Crossword .....8
- Editorials .....4
- Obituaries .....5
- School .....10
- Sports .....7-9

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## Cool way to raise funds



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Brandon Burkhardt, foreground, and Pete Kennedy hustle back to shore.

MORE THAN 50 hardy souls dove into frigid Harveys Lake on March 19, shivering as they raised funds for the American Cancer Society. The Polar Bear Plunge, organized by Allison Boris, was held along the shore at the Garrity Realty office. The event raised more than \$4,000, giving Boris a boost toward her goal of more than \$10,000 for this year's Relay for Life, which will be held June 3 and 4 at College Misericordia's Mangelsdorf Field.

The plunge was dedicated to Allison's father, Frank "Buddy" Boris and Mel Devine, longtime friends who both died of cancer, and who both loved the lake.



Polar Bear Plungers run into Harveys Lake on March 19.