

THE POST

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

Smaller Christmas tree replaces bigger headaches

By DAVE KONOPKI
Post Editor

DALLAS – Putting the star atop the Christmas tree in the center of the borough's downtown just a whole lot easier.

The Dallas Lions Club replaced the nearly 40-foot, 50-year-old pine tree located next to the Dallas Post Office with an 8-foot Norwegian pine. The larger tree was most noticeable during the Christmas season, when it was decorated with ornaments and lights.

The decision to cut down the tree was one that had to be made, said club president Drew Fitch.

"It's unfortunate, but the tree was old and it was never maintained," he said. "It was dying and we tried to save it. It was also located too close to some high tension lines. We've been dealing with this for the last 10 years. We knew something like this was eventually going to happen."

Although the decision was necessary, it wasn't

"It's going to be a very nice tree and it's going to be just the right size. I know the new tree looks small right now, but just wait for a few years. The borough is 150 years old. Another four or five years is nothing."

Drew Fitch
Lions club president

easy, said Dallas Postmaster Kristen Tucker. "(The tree) was creating a creating safety hazard," she said. "We had to take the safety of the public into consideration. It was a very difficult decision for all parties. But we felt something needed to

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A smaller tree has replaced an older, taller, unhealthy tree near the main intersection in downtown Dallas. The tree is decorated and maintained by the Dallas Lions Club.

FOR THE POST/CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK

Holiday meal a reason to be thankful

By M.B. GILLIGAN
Post Correspondent

Shavertown United Methodist Church offered something new this Thanksgiving. People from the Back Mountain were invited to attend a Thanksgiving dinner hosted by the church. The event was scheduled to take place Thursday.

"I know that several churches offer dinners (in the Wilkes-Barre area), but I just thought there may be some people who wouldn't want to travel out of our community," said Carol Folk, organizer for the event.

"We are reaching out to people in the Back Mountain who may not have someone else to celebrate with and we wanted to afford them the opportunity to stay in their community."

There was no charge for the dinner and invitations were e-mailed to Back Mountain churches and hand-delivered to the Back Mountain Food Pantry.

"I feel very strongly that there are just people being left out," said Folk. "I have a background in food services and just felt this was something that was definitely do-able."

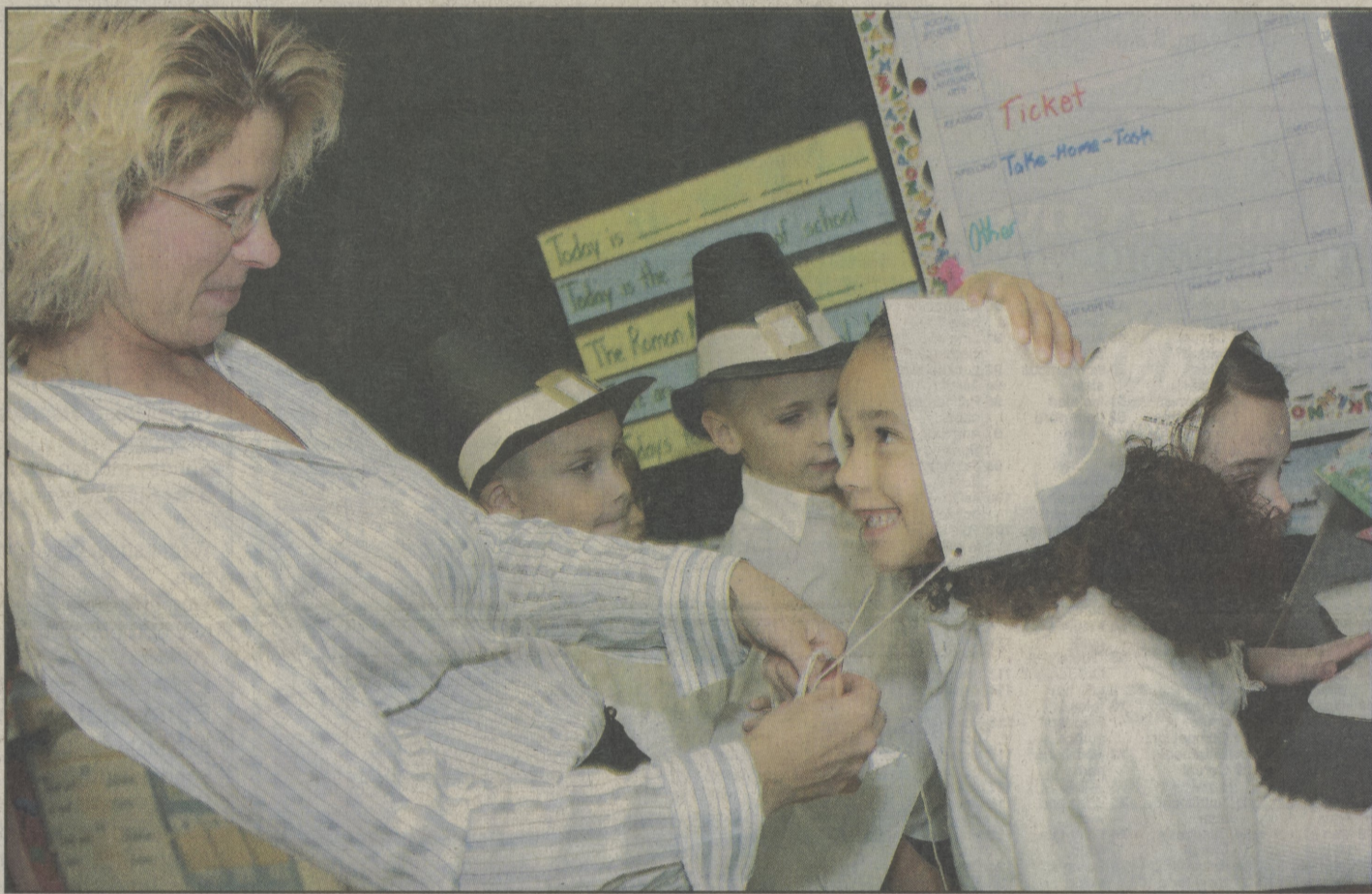
Folk resides in Wyoming, but has been a member of Shavertown United Methodist Church for about 12 years.

"When I was looking for a church, I was really impressed with Shavertown's (UMC) ministries and they have expanded since then," said Folk, who is a member of the Missions and Outreach committee at the church.

The dinner was funded completely by donations of food and money from the congregation. More than 30 people made reservations for the Thanksgiving dinner, some who insisted on making some type of donation.

The really wonderful thing about this is that we have at least that many people who have volunteered to help," said Folk, who was one of at least three cooks scheduled for the event. In addition, volunteers were scheduled to set up tables, serve dinner, and wash the dishes afterwards.

"This is the first year we are doing this so we're just feeling our way," said Folk. "Next year we'll start a little earlier and do something a little splashier to get the word out."



Second-grader Madison Goodwin has her pilgrim costume put on by teacher Kerry Landon.



Matthew Duffy enjoyed making cereal beads for the Thanksgiving program at Gate House pre-school in Dallas.



From left, Aaron Yurko, Katie Grose, Bielle Brace and Ann Yanik wait in the wings to start their Thanksgiving program performance at Dallas Elementary School.



Christian Diane, a pre-schooler at Gate House Pre-School in Dallas, gives his version of the meaning of Thanksgiving to a television reporter.

PHOTOS FOR THE POST/CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK

T-Day is a big day for area schools

Thanksgiving is full of traditions – from turkey to pumpkin pie to spending time with family members.

And for more than a decade, there have been a few unique Thanksgiving traditions in Back Mountain elementary schools. Three of those traditions were kept alive last week.

The Dallas Elementary School held its annual second grade play. The children, dressed as pilgrims and American Indians, sang and performed in front of family members and friends. The students are members of the classes of teachers Kerri Landon, Arlene Besecker, Diane Hogan, Sharon Lyons, Dyan Nice and Maryann Yurko.

At Wycallis Elementary School, the second-graders stomped their feet, clapped their hands and sang their way through the school's annual hoedown. The students were under the direction of teachers Elizabeth Faerber, Suzanne Herstek and Colleen Williams.



Parents Bridie Spare, Susan Diane and Susan Maloney, came dressed as pilgrims to the Thanksgiving program at Gate House in Dallas.

And in a more recent tradition, pre-schoolers ages 3-4 at the Gate House in Dallas held a Thanksgiving program. The school is part of the Gate of Heaven School. Students in the classes of Mary Jane Kozick and Ann Morrison sang songs, enjoyed a huge feast on the school grounds, and even got an opportunity to ride a pony.



American Indian Zack Haddle helps pilgrim Jack Tomko with his costume prior to their performance at Dallas Elementary School.

The gymnasium floor was full for the second grade Thanksgiving performance at Dallas Elementary School.

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