

# The DALLAS POST

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## DOWNTOWN RENOVATION



The former Himmler Theater closed in 1964.

## Curtain expected to rise in former Dallas theater

A \$2.5-\$3 million project is reviving the old Himmler Theater on Lake Street

Arts YOUiverse of Wilkes-Barre, to create a unique venue for art classes, as well as possible workshop space for local artists.

A new breath of life is in the stars for two historical buildings on Lake Street in Dallas. And the Back Mountain community is hoping to reap the benefits of the future renovation project.

Through its fine arts program, College Misericordia is considering offering art courses in the building for its students and the public. The upper showroom level is also available to accommodate a business that would compliment the overall project theme.

Built in 1927, the former Himmler Theater has remained silent for more than 40 years. Since its closing in 1964, the theater has been used primarily as warehouse space, first by the former Dallas Dairy and most recently the former L.L. Richardson Dodge dealership. The adjacent dealership showroom building closed in 2005, following a long history of its own.

"The arts and higher education are intermingled in such a way that it would be a shame not to take advantage of this wonderful opportunity," said College Misericordia president Michael MacDowell. "We have many students involved in the performing arts, and offer photography on campus. This facility gives College Misericordia the opportunity to expand our visual arts offering to students and to the Back Mountain community that we have served for over 82 years."

The Back Mountain Arts Association, a nonprofit organization in its formative stages, is dedicated to reviving the theater. Funding for the \$2.5 to \$3 million project is anticipated to come from grants, as well as public and private donations.

**"We see this as an exciting opportunity for the community to pull together and create something that we can all value."**

Chris Matus  
Property owner

Being considered within the future renovation of the historic movie house is the possibility of constructing an approximate 200-seat community cultural arts center that could serve as a local venue for a variety of amateur and professional entertainment avenues, including local dance and community theatre groups.

tion of the center of Dallas, College Misericordia and borough officials plan to work with the building owners Chris and Rebecca Matus of Dallas, who purchased the two properties last fall in hopes of reviving them. "We see this as an exciting opportunity for the community to pull together and create something that we can all value," said Chris Matus. Borough manager Joseph Moskovitz is excited about the future of Dallas. "These are exciting times for the borough and its downtown,

The former showroom is also expected to play a new and exciting role in the community. The lower level is the future home for a cooperative effort between College Misericordia and

As efforts continue for the revitalization of the center of Dallas, College Misericordia and borough officials plan to work with the building owners Chris and Rebecca Matus of Dallas, who purchased the two properties last fall in hopes of reviving them.

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Plans are being made to transform the former Himmler Theater to a community cultural arts center.

"It's very scary. Logan doesn't have the fears about cars and stairs that you and I have. We're trying to teach him to say 'ouch' or 'boo boo' when he hurts himself."

Gary Masters  
Father of son with Smith-Magenis syndrome



FOR THE DALLAS POST/CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK

The Masters family of Hunlock Creek, from left, Gary, Logan and Gina, have been dealing with 3-year-old Logan's battle with Smith-Magenis syndrome.

## A love that never hurts

By DAVE KONOPKI  
Dallas Post Editor

HUNLOCK CREEK - For more than two years, family members and friends assured Gina and Gary Masters they were the parents of a normal, active, healthy son.

Nothing more. But the Masters could tell something wasn't quite right with their son Logan. At 2 years old, he still wasn't speaking. He randomly banged his head off the floor and corners of tables. He used his fingers as a claw to tear the skin away from his ears. And there were times he placed his hands on top of a space heater and never pull back his hand from the pain.

"Everyone kept telling us 'oh, he's just being a boy,'" said Gina, a 1992 graduate of Wyoming Valley West High School. "People told us he wasn't talking because he's our only child and we're always doing things for him. Everyone told us he was fine."

Seven months ago, a doctor at Geisinger Medical Center in Danville gave the Hunlock Creek couple the reason for their son's behavior. Logan has Smith-Magenis syndrome, a genetic disorder characterized by a specific pattern of physical, behavioral and developmental features.

"We didn't know anything about it and we immediately thought the worst," said Gary, a 1992 graduate of Lake-Lehman High School. "The doctor's office called at 7 p.m. and asked us to come a few weeks earlier than our scheduled appointment. They could tell we were scared, so the doctor gave us the diagnosis on the phone."



Three-year-old Logan Masters has Smith-Magenis syndrome, a deletion of the 17th chromosome.

The syndrome is the result of the lack of a 17th chromosome. Some of the common symptoms of Smith-Magenis are self injury, head banging, insensitivity to pain, eye problems, a lack of depth perception and learning disabilities. The body of someone with SMS doesn't produce melatonin.

"Once we started learning more about (Smith-Magenis), we started to put all of the characteristics together and it made sense," said Gary, 32. "Logan has so many of the classic symptoms."

In addition to behavioral problems, there can also be speech delays. Many children with SMS

### YOU CAN HELP

The L.O.G.A.N. Foundation is holding a golf tournament at 10 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 7 at Mill Race Golf Course. The cost is \$80 per person for the captain and crew event. The fee includes golf, cart, lunch, beverages and a party. For more information, call Gina or Gary Masters at 477-3454. To learn more about Smith-Magenis syndrome, visit the Web site prism-s.org.

learn to communicate verbally, with sign language. The 3½-year-old Logan knows approximately 150 words in sign language and has a vocabulary of about 12 words his family can understand - from Mama to Papa to Bob (SpongeBob Squarepants) to Momo ("Sesame Street's" Elmo) to pizza.

"Going through this definitely tests the kind of person you are," said Gina, 31. "It made me appreciate everything in life. Something like this could test a relationship between husband and wife. With (Gary) being by my side, I fell in love with him more. I think we're stronger as a couple."

The Masters recently founded the L.O.G.A.N. Foundation. The acronym stands for Little Ones Genetic And Neurological. The foundation is in the process of receiving its 501-C tax exemption status.

"Our dream is to open a clinic in the Back Mountain for any child or adult that needs ther-

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## HONORING THE ELDERLY



TIMES LEADER STAFF PHOTO/S. JOHN WILKIN

Members of the Eastern Delaware Nation recently held a powwow at the Lakeside Nursing Home in Harveys Lake. The theme of the powwow was "Gathering in Honor of Our Elderly." The American Indians have been holding the event at the nursing home for the past six years. "It's my favorite powwow because the residents here enjoy it so much," said Eastern Delaware Nations sub-Chief John Taffe, who has attended each year since the powwow began. Resident Peggy Lassourreille, who is part American Indian, carried the nursing center wooden staff, adorned with leather and feathers, into the dance circle during the grand entrance. At left, Pete Blackwolf, a member of the Eastern Delaware Nation, leads a men's traditional dance.

### How To Reach Us

News: 675-5211  
thepost@leader.net  
15 N. Main St.  
Wilkes-Barre PA 18711

Subscriptions  
and Delivery: 829-5000

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