

The DALLAS POST

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Latin perfect language for Farias

BY GENELLE HOBAN
Post Correspondent

SHAVERTOWN — Katherine Farias not only knows the meaning of the phrase "carpe diem." She knows how to do it.

The Wyoming Seminary Upper School student was able to "seize the day" while taking the 2006 National Latin Examination. The Shavertown resident attained a perfect score in the Latin II test, which was taken by 149,000 students from the United States and 13 other countries. Only 1 percent of students received a perfect score.

"I really was surprised to find out that I did so well," said the Wyoming Seminary sophomore. "I didn't find it easy or difficult when I took it. It was just another test."

The approximately 45-minute exam tested the students' abilities in Latin reading comprehension, grammar, vocabulary and culture.

As a reward for receiving the unusually high score, Farias thinks her teacher might give her a few extra credit points in her Latin class at Wyoming Seminary. She will also receive a hand-lettered certificate from the National Latin Exam.

The daughter of Alan and Ann Farias said she began taking Latin about four years ago at school.

"It wasn't required, but a lot of people took it," she said. "It was just something I did. I really like Latin compared to any of the modern languages."

Farias, who also speaks Spanish, says Latin is more complex and completely different from the English and Spanish languages.

"It is difficult because of sentence structure and tough to speak because of word order," said the 15-year-old. "We don't speak it in class because the word endings change depending on the part of speech you use."

Since Latin is no longer a spoken language, Farias said it is interesting to figure out what it was like thousands of years ago when people spoke it.

"Sometimes it's neat though because some words we still use in English come from Latin, like summa cum laude when someone graduates with honors," she said.

Aside from speaking three languages, Farias also plays sports and is active in many school activities. She is a member of the tennis, basketball and lacrosse teams, as well as a part of student government, Blue Key and S.A.C., the student activities committee.

"I also love watching Grey's Anatomy and shopping," she said.

'TEACHER OF THE YEAR' FINALIST



Dallas Middle School special education teacher, Kathleen Andrusisian, gives a hug to Caitlin Trainor a blind student at Dallas Senior High School who introduced her at the state convention.

FOR THE DALLAS POST/CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK

An inspirational lesson

By DAVE KONOPKI
Dallas Post Editor

DALLAS TWP. — For the last 30 years, Kathleen Andrusisian has inspired countless students as a special education teacher. Earlier this month, it was time for one of the students to return the favor.

Caitlin Trainor, a sight-impaired 11th grade student at Dallas High School, introduced Andrusisian during the Pennsylvania "Teacher of the Year" luncheon in Harrisburg. The Dallas Middle School teacher was one of 12 finalists from across the state, becoming the first educator from the Dallas School District to be named as a finalist.

Using a speech written in Braille, Trainor introduced her former teacher to the crowd of more than 300 people.

"She was the star of the show," said Andrusisian, who has been teaching in the district for the past 10 years. "She was incredible. Everyone in the room was silent. Her speech

"To be a good teacher you have to love learning. And you have to love teaching others."

Kathleen Andrusisian, Special education teacher, Dallas Township

made you want to cry. I was teary-eyed. She inspires me so much."

Students, parents, colleagues and community members from across the state nominate teachers for the annual award. A committee of former "Teacher of the Year" recipients and past finalists narrow the list to 30 semifinalists and eventually to 12 finalists.

The selection process includes answering essay questions and providing a videotape of work with students. The committee and the Pennsylvania Department of Education select the winners. This year's award was given to Lois

Rebich, an instructional support teacher at Ross Elementary in the North Hills School District.

Dallas Middle School principal Anthony Martinelli nominated Andrusisian for the award. He also attended the luncheon with Dallas school board member Dick Orloski.

"Each year, I try to nominate a person who exemplifies the type of teachers we have in our school," said Martinelli. "I carefully make a selection based upon performance. It's very, very difficult. But I believe we have to celebrate our teachers' success as well as the success of our

students.

"Kathleen has a passion for teaching. She's every dedicated and she truly believes that every child can learn."

Andrusisian says she had mixed feelings when Rebich was announced as the winner. Rebich will represent Pennsylvania at the national Teacher of the Year convention next April in Dallas, Texas. She is also expected to make several other appearances across the country and write in various publications.

"Part of me wondered if there was something I didn't do to win," she said. "The other part was relief. If I had won, I would have been very taxing to maintain my teaching job and meet requirements as Teacher of the Year. I didn't know if I would be able

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Kids with books have dogs' ears

By DAVE KONOPKI
Dallas Post Editor

DALLAS — It didn't take long for Emily Lofing to realize the well-behaved greyhound sitting next to her at the Back Mountain Memorial Library wasn't an ordinary dog.

While the 10-year-old Shavertown resident read several books, Tia sat quietly nearby, her undivided attention focused squarely on the young girl.

"I thought it was neat that dogs would listen to you read," said Emily, a third grade student at Wycallis Elementary School. "Most dogs wouldn't listen. I thought it was fun. The dogs weren't jumping around like a normal dog would."

The pet therapy dogs were part of special reading program at the library last week. The dogs — licensed members of Therapy Dogs International — visit places such as schools and libraries to help children gain confidence and improve their reading skills.

"I kind of felt more comfort-



Shavertown resident Stephen Lofing, 7, reads to Anna, a pet therapy dog owned by Marty Neely. Stephen attended the program with his 10-year-old sister Emily.

able reading to the dogs," said Emily, who attended the program with her 7-year-old brother Stephen. "They won't get make fun or get mad at you if you make a mistake."

That's a comment Natalie Puhak has heard repeatedly during her time as a pet therapy dog handler.

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PHOTO FOR THE DALLAS POST/JONATHAN J. JUKA

Darcie Hungarter and her dog Tia help Nichole Conrad, 5, of Shavertown, read 'Haunted Castle' during a special reading program at the Back Mountain Memorial Library.



Jacob Garnett reads to Cody, while his brother Zackery pets the greyhound. At left is Cody's handler, Diana Cognigni. The dogs and their handlers dressed in Halloween costumes during the reading program at the Back Mountain Memorial Library.

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