

The DALLAS POST

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

Auction barn doomed; spirit of event lives on

By CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK
Dallas Post Correspondent

The "Risley" barn on Lehman Avenue, home to the Back Mountain Memorial Library Auction from 1947 to 1971, is being remodeled and its famous front facade taken down. The carriage barn, which hosted and stored antiques for the library's annual auction and fundraiser, has deteriorated and its present owners have not been able to maintain it in its complete form.

"We so not wanted to interrupt the historic process," said Gina Ackerman, who, along with her husband Bill, owns the barn. "We're trying to do the right thing, but we're not coming up with the resources."

For decades, the barn was a fond symbol of the Back Mountain Memorial Library Auction and the present barn-like structure attached to the library where the auction is now held was built to simulate the barn experience.

The first auctions were true barnyard

Back Mountain Memorial Library Auction starts Thursday -- Special section, inside.

auctions. Flyers distributed before the event asked for donations of horses, cows, sheep, seed, manure and lime as well as household items.

"We were in the market for a puppy one year and my sister, Charlene Wilsha, bought one for us from the auction," remembers Shawn Murphy, who lives a block from the barn. "Needless to say, as kids, we were delirious."

Each year, Herman Thomas donated a fleecy lamb to the auction and Herbert Hill Sr. would imitate a lamb's "baa" each time the bidding went up a dollar.

Sixty-one years ago, Alice Howell, Mrs. Harry Ohlman and Mrs. Lewis LeGrand suggested the idea of an auction to Howard Risley, then publisher of The Dallas Post and owner of the barn, as a way to raise about \$700 for the library.

Once Risley grabbed onto the idea, he is quoted as having said, "Hell, we'll have

an auction and make \$2,000." He was wrong; the first auction raise more than \$3,000.

"It was a wonderful crowded little street scene," said Barbara Lemmond. "Lehman Avenue was blocked off from Huntsville Road to Spring Street. The auction block was a flatbed trailer in front of the barn. A fence was set up along the street from the barn and tables were put out to hold the antiques. People brought their lawn chairs and sat across the street from the barn in the field which had a huge tree in it."

"It was a mob scene. For the teenagers it was 'the' place to be seen," Lemmond added. The Dallas and Lehman bands played and the Huntsville Christian Church women cooked a dinner at the school across the street.

Originally, there were only three booths - refreshments, baked goods and an odds and ends booth. And there were only two auctioneers. The event was only supposed to be one day - June 7, 1947.

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SUBMITTED PHOTO

The Risley barn, where the first-ever Back Mountain Memorial Library Auction was held 61 years ago, is being remodeled and the front section torn down.

Firefighter training



CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK/ FOR THE DALLAS POST

Firefighters who attended a class on structure burning at the Trucksville Fire Company on Tuesday are, from left, Bill Eck, Ted Kristeller, John Vincavage, Bob Dudick, Chris Young, Rich Sakalas, Gary Ebele, Dan Manzoni, Drew Salko, Tom Lewis, Robert Kille, Gene Vincavage, Mark Manzoni.

Preparing and training for worst

By REBECCA BRIA
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A house is burning and firefighters are inside desperately trying to put the fire out. All of a sudden, everything in one room reaches ignition temperature and goes up in flames simultaneously. This hypothetical situation - called a "flashover" - can be deadly. Circumstances like these are what firefighters train for and try to prevent.

Approximately 30 firefighters filled the magistrate's courtroom at the Trucksville Fire Station Tuesday night to undergo a structure burn session training class that will prepare them for a controlled burn of an acquired structure. The structure to be burned is an abandoned house at 1525 West Eighth Street in Kingston Township.

The structure burn session is a 16-hour program conducted through the Pennsylvania State Fire Academy. Members of Trucksville, Shavertown, Jackson Township, Franklin Township, Luzerne, Kingston, Plymouth Township, and Mount Zion fire departments are par-

"In the fire service today, it's a learning continuum."

Martin Barry
Firefighter instructor

icipating to practice for a real fire. Trucksville Fire Department is sponsoring the program.

Martin Barry of Dallas is serving as one of the instructors to the course. Barry is a Pennsylvania State Certified Fire Academy Instructor who has been in the fire service for 22 years and instructing for 11 years.

"In the fire service today, it's a learning continuum," said Barry. He points out that procedures and equipment are always improving and firefighters who have been serving for a while need to become acquainted with the improvements. In addition, many new homes in the Back Mountain area are larger

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VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL



CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK PHOTOS/ FOR THE DALLAS POST

Kami McGee enjoys the slip and slide at the culmination of Vacation Bible School for River of Life Ministries in Lehman. Children raised over \$700 for a mission school in St. Croix.

Plunge into Bible

By REBECCA BRIA
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Kids have been out of school now for two or three weeks and already many are bored. Officials at River of Life Ministries in Lehman decided it was the perfect time to bring children into their church and teach them about God.

About 50 children attended the first ever Vacation Bible School at River of Life Ministries from June 17-22. Kids between the ages of 2 and sixth grade were invited to participate from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. throughout the week for free. Children of all churches and faiths were welcome.

Each session was opened with singing, said Loydene Kreller, co-director of the event and wife of the church's pastor. A puppet show was performed and a person in a penguin costume made an appearance. The children went to class and afterward enjoyed refreshments that went along with what they were studying for that particular day. Craft time and more singing followed.

Throughout the week, the children brought in change to give to



Michelle Emil had her hands full eating cotton candy at the River of Life Ministries Vacation Bible School culmination party.

a radio station in Saint Croix, located in the Virgin Islands. WIGN, a Christian radio station from Sweet Valley, started the Christian radio station in Saint Croix to spread the word of God to people who might not otherwise have the opportunity to hear it. The children really got involved in the drive because they wanted to donate money so other kids could learn about Jesus, said Kreller.

The overall theme of the week-long Bible School was water. "Each day the kids plunged in-

to the word in the Bible and learned how Jesus used the element to teach some uncommon lessons," said Kreller. Because of this, the final night of Bible School was a water park fun fair. A pool and waterslides were available for the kids to enjoy. Games like the duck pond, lollipop tree, obstacle courses, basketball and golf shoots were enjoyed. Hot dogs, popcorn, and cotton candy were also a hit.

Kreller says the children got to participate in games by handing in tickets they received during

the week. The children earned tickets for being obedient, remembering their Bibles and for bringing along a friend. The more tickets a child received, the more games he or she could participate in at the fun fair.

River of Life Ministries Church is a relatively new independent Bible church that opened in 2003. The Rev. Kenneth Kreller serves as senior pastor to the church and says the congregation currently has about 100 members. Services

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