

# The DALLAS POST

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## American Idol auditions



Blanca Frederick, of Dallas, waits her turn to audition for 'American Idol' in Philadelphia. Frederick sang 'Count on Me' by Default but did not make it past the preliminary audition.

## Singing in hopes of being the next Idol

By REBECCA BRIA  
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"Singing's been my passion since I was able to speak."

Blanca Frederick  
'American Idol' audition participant

Blanca Frederick didn't know whether to be nervous or scared.

Frederick went in a front of an "American Idol" producer with three strangers and waited for her turn to sing. After the others showed their stuff, Frederick sang, "Count on Me" by Default, a song she had recently sung at her parents' wedding when they re-married. Then the four "Idol" wannabees turned to the producer for a response. He said everyone in the group was wonderful, but unfortunately, nobody would be moving on.

Seventeen-year-old Frederick, of Dallas, tried out for Season Seven of "American Idol" on August 27 at the Wachovia Center in Philadelphia.

"Singing's been my passion since I was able to speak," she said.

A senior at Dallas High School, Frederick has been around songs for as long as she can remember. As a young child, her mom sang to her at bedtime. Her grandmother had gone to opera school and Frederick recalls her singing in a church choir. Frederick enjoyed Disney movies when she was young and would sing the songs from them. Her favorite movie was "Pocahontas" because that was her nickname due to long, dark hair that fell to the backs of her knees.

Although Frederick never

got to see judges Simon Cowell, Paula Abdul and Randy Jackson, she did see host Ryan Seacrest and met Constantine Maroulis, a runner-up finalist from a previous season. Maroulis posed in a photo with Frederick and signed her "Rent" (the musical) bag.

She also saw people dressed eccentrically, including a 50-year-old drag queen wearing a white feather hat and a white robe, whom, Frederick says, made it past the initial audition. Frederick, on the other hand, kept her look simple. She wore a new pair of jeans, a shirt she wears on special occasions and a necklace given to her by her friend, Kris.

At auditions, Frederick talked to several contestants. She met a boy her age named Kevin and a music teacher from California who gave her helpful tips. Neither of them made it past the first round, either. She spoke with a girl named Gina and heard her sing, "Fighter" by Christina Aguilera during the audition. Blown away by her performance and talent, Frederick was shocked that Gina did not advance.

The show only allowed Fre-

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CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK/ FOR THE DALLAS POST

Enjoying elegant birthday party fare is Anna Cheshire, of Dallas, at a children's birthday party and fundraiser for Community Cares for Kids, an organization headed by Dr. Francis Collini. Dr. Collini makes an annual trip to Ecuador to provide essential cosmetic services to children in that country.

## Birthday sharing

Serafin siblings celebrate birthdays, hold party to raise funds for others

By REBECCA BRIA  
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Siblings Joelle and Jacob Serafin had one big birthday party. There were ponies, piñatas, a moon bounce, a heated pool, cotton candy, snow cones, face painting, spin art, sand art and plenty of food. But no presents.

Instead of gifts, Adam and Terry Serafin, the children's parents, requested guests make a monetary donation to Community Cares for Kids.

Dr. Francis Collini of Shavertown and a medical team travel to Ecuador each year to perform free corrective surgeries on children. Children from all over the world are also brought to Collini's Shavertown facility for surgery. The non-profit group Community Cares for Kids fund supplies and medical care for the operations. Terry Serafin is a registered nurse and works for Dr. Collini.

Joelle Serafin was 8 years old on September 15 and Jacob Serafin celebrated his ninth birthday on September 26. Every year, the children's parents hold a party for the two children the weekend between their respective birthdays. This year, the party was on September 23.

This tradition began the years of Jacob's third and Joelle's second birthdays. The children had been diagnosed with autism and



Joelle Serafin and her friend, Justin Buttsavage, of Dallas, examine a pony during a backyard birthday party held in honor of Joelle and her brother, Jacob. The party was a fundraiser for Community Cares for Kids that sends Dr. Francis Collini, a cosmetic surgeon from Shavertown, to Ecuador each year to help children there.

Terry joined an autism support group where, at her first meeting, she encountered crying parents. One woman said the thing she hates the most about autism is that her child is never invited to a birthday party. Terry was determined to change that.

That first year, the Serafins invited children with autism and their parents, as well

as some family members, to a large, joint birthday bash. They decided to veto presents and ask for monetary donations to a charity instead. The charity they selected was S.A.F.E., Supporting Families and Autism Everywhere. The party was a hit and be-

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## Group hopes to return meaning to lives of older residents

By REBECCA BRIA  
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### TO BECOME A MEMBER OR TO DONATE:

For information or to be put on the Generation to Generation mailing list, please send your name and address to: Generation to Generation c/o Center for Adult and Continuing Education Misericordia University 301 Lake Street Dallas, PA 18612 If you would like to make a donation, please send it to: Generation to Generation PNC Bank 325 Memorial Highway Dallas, PA 18612

While making rounds at his Back Mountain restaurant, Peking Chef, Eric Lee noticed something. Many older folks began to convey the same message to him: they felt their lives no longer had meaning. These people were bored, but too proud to go to senior centers. Their grown children would call Lee to check up on their parents and ask him about their activity levels, which were low. Desperate to help out, Lee took action.

With a vision in his head, Lee approached his friend Joseph DiVizia, executive director of Luzerne County Office of Human Services, in February 2007. The idea for an organization was founded and DiVizia drafted a mission statement. Lee put together a group of people who met for the first time in March 2007. After revising the mission statement several times, Genera-

tion to Generation was born. Lee serves as secretary and DiVizia as president. Many of the board members of Generation to Generation are husbands and wives which, DiVizia says is important because husbands and wives are the core of generations.

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Generation to Generation, a new non-profit group in the Back Mountain, is designed to enrich lives through inter-generational sharing. Members 55 and over were recently invited to go on a bike ride at White Haven Challengers in White Haven. From left, are Eric Lee, Rosa Lee, Andy Logue, Bill Runner, Linda Kohut and Geoff Lee.