

# The DALLAS POST

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CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK/FOR THE DALLAS POST  
**John Engler Jr., of Trucksville, is turning 76 this week, but technically he'll only be 19. Born on Feb. 29, 1932, Engler came into the world on Leap Year Day. In non-leap years, Engler celebrates his birthday on Feb. 28, March 1 or a Sunday close to the date.**

## How can he be 19 years old?

By REBECCA BRIA  
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John Engler Jr. is turning 76 this week, but technically, he'll only be 19. How is that possible, you ask? Engler was born on February 29, 1932 - a Leap Year Day.

Because each year is actually 365.6 days, leap years are observed to compensate for the extra six hours not included in a calendar year. Leap years occur in years divisible by four and in century years divisible by 400. Typically, every four years is a leap year.

### OTHER FEB. 29 BIRTHDAYS

Some famous February 29 birthdays (source: www.famousbirthdays.net)  
 1976: Jeff "J-Rule" Atkins - rap/hip-hop singer  
 1972: Antonia Sabato, Jr. - actor  
 1940: Gretchen Christopher - singer  
 1904: Jimmy Dorsey - band leader  
 1860: Herman Hollerith - engineer/computer inventor  
 1736: Ann Lee - religious zealot

In non-leap years, Engler, who lives in Trucksville, is forced to observe his birthday on February 28, March 1 or a Sunday close to February 29 but he never feels cheated.

"Sometimes I can celebrate it twice or even three times," he said.

And as a child, Engler's "real" birthdays brought

about more expensive gifts such as a bicycle and a sled.

"I don't know why they (my parents) did it," Engler said. "It was just more or less to show that was my real birthday."

According to leapzine.com, one in every 1,461 people is born on Leap Year Day. That amounts to 684 Leap Year Day births per one million people. There are about 200,000 people in the United States and four million people in the world with a February 29 birthday.

"There's not too many of us around," Engler said.

Once, Engler just missed someone with his exact birthday. A few years ago during a leap year, Engler went to Cooper's Seafood House in Pittston to receive a complimentary lobster or steak on his birthday. In order for his birthday to be verified, Engler had to show an employee his driver's license. He was then informed that not much earlier in the

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"It's like a journey, but the journey is inward to discover my true self, who I really am. And part of that journey is letting go."

Sister Barbara Craig



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 Pat Smith, of Shavertown, falls in line during an introductory meditative Zen walk at Mercy Center.

## Seeking relief

Zen Meditation classes provide spiritual journey toward relaxation to reduce stress

By REBECCA BRIA  
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With the tone of a bell, the room fell completely silent. Staring at a spot on the floor, everyone silently counted their breaths for 10 minutes. Another bell notified the group the period of sitting meditation was almost over. A clap of two pieces of wood indicated it was time to move on to the Zen walk.

Ten women and two men found themselves at a beginner's Zen meditation class during the evening of Tuesday, Jan. 22, at Mercy Center in Dallas. With their shoes lined against the wall in Zen discipline, the individuals sat in a half



Time, life and everyday worries slip away during a Zen meditation class at Mercy Center conducted by Sister Barbara Craig, of Dallas, and Gail Shemo, of Shavertown.

circle. Many came for stress relief while others sought pain reduction, a spiritual journey and relaxation.

Sister Barbara Craig, a Roman

Catholic nun from Dallas, and Gail Shemo, of Shavertown, instructed

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## Sharing books so that others can enjoy

Susan Schilling of Dallas leaves books in public places for fellow readers

By REBECCA BRIA  
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Susan Schilling was having a lousy day when she came across a hardcover book called "Geisha, A Life" on a bench at a doctor's office in Bethlehem.

This was no ordinary book. A label on the cover said, "I'm not lost; I'm free" and indicated the book came from a user of BookCrossing.com. Schilling's mood lifted and, intrigued, she took the book with her back to her Dallas home.

That's how Schilling first heard about and got involved with BookCrossing.com.

On its Web site, BookCrossing is described as "the act of releasing books 'into the wild' and then following their journeys and the lives they touch." Founded in April 2001, the site enables users

to create free accounts in which they can follow and review books they release and find all over the world. BookCrossing.com also allows people to hunt for books by location.

Schilling, 44, registered for the web site in October 2007 and logged that she found and has "Geisha, A Life." But that wasn't enough. She chose books of her own and those belonging to her husband, Jim, that were collecting dust on her bookshelf. She added each book into the Web site and then the real fun began.

During her travels as a pharmaceutical sales representative, Schilling began leaving books at locations like Starbucks in Shavertown; Penn State/Wilkes-Barre in Lehman Township, where she is a cycling instructor; Panera Bread in Wilkes-Barre Township and in locations out of the area. She has also given books to her sister-in-law, who lives in Georgia, to leave near her home.

So far, two people have logged into the web site to say they have



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found books Schilling left - one at Starbucks in Shavertown and one in the restroom of a doctor's office in Mount Pocono. But she

has yet to receive a book review, which is what she would really

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LAST KNIGHT 2008

## Hoping to keep grads safe, secure

By REBECCA BRIA  
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The tune of Pomp and Circumstance signals the opening of a new chapter in students' lives. At Lake-Lehman, parents and administration want to make sure that chapter isn't closed the very night it begins.

In an effort to keep students safe on graduation night, Last Knight 2008, formerly called the lock-in, was created to give seniors a fun tobacco-, alcohol- and drug-free party. The students are locked into the school around 10 p.m. and kept until 5:00 the following morning. Parents and some members of the administration serve as chaperones.

"Statistically, graduation night tends to be one of the deadliest nights for kids who are seniors," said Nancy Edkins, Lake-Lehman Junior/Senior High School assistant principal and chair of Last Knight 2008.

The lock-in was created in 2007 by Superintendent James McGovern. Despite planning that started late and a teachers' strike in the spring, the lock-in attracted 85 seniors, a little more than half of the Lake-Lehman Class of 2007.

"One of the responses that we got back from the kids was, 'Wow, this was a lot better than we thought it would be,'" Edkins said.

Neighboring school district Dallas also has an annual lock-in. The parent-run event will be held for the ninth year this June at Dallas High School.

At the Lake-Lehman lock-in, seniors are treated to plenty of food throughout the night. The students are entertained by activities such as kickball and volleyball tournaments, a photo booth, a band, disc jockey and a hypnotist. This year, the students have requested laser tag. Since it is an expensive activity, the committee needs to raise more money before it can grant the request. To raise money, the committee has sent letters home, asking parents to contribute and plans to have dress-down days in the district.

Seniors are also presented with prizes throughout the evening. A video iPod was given as a door prize last year and Edkins would like to have another large-scale prize this year.

The Last Knight 2008 planning committee has already started getting ready for graduation night but the committee is in need of more volunteers. A committee meeting will be held at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 27, in the high school cafeteria and new members are welcome.

"We really need people, their ideas and their energy to help us pull it off again and be successful for our kids," Edkins said.

In addition to volunteers, the committee is seeking donations of prizes, gift certificates and gift baskets to award to the students at the event. Financial contributions are also desired.

### IF YOU GO

Last Knight 2008 meeting  
 Wednesday, Feb. 27

7 p.m.  
 Lake-Lehman Junior/Senior High School cafeteria  
 Anyone interested in helping with Last Knight 2008 is asked to attend a planning committee meeting or call Principal Nancy Edkins at the school at 675-7458 extension 2793.



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