



Bradley Fuller gets the hang of making coffee Monday mornings at David's Place in Wilkes-Barre. Helping Bradleys Krista Maurer a TSS specialist.

EXTRA

Continued from Page 1

past all the diagnosis, doctors and therapists, though, it all comes down to the amount of attention children with autism get. That attention can stimulate them to respond, suggest the experts at Autism Speaks, the oldest organization to advance awareness of autism.

"It's amazing the spontaneous language we heard today," Suzanne remarks. "Did you hear Bradley introduce you to his teacher?" she gushes.

"We started the shop to provide a warm accepting atmosphere for young people with disabilities to learn," Suzanne adds. "We know they can learn if they have a chance."

The boys greet Mike Naperkowski and Jim Youkoski, Wilkes-Barre Public Works Department workers and regulars whom they remember from the previous week. A pot full of hearty hellos begins and the boys are drawn to the encouragement from the burly men.



Cody Walsh clears the table for Mike Naperkowski and Jim Youkoski, Wilkes-Barre public works employees who are regulars at the coffee shop.

"We met these boys last week; they cleared our table," said Naperkowski. "Everything they learn here will prepare them for life."

"The kids are special and when we leave here, we walk away with tears in our eyes because you can see that something special is happening here," said Youkoski. "There's something in their hearts."

Bradley cleans the workers' table; Cody makes another pot of coffee and the boys sit down for a

well-deserved break, drinking hot chocolate and eating donuts. The shop, on New Street, opened last September.

"People in the community have been very welcoming and stop in regularly," says Lee Sekora, a 30-year veteran learning support teacher at Lake-Lehman High School who takes the boys to the shop every Monday.

Sekora heard about the coffee shop from Regina Modrowsky and Susan Ryan, a nurse and guidance counselor, respectively,

at Lake-Lehman. They suggested the boys visit and the Lake-Lehman School District and parents have approved the coffee shop for the weekly work session.

"Everybody is ecstatic (with the results)," Sekora says.

Hugs, smiles and encouragement are routine here, making the boys relax and helping them to learn the ropes.

"It's kind of like 'Cheers,'" says Judy Gildea, a retired teacher who, along with her husband, Barry, volunteers at the shop.

Once people visit the coffee shop, they are drawn in, the Josephs say. They want to become more involved.

And it's easy to understand why. These boys with autism light up the restaurant, engaging everyone there.

They are already neighborhood personality hits.

There are children with autism - kids who are supposed to be able to do very little and speak even less. Yet here on a cozy hillside in the Heights section of Wilkes-Barre a bunch of these kids, along with some retired teachers, have the neighborhood bubbling with coffee and the warmth of conversation and friendship.

MAME

Continued from Page 1

acters and getting to show people this little window in someone else's life."

Last summer, Thomas attended the Pennsylvania Governor's School for the Arts where she majored in theater. She has also been a member of the Choral Society of Northeastern Pennsylvania. Thomas will major in theater next year at Muhlenberg College.

"Mame" is set in the 1920s and 30s and is about a woman, Mame, who gains the guardianship of her 10-year-old orphan nephew, Patrick. Eventually, Patrick goes to college, becomes a different person and, once again, Mame steps in to save him. One of the more famous songs from the musical is "We Need a Little Christmas."

Another star performer in the Lake-Lehman musical is 15-year-old Jake Baker. The freshman, who is playing the role of Patrick, first became interested in theater when he was a Christmas present in his school play in kindergarten.

"I like being in front of an audience," Baker said. "It gives me a rush of energy."

Baker was active in local theater as a child in his home state of Maryland. After moving to the area at age 10, he got involved in the Little Theater and the Music Box Dinner Playhouse.

At the school level, Baker has played Winthrop in "The Music Man," Dodger in "Oliver" and is currently filling a role for a show at Meyers High School.

But this young thespian has no plans of majoring in theater in college. Instead, he wants to be an orthodontist.

Lake-Lehman Junior/Senior High School chorus director Jonathan Pineno says he chose "Mame" because it allows him to feature his three strong female students, Emily Thomas, Kiri Koziol and Leah Conklin, who have been active in the chorus throughout their high school career.

Koziol, 15, a sophomore, is playing the role of Vera. She first



CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK PHOTO

Kiri Koziol (Vera), Emily Thomas (Mame), Jake Baker (Patrick) and Joseph Johnson (Ito) practice their lines.

ART EXHIBIT

Fine Arts Exhibit: display of student works Thursday, April 24 through Saturday, April 26. The exhibit will be open from 6 to 8 p.m. each night. Lake-Lehman Junior/Senior High School lobby

performed in a Lake-Lehman High School play while in the sixth grade. Pineno was in need of elementary children for "The Music Man" that year and Koziol volunteered. Since then, she has played Bet in "Oliver" at Lake-Lehman and Mrs. Bedwin in "Oliver" at the Performing Arts Institute at Wyoming Seminary.

"I like doing it live and performing in front of people," Koziol said.

During her role as Mrs. Bedwin, Koziol was forced to improvise half a scene when the curtain did not go down like it was supposed to. Vera will be her first big role in a musical.

Due to the small number of boys in the chorus at Lake-Lehman Junior/Senior High School, some male roles will be played by females in the upcoming production "Mame."

Ralph Devine has been changed to Ruth Devine, Uncle Jeff to Aunt Jess, Cousin Pan to Cousin Fran, Mr. Upson to Marie Upson, doorman to doorman and elevator boy to elevator girl.

Pineno says about 10 boys in the chorus graduated last year and, since then, the chorus has mainly been composed of girls.

Although it is uncommon for high schools to present "Mame" because of the many middle-aged characters, Pineno says Dallas High School performed the show about 10 years ago.

New Z-Trak™ Estate Series

Z520A

- 25 horsepower
- 54" or 60" 7-Iron™ mower deck
- EXCLUSIVE Comfort and Convenience Package

2 Yrs. 300 Hrs. LIMITED WARRANTY

On your mark, get set, mow.

DEERE SEASON
GOING ON NOW THROUGH JULY 28

Z465

- 25 horsepower
- 62" Edge™ mower deck
- 21" high-back seat with suspension

2 Yrs. 120 Hrs. LIMITED WARRANTY

NO INTEREST NO PAYMENTS FOR 12 MONTHS²
ON ALL MODELS SHOWN

LEHMAN POWER SLS & SERVICE
83 HAZLETON STREET
ASHLEY, PA 18706
(570) 824-8020

CERTIFIED GOLD STAR DEALER VISIT US AT WWW.JOHNDEERE.COM JOHN DEERE

Offer ends 7/28/2008. Some restrictions apply; other special rates and terms may be available, so see your dealer for details and other financing options. ¹Prices and model availability may vary by dealer. Available at participating dealers. ²Subject to approved credit on John Deere Credit Revolving Plan, a service of FPC Financial, f.s.b. For consumer use only. After promotional period, finance charges will begin to accrue at 17.9% APR. A \$1.00 per month minimum finance charge may be required. Upon default of your account, the interest rate may increase to 19.8% APR. The engine horsepower information is provided by the engine manufacturer to be used for comparison purposes only. Actual operating horsepower will be less. Prices and model availability may vary by dealer. Available at participating dealers. While general information, pictures and descriptions are provided, some illustrations and text may include finance, credit, insurance, product options and accessories NOT AVAILABLE in all regions. PLEASE CONTACT YOUR LOCAL DEALER FOR DETAILS. John Deere's green and yellow color scheme, the leaping deer symbol and JOHN DEERE are trademarks of Deere & Company.

BC38UA12875 -00235609

FIND A JOB YOU'D DO FOR FREE

THEN LET THEM PAY YOU.

When you do what you love to do, it's not really work at all. Now you can find the job you love, where you love to live. Your calling is calling—find it at timesleader.monster.com.

timesleader.com monster®

timesleader.monster.com