

# The DALLAS POST

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William Dunn

On his opportunity to be a Judge Advocate General



CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK/FOR THE DALLAS POST

William Dunn, 29, of Shavertown, is going to JAG school to become a Judge Advocate General in the 28th infantry division of the Pennsylvania Army National Guard. Dunn, who works as an assistant district attorney for Luzerne County, will spend an approximate total of 16 weeks in training.

## A real life JAG officer

Shavertown man gets opportunity to serve community, nation

By REBECCA BRIA  
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William Dunn always knew he wanted to serve in the United States military. But he never dreamed of becoming a JAG.

Dunn, 29, of Shavertown, has been selected to be a Judge Advocate General, or JAG, in the 28th infantry division of the Pennsylvania Army National Guard. He was commissioned in December 2007.

"It wasn't something I thought of until after becoming an attorney," Dunn said. "It allows me to combine my skills to serve my community and nation. I think it will also enhance my skills as a lawyer."

But Dunn says being a JAG isn't similar to what people may see on the television show "JAG." Instead, JAGs assist in rebuilding Iraq's judiciary, constitution and laws. They also prosecute and defend soldiers caught up in civil legal matters and aid military families with wills.

"Unlike the TV show, we don't fly helicopters or jets," Dunn said. "Our duties are very legal



William Dunn, 29, of Shavertown, will undergo 10 weeks of JAG school on the campus of the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, Va. Dunn will also spend two weeks at Fort Lee, Va. for officer leadership training.

specific."

Dunn, a Harveys Lake native, spent about a decade of his childhood living in Harrisburg where he was exposed to state government. A 1997 alumnus of Lake-Lehman High School, he graduated from Penn State University Main Campus in 2001 where he received a dual bachelor's degree in political science and journalism.

He attended law school at the Widener University Harrisburg campus where he worked at the Pennsylvania State Police Office of Chief Counsel. After graduating from Widener in the spring of 2006, he passed the Pennsylvania Bar

Exam that summer.

After law school, Dunn accepted a position in a civil law firm in Reading where he worked for a short period of time. In December 2006, he began his current position as assistant district attorney for Luzerne County.

So far, Dunn has undergone four weeks of basic training where he had basic firearms instruction, first aid, land navigation and military etiquette. He will take a military leave for about 10 weeks to attend JAG school on the campus of

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CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK/FOR THE DALLAS POST

Virginia Hunisch reads to Dallas Elementary School second-graders on April 23 during the Greater Wilkes-Barre Chamber of Commerce and Industry's 12th Annual Community Reading Day. Hunisch said student Erika Wintersteen, bottom right, has hair that looks like the main character's hair in the book she was reading.

## Volunteers open a special chapter for second-graders

By REBECCA BRIA  
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Virginia Hunisch had no idea the book she selected to read to students at Dallas Elementary School would be so relevant.

Hunisch read "Melissa Parkington's Beautiful Beautiful Hair" to Maryann Yurko's second-grade class on April 23 as part of Community Reading Day at the school. In the book, the main character, Melissa, cuts off her long hair and donates it to be made into a wig for a child.

While reading the book, Hunisch discovered a boy in the class, Preston Towle, recently donated his hair to Locks of Love.

"That was a special book," Yurko said. "It was like it was meant for us."

The 12th Annual Greater Wilkes-Barre Chamber of Commerce and Industry Community Reading Day was held on April 23. One-hundred and fifteen employees from area businesses volunteered to read a book to second-grade and Luzerne County Head Start classrooms to promote literacy.

According to Wilkes-Barre Chamber of Commerce and Industry employee Karen Gallia, professionals from the community read to second graders at Back Mountain schools, including Dallas Elementary, Wycallis Elementary, Lake-Noxen Elementary, Lehman-Jackson Elementary, Ross Elementary and Gate of Heaven School.

"Love it; it's just great," Hunisch said. "I'm very interested to see what happens at the end after reading the book."

Hunisch, of Moosic, is a Business Development Specialist at Valley Crest Nursing and Rehabilitation Center. She is the mother of four children, a fact that made a few students gasp and said "whoa" when they learned it.

The children sat on the floor and listened intently while Hunisch read to them. She asked them questions relevant to the story while she read, such as, "Who here plays basketball?"

"Can everyone see Melissa's hair, how nice and long it is?" Hunisch asked. "Your hair looks like Melissa's, so you can be Melissa," Hunisch said to Erika Wintersteen, a girl with long, brown hair.

When the character in the book, Melissa, cut her hair, Edward Zochowski's hand shot up.

"Isn't her hair going to grow back?" Zochowski asked.

"Yes, it will," Hunisch replied.

Bobby Bogumil said Melissa's new short hair looks like that of Madison McEvoy, a girl in the class.

Hunisch was happy with her book selection after discovering Towle donated his hair. She enjoyed the experience and felt it was worthwhile.

"There was one little boy in the back who was so engrossed in it," Hunisch said.

### ON THE WEB

To see more photos go to [www.mydallaspost.com](http://www.mydallaspost.com)

## Family continues traditional Memorial Day services at Kocher Cemetery

By REBECCA BRIA  
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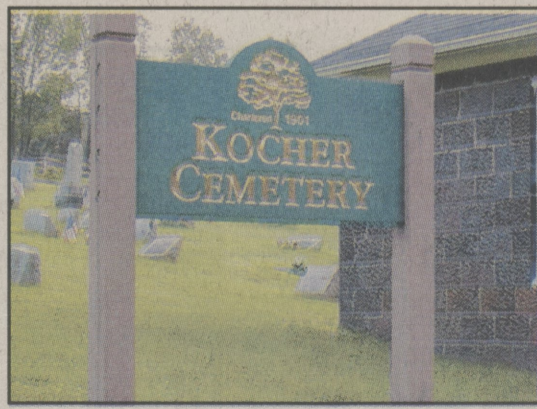
Nestled on a hillside in Ruggles lies the final resting places of nearly 1,000 people, many of whom bear the last name Kocher.

Following in tradition, members of the Kocher family and others will once again come together this Memorial Day to remember those buried at the cemetery. The service will be held at 10 a.m. on Monday, May 26, at Kocher Cemetery off Spruce Tree Road in the Ruggles section of Laketon in Lake Township.

Military Chaplain James May, of Falls, will officiate and perform "Taps" on a brass instrument. Pre-recorded songs will also be played. Kocher Cemetery President Don Kocher will raise the American flag.

The ceremony is being organized by Linda Mericle, of Trucksville, formerly of Lehman, a Kocher descendant who will one day be buried at the cemetery.

"When they (the cemetery corporation) needed someone to take up the challenge of having a Memorial Day program, I volunteered to do it," Mericle said. "This is something traditionally our cem-



SUBMITTED PHOTO

A Kocher Cemetery sign stands next to the chapel in the cemetery. A Memorial Day service will be held at 10 a.m. on Monday, May 26, at cemetery off Spruce Tree Road in the Ruggles section of Laketon in Lake Township.

etry has done every year. We only didn't have it the last two years."

Kocher Cemetery is a family cemetery chartered on April 22, 1901, however, the earliest burial dates back to Stephen Kocher who died in 1813. Approxi-

mately 100 veterans of the United States military are buried at the cemetery, some of whom fought in the Civil War.

The 100th anniversary of the cemetery was celebrated at Memorial Day services in 2001.

Burials at the cemetery are allowed beyond Kocher family members. A corporation made up of officers and a governing board operates the cemetery and meets semi-annually in May and October.

Mericle's grandfather, Edward Kocher, purchased 10 burial plots in Kocher Cemetery in the 1920s. She has a photo of him clearing land adjacent to the cemetery in the 1920s so an upper section could be excavated. Mericle and her daughter, Cassie, will one day be buried next to the elder Mericle's grandparents, her uncle, Edward Kocher, and her mother, Katherine Kocher Fox. Her father, Allen Fox, will also be buried in one of the 10 plots.

A chapel was built in the 1920s from tile blocks left over from construction of Lake Township High School. A flagpole was installed in May 1985 and was dedicated to Jasper "Jap" Kocher, cemetery president from 1961 to 1984.

The cemetery has a maximum capacity of about 2,000 graves with about half of them already used.

