

The DALLAS POST

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Serving the communities of the Dallas and Lake-Lehman School Districts

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LAKE-LEHMAN

Four school board seats are open

By REBECCA BRIA
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Four seats on the Lake-Lehman School Board are up for election in the midst of a three-year-old teachers' contract dispute.

Board members are elected by region based on their municipality and this year there is one seat in Region I, one seat in Region II and two seats in Region III.

Region I, which overlaps into Wyoming County, is comprised of Noxen, Lake Township and Harveys Lake. Region II is made up of Ross Township and sections of Lehman Township. Region III is composed of Jackson Township and Lehman Center.

Seven candidates are hoping to win those seats and all of them have cross-filed among the Democratic and Republican parties. The incumbents are Charles Balavage and Drew Salko. Their challengers are Dr. Kevin Carey,

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How much will you pay in tax?

Members of the Dallas School Board voted Monday night to pass a final budget for the 2009-10 school year which will increase most property owners' school taxes. The board must vote to approve the budget a second time by June 30.

Under the budget, the millage rate will be 10.3043 mills. The district's millage rate would have been about 9.7376 if the district was going to receive the same amount of revenue as it did prior to reassessment, according to figures from the county's reassessment company, 21st Century Appraisals, Inc.

The 2008-09 school year millage rate was 262 mills. Dallas, along with other school districts in Luzerne County, had to reduce millage rates because school districts are not allowed to receive revenue windfalls in the first year of reassessment. The increase is equal to nine mills under the old assessments.

Although the millage rate has been drastically reduced, property owners may see an increase or a decrease in their school taxes based upon whether or not their reassessed values have been raised or lowered.

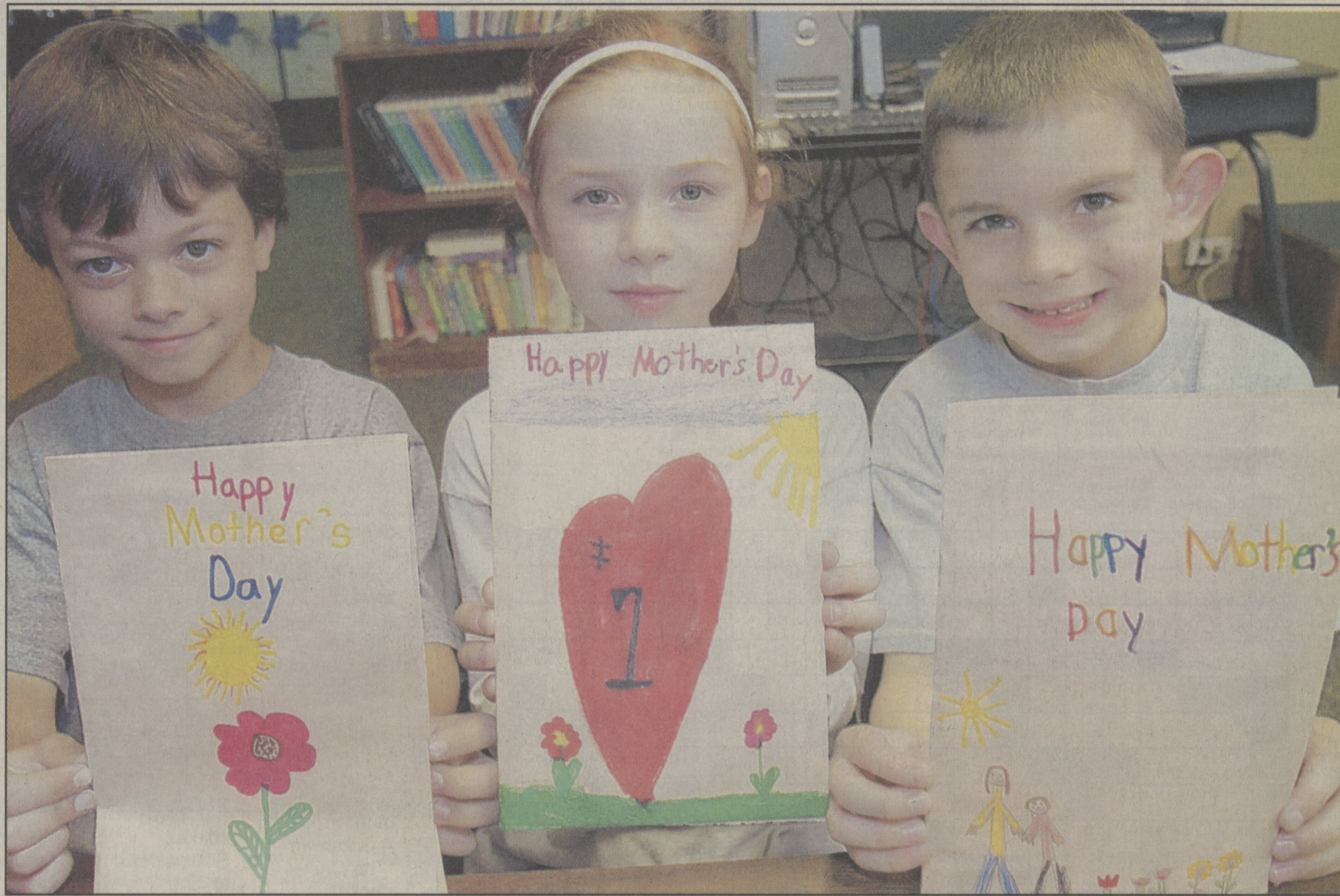
TO DETERMINE WHAT YOU WILL PAY IN SCHOOL TAXES IN THE DALLAS SCHOOL DISTRICT:

- Take your reassessed property value, multiply by the new millage rate of 10.3043 and divide by 1,000. The answer to this equation should be the amount you will pay in school taxes this fall. For example, a property owner whose reassessed value is \$200,000 will pay \$2,060.86 in school taxes.
- If you do not know your reassessed property value, you may look it up at www.timesleader.com. Click on the "Local Property Assessment Database New Values" tab on the left side of the page. Under important links, click on "New Luzerne County Property Assessments" and enter your property information.



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Gate of Heaven students honor Moms on their very own special day



CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK PHOTOS/ FOR THE DALLAS POST

Celebrating Mother's Day

Moms all over the country are being honored today as Mother's Day is celebrated. Shown in the photo above, Michael Starbuck, left, Samantha Aben, center, and Tyler Osipower show off their Mother's Day cards made in Mrs. Mary Gilbert's first-grade class at Gate of Heaven. At left, Kaitlyne Patla, a first-grader at Gate of Heaven School, works on her Mother's Day project



Residents are divided over re-opening of bridge

By REBECCA BRIA
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Dr. Bruce Goeringer's patients haven't been able access his dentistry office from Memorial Highway in nearly three years. And, because of a recent decision by Dallas Borough Council, they'll never again be able to do so.

The council voted unanimously on April 15 to eliminate a bridge replacement project on Orchard Street in lieu of Federal Emergency Management Agency and Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency-approved alternate projects. The bridge, which crosses Toby Creek, was damaged during the flood of June 2006.

Council President Patricia Peiffer said the borough could not secure enough money from the agency to complete the bridge replacement and meet Pennsylvania Department of Transportation specifications.

According to borough manager Tracey Michael Carr, FEMA and PEMA awarded \$302,905 but, in order to build and comply with PennDOT, \$414,418 would be needed, estimates the borough engineer. That cost would include engineering fees and a 10 percent work contingency, but the total would depend on bids received.



This bridge over Toby Creek between Route 309 and Orchard Street has been closed since 2007. Dallas Borough has received FEMA funds to rebuild it but borough officials say the bridge will not be rebuilt.

CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK/ FOR THE DALLAS POST

Peiffer says as far as she's concerned, the decision is final.

"It's actually safer for the residents not having that bridge," she said.

Instead, the borough will use the FEMA and PEMA funds for alternate projects, including demolition and remov-

al of the existing bridge on Orchard Street, repair of the municipal building and maintenance garage, purchase of a police cruiser and dump truck and improvements for storm water and storm sewer systems.

Carr says the borough can only use

"Two months ago I was at one of the meetings because all along I wanted this bridge to be built and all along the borough has been going against me."

Dr. Bruce Goeringer
On Orchard Street Bridge

75 percent, or \$227,194, of its approved FEMA and PEMA award for the alternate projects.

That doesn't sit well with Goeringer, whose office is on Lincoln Street which connects to Orchard Street. The office is located on the opposite side of the bridge from Memorial Highway, forcing his patients to turn off the highway and onto Main Street, followed by a right onto Orchard Street and a left onto Lincoln Street.

"Two months ago I was at one of the meetings because all along I wanted this bridge to be built and all along the borough has been going against me," Goeringer said. "(The alternate pro-

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