

The DALLAS POST

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IT'S ALL ABOUT THE FOOD



Fraternal twins Sophia, left, and Emma Schoenwetter, of Dallas, feast on Dippin' Dots with help from their mom, Martine, at the Dallas Harvest Festival. **For more festival photos, please turn to page 8.**

BILL TARUTIS/ FOR THE DALLAS POST

Shavertown man creates 'The Robot'

Mark O'Brien's children's book is about a lonely robot looking for love.

By SARAH HITE
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When a relationship ends, a supportive friend can make all the difference in the world.

Mark O'Brien, 25, of Shavertown, hopes the support he offered to his friend April after her breakup could impact communities all over the globe.

O'Brien wrote a children's story, titled "The Robot," about a lonely robot looking for love. The message O'Brien, whose pen name is Mark Allen (Allen is his middle name), is trying to spread is "love oneself first."

The author already had the concept of the robot in place long before he heard of his friend's relationship woes, but couldn't fig-

ure out what sort of adventure the machine should have. Once he heard about April's situation, the words just poured out of him.

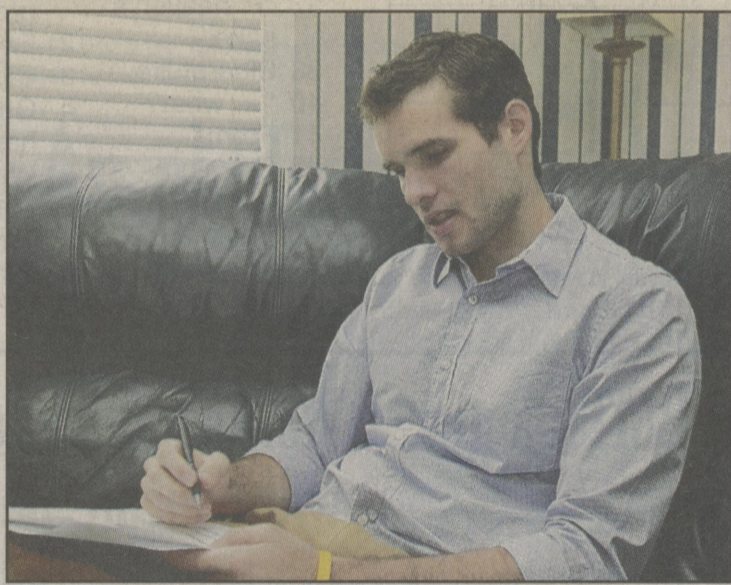
"When she kind of told me her story ... I literally was sitting at my computer (thinking), 'Man, I have so much I want to say to her,'" he said.

He didn't want to tell his friend what everyone else would tell her, so he chose his words carefully and let "The Robot" send her a positive message of self-fulfillment.

"When I wrote it, it really kind of ended up being (the message that) true love is how you define it yourself," he said.

O'Brien's message doesn't end on the page. He's taken his ideas online and hopes to create a website where budding artists can submit their own illustrations and interpretations of the story.

After all drawings are submitted on the social networking-style site, the public will be able



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Author Mark O'Brien at work on the sofa at his parents' home in Shavertown.

to vote on the artwork to reveal what drawings will go on which pages for the book to be sold in stores. Visitors would also be able to assemble and order their own

version of the story.

O'Brien, who majored in business with a focus on advertising

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Young ballerinas vie for parts in 'Nutcracker'

By SARAH HITE
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A-deen. Dva. Tree. Chye-tir-ye.

Svetlana Todinova of the Moscow Ballet counted little girls' heads as she chose who will play mice in "The Great Russian Nutcracker" during a ballet audition in the Joan Harris Centre for the Gifted and Talented in Luzerne on Sept. 5. Petite ballerinas clad in black leotards and pink tights fidgeted nervously as Todinova

"I'm not scared. It's kind of easy."

8-year-old Bridget Frame
Tunkhannock

scoured the line for mousey material. Girls continued the choreography she had shown them as they crept and hunched in place, keeping their eyes fixated on the graceful dancer.

Todinova gently grabbed one little girl's wrist and moved her to the winners' circle. The girl's eyes were as wide as saucers when she realized she had been chosen while the dancers crept with more fervor as the number of girls in the line dwindled.

Eight-year-old Bridget Frame, of Tunkhannock, wasn't too worried about the audition. After all, she consid-

ers herself to be an old pro in the ballet business.

"I'm not scared," she said. "It's kind of easy."

She's been dancing ballet, tap, jazz and hip hop for four years, and she was in "The Nutcracker" last year as a little French girl. She'll reprise the role in this year's production, slated for 7 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 14 at the P.M. Kirby Center for the Performing Arts in Wilkes-Barre.

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Anna James, of Jackson Township, auditions for a part in "The Great Russian Nutcracker."



Fall Festival will showcase 'Lands'

By EILEEN GODIN
Dallas Post Correspondent

IF YOU GO ...

Mooove over summer, The Lands at Hillside Farm in Shavertown will showcase the sights and tastes of fall during its Fall Festival on October 2 and 3.

The annual Fall Festival will offer guests an opportunity to visit the farm and its animals but also a chance to see a real working farm close up.

The Fall Festival will run from noon to 6 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 2, and from noon to 5 p.m. on Sunday, Oct. 3 at the farm, located off Hillside Road in Shavertown.

A fee of \$10 per car load includes admission and parking.

The Lands at Hillside Farms is a nonprofit organization so the money raised from the festival will help to continue the many educational programs offered throughout the year.

"The Lands is a '412-arce classroom without walls,' where students ages 1 to 100 have the unique opportunity to see, touch, taste, smell and learn about science, agriculture, archeology, ecology, history, sustainable living and community service," said Suzanne Kelly, director of advancement at The Lands at Hillside Farms.

Kelly said the farm needs to raise \$200,000 annually to fund all the educational programs it offers. Many fundraising events are held throughout the year but the Fall Festival is

What: Annual Fall Festival
Where: The Lands at Hillside Farms, Hillside Road, Shavertown
When: Noon to 6 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 2; and noon to 5 p.m. on Sunday, Oct. 3
Cost: \$10 per carload includes admission and parking

the biggest one, she said.

The farm will be rocking to the sounds of Cabinet on Saturday, Fell Swoop on Sunday and the Adam Monaco Band for children on both days. Local vendors and artisans will display and sell handmade items, children's games, hayrides, pony rides, and farm to table cooking demonstrations.

The farm to table cooking demonstrations, sponsored by Luzerne National Bank, will be hosted by chef Kate Gabriele of Rustic Kitchen Bistro and Bar, Wilkes-Barre, on Saturday and natural foods chef Jennifer Elliot on Sunday.

Kelly said the festival will also be WVIA Member Day.

"(WVIA) members receive free parking/admission and a free hayride," she said. "WVIA guests will also be the judges of our Scarecrow Contest and the winner will receive a \$100 gift certificate to our Dairy Store."

The farm has a lot to boast about and share with the community from goats, chickens, horses and cows to the restoration of many buildings and a large number of volunteers who keep it running, Kelly said.

Doug Klopp is new Lake-Lehman principal

By SARAH HITE
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Paperwork, Post-It notes and pending e-mails are just a few aspects of Doug Klopp's daily duties as the new principal of the Lake-Lehman Junior/Senior High School. Though it's already a month into the school year, Klopp feels as though only a few minutes have gone by since his inauguration in August.

But, despite the hectic schedule, Klopp is pleased with his progress at the school.

"The adjustment here has been surprisingly smooth so far," he said. "I don't know if I'm still in the honeymoon period of it."

A Williamsport native, Klopp, 39, now lives with his family in Shavertown and has been in the education field for years. He started as a guidance counselor in the Poconos and worked his way up to his previous position as the Northwest Area Middle/High School principal.

As he settles into his office at Lake-Lehman, he aims to continue in his mission of bettering the educational environment for all students.

"Knowing where clear, definable limits are is important for safety," he said. "Kids have to feel safe enough to be able to explore and be creative."

Klopp's analogy for being a pillar in the district is very reflective of his past. He was



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Doug Klopp is the new principal at Lake-Lehman High School.

once a defensive end for the Bloomsburg University Huskies football team, and the memory of the sport lives on - even at his desk in the principal's office.

"I feel like (being principal is) like being the quarterback of the team," he said. "You're part of something and you're working together with a team. Some people have the qualities to help make the machine work as one."

And that's what Klopp's focus is all about - making sure the team works together in unison, rather than having one person make all the plays. It's all in the assurance of a winning school year.

"Of all the professions you can get into, this has such challenges but it has such

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