

The DALLAS POST

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BMT Library stays afloat despite budget cuts

By SARAH HITE

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There is a slight irony to what Martha Butler, director of the Back Mountain Memorial Library, sees every day. Despite receiving cuts in funding on the county and state levels, more people are using the library during tough economic times.

"We're busier than ever," said Butler. "The library is used twice as much now."

The library located in Dallas, which serves eight other surrounding municipalities, lost approximately \$26,000 in state and county funding this year. Butler estimates it costs nearly \$400,000 a year to run the library — an organization that relies on fundraisers and donations for its budget.

Butler says this is nothing new. Library funding has always been dependent on the economy. And though it is a struggle, she says she and the staff try to ensure business as usual at the library for patrons.

"Everything is affected," she said. "We will have to make cuts on books and materials, but we're not at a point where we would have to cut hours — yet. You never know."

The library won't be removing its bookshelves anytime soon. Butler says the kinds of cuts made to supplies would include ordering fewer copies of books and DVDs, cutting back on magazine subscriptions and letting go of certain Web programs, such as tutor.com, a service for

YOU CAN HELP ...

What: Haunted Library "The Seven Skulls"

When: Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, Oct. 24, 29 and 30
Fridays and Saturdays: 6:30 to 11 p.m.; Sundays: 5 to 9 p.m.

Where: Slightly Read Book Store

How much: \$6

What: Fundraiser

When: Tuesday, Nov. 9, 5 to 8 p.m.

Where: Friendly's Restaurant, Dallas

How much: A percentage of sales, including eat-in, takeout and gift certificates, will benefit the library.

For more information, call the library at 675-1182.

students.

In addition to novels and non-fiction, most special programs for the coming year will also be eliminated, such as lectures for adults and magicians for children, because of the added cost to the library.

There are programs happening now that are "donated." Experts offer their time and skill to teach classes at the library without asking for a penny, and the library doesn't get revenue from the programs, either. For example, the library is offering a six-week chair caning class, and the cost covers only the supplies needed for the course.

"It doesn't incur costs to the library," Butler said of the class.

Butler, who has spent half of her career at the Back Mountain



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Andrew Stocker plays a miner at the Back Mountain Library Haunted House.

Memorial Library, says there is hope on the horizon. Patrons keep pouring in, and so do donations and volunteers in support of the library.

"I think this community values the library and its services," she said. "They respond and support it regularly. I think they view it as an asset."

She said the library has hundreds of volunteers, from day-to-day book washers to those offering their time to work at the annual auction. The Slightly Read Book Store is also another way for the library to raise funds — all the books for sale are donated by patrons.

"It helps us to keep afloat and

weather the cuts," she said of the library's volunteer force.

As a librarian, Butler says it's hard to see the library's funding fluctuate every year because its purpose in the community is long lasting.

"The library enhances a person throughout their life," she said. "It's lifelong learning."

35 years of 'perfect'ion

By SARAH HITE

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Janine Hudak and Tammy Lemelin, both from the Back Mountain area, have been working at Pizza Perfect since they were youngsters in elementary school. They stood on milk crates to put cheese on pizzas, swept the parking lot, made pizza boxes and did every other sort of odd job a 10-year-old could manage.

Their parents, Richard and Louise Adamchick and Richard's close friend and business partner Myron Mickiewicz opened the successful pizza parlor a few decades ago, and now the sisters serve as the restaurant's managers, overseeing operations for the Carverton Road eatery.

Pizza Perfect is celebrating 35 years of pizza, wings and everything in between this month, and the staff can still remember the early years when a cut of pizza cost 30 cents and the Trucksville location was only half its current size.

"The man who rented (the building) to us said he would only rent to us on a month-by-month basis because he didn't think we would make it," said Adamchick of starting the business.

He and Mickiewicz operated the pizza joint part-time while still maintaining their delivery

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CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK/ FOR THE DALLAS POST

Marty Wise helps show Boy Scout Zack Calkins the ins and outs of carpentry and making a bat house.

Scouts attempt to help save bats

EILEEN GODIN

Dallas Post Correspondent

One tiny creature, once seen as a pest, now needs our help, and Trucksville Boy Scout Pack #155, sponsored by the Trucksville United Methodist Church, is stepping up to help out.

Cave, or mine dwelling, bats are being killed off in record numbers by a disease known as White Nose Syndrome, said Den leader Russ Banta, of Trucksville. The bats are also found in old barns, behind house siding and in other small crevices.

Fifteen Boy Scouts ranging in

age from 6 to 15 were at the Trucksville Early Childhood Education Center on October 17 to roll up their sleeves and build 20 single chamber bat boxes for donation to the Pennsylvania Game Commission in Dallas in early spring.

The project is aimed at giving the boys a chance to work with hand tools while contributing to the betterment of the environment, Banta said. The boxes will give the bats a clean healthy place to live, hopefully resulting in recovery of the bat population.

Kevin Wenner, Pennsylvania Game Commission wildlife manager supervisor for the Northeast region, said bats affected by the White Nose Syndrome develop a white fungus on their noses and wings, ultimately dying of starvation. He said one to two million bats locally have been lost to the disease.

In 2006, the first reported findings of White Nose Syndrome occurred in New York. Wenner be-

lieves the disease traveled into Pennsylvania by cave spelunkers, people who enjoy exploring caves, or by biologists studying bats.

"The fungus is a skin irritant," he said.

Afflicted bats spend most of their time trying to clean the fungus off their wings, an activity Wenner said burns up their fat and energy reserves. The bats awake hungry from hibernation in February.

In February, their normal food, insects, are not available, he said.

"They wind up starving," he said. "Bats would normally hibernate until April."

Normally, bats eat three times their weight in bugs in one night, keeping the insect population in check. Without bats, farmers will use more insecticides and the well-being of forests will be at risk.

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Hodne's demeanor belies a man who has been at job for 40 years

By KIM ROLLMAN

Dallas Post Correspondent

Dwight Hodne enters the room wearing faded jeans and a gray sweatshirt. As he strolls across the lobby, he offers a warm, casual smile and extends his hand. It is hardly the image I had in mind when I was asked to interview the recently-retired pastor. Hodne appears to be much younger than his 65 years and, as we talk, it is clear to me it is not just his appearance that contradicts his chronological age; he speaks with the unbridled enthusiasm of a young man just starting out, rather than a man who has spent nearly 40 years in his vocation.

Hodne retired as the pastor of the Fellowship Evangelical Free Church in Dallas in August. His retirement is, by his own admission, a mere technicality. He is retired from the administrative duties of pastoring a church, but plans to continue his ministry for many years to come. He will draw upon his decades of experience to train new pastors and to introduce Christianity to minority groups in our country.

The son of Norwegian immigrants, Hodne was born and raised in Boston, Massachusetts. At 9 years old, he developed "a personal relationship with God." He left Boston to attend The King's College in New York where he earned a degree in psychology. During his second year there, he worked at a Christian camp where he witnessed campers being saved, or welcoming God into their lives, and he knew immediately that he had found his calling in life.

"Watching others receive Christ was a great experience for me," he explains. "I knew that I wanted to do this for the rest of my life. I wanted to do something that lasted forever, that changed people's lives forever."

After college, Hodne married his childhood friend, Holly, and



CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK/ FOR THE DALLAS POST

Retiring pastor Dwight Hodne gets a high five from Gregson Dieffenbacher who is held by his grandmother, Pat Dieffenbacher, at a retirement luncheon in his honor at the Evangelical Free Fellowship Church in Dallas.

the couple moved to Chicago where the aspiring pastor studied at the Trinity Evangelical Divinity School for four years. After graduating from the seminary in the early 1970s, he worked as a youth pastor in the Chicago area. In his two years there, he saw his youth group of high school students grow from 15 members to more than 80.

He then moved on to pastor a church on Long Island, NY for four years. Although he never wavered in his devotion, he didn't feel he was where he needed to be. The church had already been well established and the young pastor felt his talents would be better served elsewhere. Seeing himself as an innovator or pioneer, he wanted a chance to develop his own ideas and start a program from scratch.

He got that chance in 1977 when the Eastern District Association of Evangelical Free Churches came looking for someone to develop a year-round program at Camp Orchard Hill in Orange. The association had purchased the camp, which included a din-

ing room and several cabins, and was looking to develop a summer camp and retreat program on the site.

So Hodne packed up his wife and two young children (his youngest son was not yet born) and left a solid job to come to the Back Mountain for a job that required him to raise his own salary by developing the camp and getting funding from the churches served by the camp. It was a big risk and times were tough for the young family but Hodne was energized by his faith.

"It was a risk," he said, "but I trusted in the Lord. I believed that God was going to take care of us."

The Hodnes worked together to build the camp program. Within five years, the camp grew into a year-round facility that administered to over 3,000 youth and adults. The program included family weekends, weekend retreats, youth groups, adult classes and men's and women's retreats. Hodne and his staff used

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