

The DALLAS POST

50¢

WILKES-BARRE, PA.

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AN EDITION OF THE TIMES LEADER

NEW DALLAS HIGH SCHOOL BUILDING

Mark Kraynack: The man behind the construction

By SARAH HITE
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Mark Kraynack is proud of the new Dallas High School, which is being prepared for a formal dedication in just a few weeks.

After all, he has been an integral part of the construction process since it began in 2008.

"I think of it as my house," said Kraynack, of Harveys Lake.

Serving as buildings and grounds supervisor and clerk of works for the Dallas School District, Kraynack works behind the scenes with a staff of 40 to ensure the cleanliness, safety and beauty of the campus remains intact while also making sure the district saves the most money in its building projects.

But it hasn't always been that way. Kraynack, 50, was named clerk of works when the district began its additions to Wycallis

Elementary School in 2008 — about 14 years after he was initially hired.

The district had hired independent construction management agencies in the past for projects, such as the construction of Wycallis Elementary School and comprehensive renovations to the middle school, which Kraynack said cost the district more money in the long run.

"Quite frankly, I was honored," Kraynack said of his title. "I was doing it anyhow, but I really didn't get the title for it until then. So the Wycallis project was kind of like, 'Let's try him out before we give him the high school.'"

Kraynack said the position came naturally to him during the Wycallis expansion — he'd already worked closely with construction crews on past projects, but now the man who knew the schools inside and out had a say



Mark Kraynack, Dallas High School buildings and grounds supervisor, has overseen many aspects of the demolition of the old high school while tending to construction of the new school.

in what was best for the district. "The idea was, who (would

be) better (to hire) than the guy who's going to have to maintain

all this stuff in the years to come and ... who has a vested interest

FOR A SNEAK PEAK OF THE NEW DALLAS HIGH SCHOOL BUILDING, TURN TO PAGE 5.

in the district be the one making the calls," he said.

Kraynack does have a vested interest — he attended Dallas schools before finishing his high school years at West Side Career and Technical Center. When he joined the district staff in 1994, he said he was coming back to his old stomping grounds.

"It was pretty neat because I remembered my teachers and they remembered me," said Kraynack.

The high school construction project is a little different from the Wycallis expansion — especially in price. Adding classrooms to the elementary school

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DALLAS SCHOOL DISTRICT

Board approves support contract

By SARAH HITE
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A support staff contract, new hires and the high school construction project were on the agenda at the Dallas School Board meeting Monday evening.

The board approved a contract with the district educational support personnel, which includes maintenance workers, custodians and secretarial and clerical positions.

While the agreement does feature raises for all position levels, Superintendent Frank Galicki said both parties kept the economic climate in mind during negotiations for the contract that expired on July 1.

Each position has an eight-level pay scale, and raises do not reflect longevity bonuses. Maintenance workers received an additional 21 to 27 cents per hour, custodians received between 18 and 25 cents per hour and secretarial/clerical workers got an additional 18 to 24 cents per hour.

The contract will remain intact until June 30, 2016.

Several personnel changes were approved during the meeting, including the appointment of two permanent elementary teachers.

Lesley Plank, who served as a long-term substitute for Dallas Elementary fifth-grade teacher Angel Bestwick, was hired to replace Bestwick with a starting salary of \$37,396. Bestwick took a leave of absence last year and submitted a letter of resignation last month.

Ashley Barchik, who served as a long-term substitute for Dallas and Wycallis elementary schools' art teacher Erin Lyпка last year, was hired to that position permanently with a starting salary of \$35,295. Lyпка also submitted a letter of resignation last month.

A part-time high school

"A lot of people said they were shedding a tear for the old building. Once they see the new building, I don't think they'll be shedding any tears."

Bruce Goeringer
Dallas School Board president

Spanish teacher, Sara Rosenberg, was hired at a rate of \$28.35 per hour for three hours per day.

Two long-term substitutes were also hired — Kristin Hricko as substitute school psychologist at the prorated salary of \$35,000 for the period of September 8 through December 30, and Diana Burns-Snyder as a substitute elementary teacher at the prorated salary of \$45,189 for the period of Sept. 8, 2011 through Jan. 27, 2012.

Nicole Miller, senior high math teacher, was approved for a leave of absence for a period of Oct. 3, 2011 through Feb. 29, 2012.

The board reflected on the progress of the new high school building during the meeting as seven of the board members toured the new facility during the executive session. Dennis Gochoel Jr. was absent and Catherine Wega participated in the regular meeting via speakerphone.

Bob Nesbit, of Crabtree Rohrbaugh and Associates, said the project is 94 percent complete by time and 88 percent complete by cost.

The board discussed the design of the building and its "impressive" interior.

"A lot of people said they were shedding a tear for the old building," said Board President Bruce Goeringer. "Once they see the new building, I don't think they'll be shedding any tears."

Goeringer, a Dallas alumus, said while he loved the old school, he finds the new facility to be "beautiful."

"It should take care of the needs of students for years to come," he said.

Riding for a cure - for the third time

By SARAH HITE
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The third annual Endure for a Cure Bike-a-Thon on August 7, which benefits the American Cancer Society, celebrates the lives of cancer survivors and honors the memory of those who have passed away.

It also gives those currently battling the disease hope for a healthy future.

Jeff Thomas, of Franklin Township, was getting ready for a local election earlier this year. He put his name in the ring for Dallas School Board and made it on the Democratic ballot after the May 17 primary.

But eight days prior to the election, the 51-year-old businessman put his campaigning on hold when he was diagnosed with stage 2 esophageal cancer. He hasn't been quite the same since.

"I went to the doctor because I was having difficulty swallowing," said Thomas. "After that, I was scheduled for an endoscopy and found out I had cancer."

Thomas admits those first 30 days after his diagnosis were like "a black hole."

"I remember driving around, just completely lost, and I found this place," he said of Candy's Place, a cancer wellness center located in Forty Fort.

His sister arranged for a meeting with the center's director and a local cancer survivor, and Thomas said the conversation the three of them had caused him to cry for the first time.

"I had a complete breakdown," said Thomas. "I have a wife and kids and family and a business, but I'm working through this."

President of Four Star Business Systems Inc., Gold Star Wide Format and Business Office Systems Inc., Thomas received five weeks of chemotherapy and radiation and plans to have surgery to remove most of his esophagus later this year.

He will participate in the 12-mile bicycle ride during the Endure Bike-a-Thon as a sign of hope that one day he can ride his bike cancer-free.

"My fearfulness is turning into acceptance," he said.

Dawn Brady, of Shavertown, is one person whom Thomas credits for helping him make that transition.

The 49-year-old Endure festival coordinator was diagnosed



Riders in last year's Endure for a Cure Bike-a-Thon enjoyed nice weather.

ENDURE FOR A CURE BIKE-A-THON

When: Registration begins at 7 a.m. on Sunday, Aug. 7. At 8:15 a.m., riders on the 36.6 and 60-mile routes will depart. Registration will begin at 8:30 a.m. for the 12-mile family ride, which will depart at 10 a.m. Festival begins at 10:30 a.m.

Where: Wilkes University, 84 W. South St., Wilkes-Barre.

What: The 36.6-mile route runs from Wilkes-Barre across the Market Street Bridge, along Wyoming Avenue to Route 92 then onto Sutton Creek Road in Harding to West Eighth Street and past Frances Slocum on Mount Olivet Road, over to Carverton Road in Trucksville, back to Eighth Street and then onto Wyoming Avenue.

The 60-mile route starts the same and continues on Route 92 in Harding to Falls, turns on the Roosevelt Highway by Lake Winola and makes a loop back to Wilkes-Barre on the other side of the Susquehanna River through Ransom to River Road.

Rest stops, with restrooms, snacks and beverages, are available every 15 miles on each ride.

The 12-mile family fun ride is along the Susquehanna River on the levee system.

Cost: \$40 registration fee

Missed the event? Organizers are looking for volunteers for next year's bike-a-thon. Visit www.endurebike.org, or contact the American Cancer Society's Taylor office at 562-9749.

with esophageal cancer nearly six years ago and is currently cancer-free. But she said the path to freedom from the disease wasn't always an easy one.

"When I was diagnosed with esophageal cancer, the survival rate for women was between 10 and 12 percent," she said. "It was like a ton of bricks hit me all at once."

After chemotherapy, radiation and a "difficult, complex" surgery in which most of her esophagus was removed and her stomach was reattached to a small part of the remaining tissue, Brady can say she is currently cancer-free, although she's hesitant to say she's in remission.

"I have regular scans and there is no cancer," she said. "But the way it's been presented to me, the

minute you pick yourself off the floor after that ton of bricks hits you, you are a cancer survivor."

Vince Bulzoni of Shavertown, one of the event's co-founders, said he and his co-organizer Brian McQuestion keep the Endure Bike-a-Thon going because of the influence it has on others.

He said the idea of creating a physical event to promote the American Cancer Society trickles down to learning about simple wellness awareness.

"I don't think people realize the reach of their influence," he said.

The event in Northeastern Pennsylvania is one of three bike-a-thons in the region. Brady said between the Wilkes-Barre, Philadelphia and Akron, Ohio events, \$18 million has been raised for cancer research.

In two years, the Wilkes-Barre-based bike-a-thon has raised more than \$50,000 and more than 400 cyclists attended the event.

"There's a lot of potential here for this event to grow," she said.

Thomas, an avid runner and cyclist, said giving back and helping others is a large part of his experience with the disease. He said the compassion he was shown by various doctors and radiologists made all the difference in the world, and he hopes to pass that experience on to others.

"Nobody can save me today," said Thomas. "But one radiologist looked me in the eye (on my first day of radiation) and said 'It's going to be OK.' Her name was Danielle. She saved me that day."



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