

# The DALLAS POST

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## O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree A quest to find perfect holiday decoration

By SARAH HITE  
shite@mydallaspost.com

### TREE FARMS

Just as the turkey is synonymous with Thanksgiving, a full-figured blue spruce with all the trimmings might be the number one Christmastime mascot.

OK, it may be second to the jolly guy with the red hat.

Back Mountain tree farmers admit people are always looking for the perfect tree, but perfection is in the eye of the beholder.

Mary Pickarski, who owns Pickarski's Tree Farm in Dallas Township, said different tree types of trees suit different needs.

"It's nice to have a spruce if you have children and don't want them playing with the tree because it's picky," she said. "...But a Fraser fir is nice because the needles are softer if you want the children to help put on the ornaments."

She said firs are softer but have weaker limbs, and the opposite is true of the spruces, which can hold those heavy ornaments just fine.

But Pickarski doesn't offer blue spruce trees anymore - in springtime they need to be sprayed with pesticide to keep destructive weevils at bay.

"I decided not to spray because there has to be bad things in spray," she said.

Pickarski said it's also important to remember where the tree will be located once inside a dwelling. That tidbit of information will help determine what shape to look for.

**Pickarski's Tree Farm**  
Old Highway Road, Dallas Township  
Choose from Fraser, Concolor and Douglas firs. Customers cut their own trees. \$20 any size. Open dawn to dusk.

**Lehman Nursery**  
Idetown-Huntsville Road, Lehman Township  
Choose from Canaan and Douglas firs and Blue Spruces. Trees are fresh cut. \$35. Open 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday, and from 1 to 5 p.m. Sundays.

**Joe's Christmas Tree Farm**  
Route 29, Lake Township  
Choose from Fraser and Canaan firs and blue and white spruces. Customers cut their own trees. \$35 for large trees. Open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Sunday.

"If you're putting a tree in a corner or by a wall, a one-sided tree is fine," she said. "How do you trim it? You look at it and say, 'Well it's sticking out here and there and there.'"

Myrtle Chamberlain, owner of Lehman Nursery off Route 118, said the size of a tree can be deceiving upon first glance.

"The biggest mistake people make is getting a tree that's too big," she said. "The trees look smaller when you're outside, but when you get inside they can take up the whole room."

Connie and Brad Fleeger, of Sweet Valley, have had enough experience with fresh cut trees that they can eyeball what size is needed to meet their needs.

"We're looking for at least an 8-



Trees are harvested and bundled for sale at Joe's Christmas Tree Farm in Lake Township. Selling trees during the holiday season is a family affair for, from left, Tim and Joe Pearson with some good cheer from Abby Killian, Joe's granddaughter.

CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK/ FOR THE DALLAS POST

to 9-footer, and at least 6-feet across," said Brad Fleeger. "We like them real big...We've had big trees every year for the past 37 years."

Christmas tree upkeep is another important part of making

spirits bright during the holiday season. The professionals said there aren't any tricks - keeping the tree watered and away from heat sources are the only rules for having a green tree through January.

"I have some customers who put them up the day after Thanksgiving and some who put them up the day before Christmas," said Chamberlain. "I think it's about tradition."

Pickarski said she's heard of

dozens of different concoctions aimed to keep a tree healthy, but vigilant watering is best.

"Just make sure it always has a full container," she said.

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## Getting up close and personal with business

By SARAH HITE  
shite@mydallaspost.com

About 120 Dallas Elementary fifth-graders played grown-up for a

day on November 22 during the Junior Achievement of Northeastern Pennsylvania BizTown program at the Mericle Family Center for Enterprise Education in Pittston.

Youngsters got the chance to run their own businesses, deposit their hard-earned paychecks and even perfect the art of check writing to buy goods during the daylong event.

The students took part in a series of courses in their own classrooms in preparation for the visit, which included learning about financial literacy, business management, community and economy and workplace readiness skills.

The program aims to simulate adult life for the budding business owners. Students worked at their jobs during the day, received a taxed paycheck and shopped during break time.

The fifth-graders piled in to the simulated town, complete with a radio station, newspaper, café, bank, health insurance office and city hall, and after a quick de-briefing from Program Director Paul Francis, they were able to hold business meetings and get to work.

The young adults even had to interview for their positions at the various employers prior to attending BizTown, and some students learned that life doesn't always end up the way one plans.

Eleven-year-old Caleb Sweitzer, of Dallas, familiarized himself with the computer at BizTown's only radio station, WBIZ, but it wasn't what he had set out to do from the beginning.

"I just got picked for this job," he said. "I wanted to work at the bank, because I'm really good at math, but I got picked for radio DJ."



Dallas Elementary School fifth-grade student Jakob Flores was selected the mayor of Biz Town. This is the second time someone in the Flores family has been involved in Biz Town politics. Jakob's older brother took on the same role years ago when he was in fifth grade.

CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK PHOTOS/ FOR THE DALLAS POST

Fellow disk jockey David Smith was more than happy to play music for the citizens of BizTown.

"I like public speaking," said the 10-year-old from Dallas.

Future politico Jakob Flores, 10, of Shavertown, earned his title as mayor of the pretend town - a position he's always wanted.

"I wanted to follow in the footsteps of my brother James," said the suit-clad Flores. "He was the first mayor of BizTown."

Though he was nervous prior to making his inauguration address to his fellow BizTown citizens, Flores felt confident in his role as he sat and filed paperwork in the city hall.

"I like to take care of the businesses," he said. "I want to make sure they get their privileges and all the employees get paid."

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information about the Junior Achievement BizTown program, visit [www.janepa.org](http://www.janepa.org).

Katie Zimmerman, of Dallas, said she couldn't wait to start at the miniature Blue Cross health insurance business.

"I'm a health care manager," said the 10-year-old. "My mom was a nurse and she always helped me."

Zimmerman was surprised at how much paperwork was involved in the insurance aspect of health care, but she was pretty excited to work together with her team to benefit the rest of the townfolk.

"When I grow up, I want to be a doctor or that thing when you go in a house and look for clues to solve a mystery - a detective," she said.

Several parents were on hand to help throughout the day, and many said it was fun to watch their children discover the nuances of adult life.

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Dallas Elementary School fifth-grade students David Smith and Caleb Sweitzer serve as on-air personalities for the day at the Junior Achievement mock business town in Pittston.



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