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Remembering Kevin

Statue honors memory of 5-year-old

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Dallas Post Correspondent

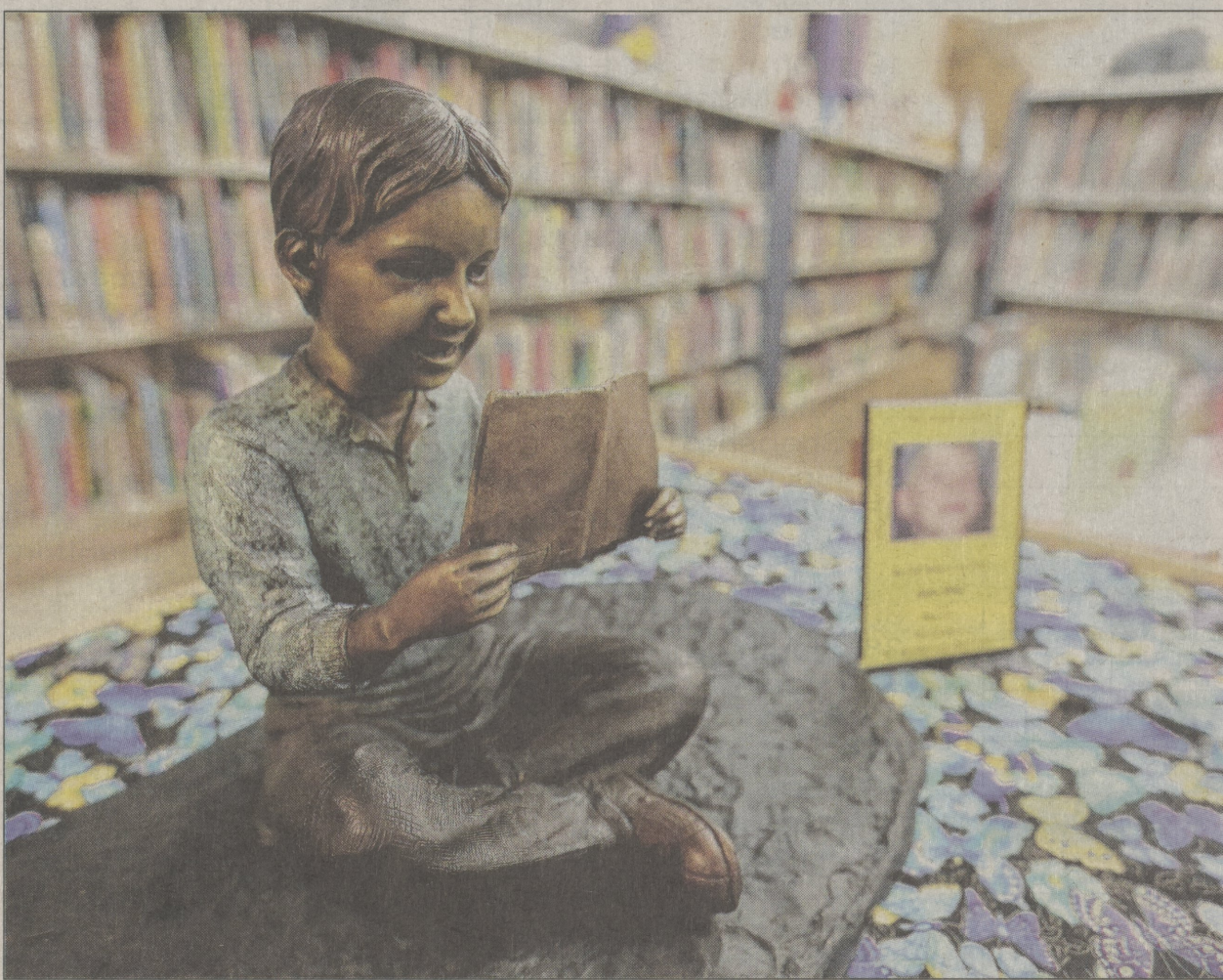
It was a time for smiles and a time for tears. A large group of family and friends assembled in the Children's Room at the Back Mountain Library on Dec. 4 for the unveiling of a statue in honor of Kevin Miller who died last December at age 5 in a tragic accident.

Kevin was a student at I'm Big Now, a preschool and kindergarten in Dallas. After his death, many people associated with the school wanted to honor the boy who was known for his sweet smile and love of singing.

"We were inundated with requests," said Lisa Wallace, co-owner of the school and preschool teacher there. She and co-owner Linda Fritzges had to decide what to do with the funds.

"The first place we thought of was the library," Wallace said. "It was the perfect place."

Wallace and Fritzges decided to leave the deci-



The bronze Kevin Miller statue, sculpted by Randolph Rose, will be on permanent display in the children's section of the Back Mountain Memorial Library.

sion about how to honor Kevin in the hands of Back Mountain Library Director Martha Butler and

Children's Librarian Janet Bauman.

Bauman said they thought about books first

but realize that books wear out. "We saw this statue and thought it would be an everlasting memorial."

"The statue is permanent," she added, "and its home will be 'the fireplace' in the Children's Room."

The following children's families at I'm Big Now contributed to the statue in memory of Kevin Miller: Erika Doran, Jack Leandri, Kyla Kon, Lily Velez, Natalie Joseph, Juliana Konnick, Luke Nicolai, Lauren Capece, Gregory Preate, Carlee Fitch, Ernie Priebe, Logan Valkenburg, James Gibbons, Sophia Strazdus, Amanda Battin, Cassie Alaimo, Jacob Bryk and Ava Magdalinski. The

following staff members at the school also contributed: Mrs. Linda Fritzges, Mrs. Lisa Wallace, Mrs. Cornelia Romanowski and Mrs. Paulette Moran.

The following members of Kevin Miller's family were able to attend the ceremony: Dr. Stephen and Attorney Caroline Miller, Kevin's parents; Christopher and Stephen, his brothers; Theresa Prebola, maternal

grandmother; and Dr. James and Frances Miller, paternal grandparents. The following aunts and uncles also attended: Thomas and Lynn Prebola and their children, Joshua and Juliette; Kristin Sassi and children, Jonathan, Tyler and Katelyn; Dr. John and Lisa Miller and children, John and Eric; Randy and Christine Lisman, and children Janice, Alan and Andrew; and cousin Megan Miller.



Kevin Miller's parents, Dr. Stephen and Atty. Caroline Miller, try to hold back tears as they listen to the statue presentation.



I'm Big Now Learning Center co-owner Linda Fritzges presents the Kevin Miller statue to Dr. Stephen and Caroline Miller and to the Back Mountain Memorial Library.

The spot is not a true fireplace but a shelf on a brick wall in a prominent place in the room. Bauman also pointed out a wall display of felt dinosaurs in the room which was donated by the Christine and Randy Lisman fam-

ily in Kevin's memory. During the brief ceremony, Fritzges told the assembled group that Kevin was "near and dear to a lot of people's hearts." She read the inscription

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Gingerbread contest about more than sweets

Family-friendly event patterned after one in N.J.

SARAH HITE
Dallas Post Correspondent

Back Mountain families showed off their sweet skills while getting into the holiday spirit during the Gate of Heaven Christmas Festival and Gingerbread House Contest on Dec. 7 at the parish.

About 20 entries were displayed, with candy-coated construction products ranging from classic gingerbread walls and roofs to marshmallow chimneys to icing wreaths.

The contest was open to the entire community, not just members of the parish, said organizer Carol Carroll.

Festival coordinator Carol Yezilski, of Dallas, was inspired to create a family-friendly gathering after attending a similar event in New Jersey, where her daughter lives.

"They've been doing it for the past 18 years, and it's the first week of December," she said. "They have 200 houses at the gingerbread house contest."

Yezilski makes a gingerbread house with her



Scott Field, 13, of Noxen, shows off his gingerbread house at Gate of Heaven School.

family for the contest and feels the event is about more than fashioning a house out of sweet treats.

"I enjoy the bonding with family," she said.

Scott Field, 13, of Noxen, and his family baked the gingerbread they used for walls and a roof from scratch.

"We wanted to it to look like a cabin in the woods," he said.

The structure was surrounded by pointed ice cream cones covered in green-tinted frosting to simulate a tree-heavy spot in the forest. Field said the lake, made from colored candy sticks, was a little trickier to make.

"We took hard candy and crushed it and melted it in the oven," he said. "We had to use quite a



Shepherd Ryan Michaels, 6, left, of Dallas, angel Melanie Selner, 9, and little drummer girl Jillian Selner, 6, both of Shavertown, try out manger scene costumes.



The Gate of Heaven Handbell Choir performs Jingle Bells under the direction of Anthony J. Kubasek.

bit. We used foil to create the shape of the lake."

Field said his family has made gingerbread houses from store-bought kits in the past, but making this one from scratch, though a bit more difficult, had

its benefits.

"We do get to eat them," said Field. "Some of the ones from the kits taste bad, depending on the kit."

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Daddow-Isaacs American Legion Post 672 50- and 60-year members honored at the Pearl Harbor Day remembrance breakfast are, from left, first row, Len Groboski, 56 years; Bucky O'Neil, 61 years. Back row: Carl Moyer, 57 years; Herbert Dreher, 58 years; and William Wallo, 51 years, all of Dallas.

Legion remembers Pearl Harbor, honors members

Large group of veterans reflects on Dec. 7, 1941

SUSAN DENNEY
Dallas Post Correspondent

For most Americans the events of Sept. 11, 2001 stand out in their memory as the most tragic day for America. But those who remember Dec. 7, 1941 know the consequences of that day were far greater.

Members of the Daddow-Isaacs American Legion Post 672 gathered on Dec. 7 to remember those who died when the Imperial Japanese Navy bombed Pearl Harbor. A few had memories of the actual day.

In spite of icy weather,

a large group of veterans honored the day with a short service, a breakfast and a recognition of Legionnaires who have been members of the post for 50 years or more.

At the beginning of the program, post historian Clarence Michael, of Dallas, led the in singing of "God Bless America." A surprising number of those in attendance knew the words and joined him in singing the less-known song, "Remember Pearl Harbor."

The Rev. Bill Lewis is chaplain of the post. A retired military chaplain living in Dallas, he spoke to the group about Pearl Harbor and its significance.

"God bless you all who still remember," Lewis said, encouraging members to share their his-

tories. "Tell your stories and pass on to the next generation the spirit you have."

James "Bucky" O'Neil, of Dallas, who has been a member of the post for 61 years, was one of the members honored.

O'Neil was a member of the Marine Corps and served from 1949 to 1962. He said he made staff sergeant in one and a half years because he was already serving when the Korean War broke out. He was a cook and then a chief cook

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