

Walbro workers ok pact

By an overwhelming margin Sunday, 292-16, Walbro employees approved a new three-year contract with the company.

The new pact with United Auto Workers Amalgamated Local 213 took effect Monday, the old one expiring the day of the vote.

The union represents 375 hourly employees at the Walbro plants in Cass City and Caro.

According to Don Tonti, the firm's director of human resources, the contract provides for a 50 cents per hour pay increase the first year, 30 cents the second year and 20 cents the third year, with a maximum cost of living increase of 25 cents per year. The previous cost of living had been 15 cents a year.

Including fringe benefits, the contract is worth about \$1.98 per hour additional to Walbro employees over the three years.

Because of the state of the economy, Tonti said, wages were the big issue in the negotiations, which began less than two months ago.

Fourteen negotiating sessions were held, according to union local President Ralph Elenbaum of Sandusky, with tentative agreement being reached late Friday afternoon. Union members gathered at the Masonic Temple in Cass City Sunday to vote on the contract.

"I think we reached a good settlement," Elenbaum concluded.



CLEANING CHIMNEYS is hard work, as evidenced by the grimace on Irene Ferguson's face. The rods in the canvas bag, protruding over the side of the chimney, are attached in sections to the wire cleaning brush. The Pigeon resident was cleaning the chimney of Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Frederick, of Evergreen township. (Story on page 18.)

Walbro still trying for state approval for chemical disposal

Walbro Corp. is still hoping to obtain approval from the state Department of Natural Resources to discharge a chemical it hopes to use in its manufacturing process at its Garfield Street plant into the village sewer system.

In the interim, the company is continuing to pay a Detroit area disposal firm to haul away its chemical wastes, which because of the cost, it feels it cannot continue to do indefinitely.

The problem is a chemical called Metaseal, used to fill pores in carburetor castings. As reported by the Chronicle in October, until last July, Walbro was dumping the 11 gallons of Metaseal it was using daily, plus some other chemicals, and primarily water, a total of 4,500 gallons a day, into an underground pit behind the factory.

Because the Metaseal compound used contained 40 percent styrene, which may cause cancer or mutations in humans, the DNR ordered Walbro to stop the underground disposal.

As of July 27, the firm

started having the 4,500 gallons a day of liquid waste hauled away. It is taken to Wayne Disposal, a Detroit area firm, which solidifies the material and then dumps it in an approved landfill.

Because the waste hauling is too costly - Walbro won't say how much - Walbro wants to use a different Metaseal compound, which uses vinyl toluene instead of styrene, and then discharge it and the remainder of its chemical waste into the sewer system.

It planned to install vacuum cleaning units which would eliminate the need to use 1,500 gallons (of the 4,500) of 90 percent water and 10 percent Stanasol, a cleaning compound, and a centrifuge to reduce the 11 gallons of Metaseal used daily down to five or six.

The question then became whether the Metaseal with vinyl toluene had any harmful effects. Walbro hired a private laboratory to do the testing.

According to Walbro Director of Purchasing Bill Ewald, the laboratory is still involved in a disagreement

with the DNR over the allowable parts per million of the chemical.

The state agency, the executive said, wants to require fewer parts per million (diluted with water) than Walbro feels is necessary for safety, that because of past chemical disasters in Michigan, "they're not going to go out on a limb at all."

Henry Torres, DNR water quality specialist, gave a different account. He told the Chronicle there had been disagreement between his agency and laboratory over the parts per million to be used in the tests.

That has now been resolved, apparently in the DNR's favor, and the laboratory is now testing the biodegradability of the chemical at various tolerance levels.

The state agency is now waiting for results, he said, with no time limit imposed on when they have to be in.

Ewald said he has been continually pursuing the DNR in hopes of getting the matter resolved, but so far has encountered mainly paperwork, red tape and

delay.

In addition to ending the underground disposal of the 4,500 gallons of the chemical waste, Walbro last July also agreed to sink test wells. Samples from the wells will determine whether there has been any harmful contamination from the underground disposal, which in turn could affect underground water supplies.

If contamination were found, Walbro might be forced to undertake a costly cleanup, either pumping out the contaminated ground water or even more expen-

sive, digging out the earth containing the contamination.

The wells have been in place several months now, according to Ewald, but the DNR has yet to send anyone to draw the samples to test.

The reason, according to Torres, is a staff member in the DNR underground compliance section assigned to the Walbro case was transferred to another department. No one else has been assigned yet, because those in the section are working on higher priority cases.



MOTHER DUCK -- This duck has been sitting on its eggs, a few feet from the edge of Reed Road in Elkland township. The expectant mother duck was discovered by David Holik, who lives nearby.

Swimming pools the same, feds empty handed for tennis

It won't cost any more to take a dive this year.

The Cass City Village Council voted Monday evening to keep rates at the Helen Stevens Memorial Pool the same as last year.

The pool will open some time before June 6, possibly Memorial Day.

Individual rates, Monday through Saturday, will be 25 cents from 1-3 p.m., 35 cents from 3-5 p.m. and 50 cents from 7-9 p.m. and 2-5 p.m. Sundays. Swimming will be free from 1-3 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays for the benefit of those who might otherwise not be able to afford to use the pool.

Rates for Saturday night group reservations, season passes and swimming lessons also remain the same.

In 1979, the village collected \$5,376 in fees, but spent \$29,976 for operation of the pool, of which slightly more than half was for salaries of lifeguards.

Council members debated raising the fees, but based on experience in other communities, where rates were increased and attendance declined, decided to keep them the same.

They agreed with the comment of Trustee Dorothy Stahlbaum that the pool can never be made self-supporting. She added, "I would like to try to get money out of neighboring townships, if possible."

Village President Lambert Althaver responded, "We can try," but expressed doubt anything will be contributed beyond what they presently give.

TENNIS COURTS

In approving the 1980 budget, the council decided

it couldn't afford the \$30,000 it would have needed to match the anticipated federal grant it had applied for in that amount for construction of four new tennis courts.

It didn't matter. The village has been notified by the state Department of Natural Resources that President Carter has placed a freeze on awarding of federal Land and Water Conservation Fund grants.

The project has high priority, if and when the funds are unfrozen. That could work to Cass City's advantage, Althaver pointed out, should it get the grant late enough this year (or next year) so that the village could pay the local share out of 1981 funds, if it can afford it then.

Contributions are being sought for the local share. Latest contributor is the Walbro Charitable Trust, \$1,500 for the village park but designated for the tennis courts.

CONSTRUCTION, DESTRUCTION

The DNR has now given the final documents for the wastewater treatment plant project and sent them on to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for its review, with final okay there expected by May 9.

With the other procedural steps also on schedule, village Supt. Lou LaPonsie reported, construction should start by June 1. Completion date is scheduled Nov. 18, 1981.

The contractor on the Garfield Street-Doerr Road reconstruction project, Hallenbeck Construction Co., will probably start Monday, weather permitting.

Next scheduled council meeting date would be May 26, which is Memorial Day, so it will be rescheduled.

No significant progress was reported in the village's efforts to get Wickes Agriculture to tear down the old Vulcan Street elevators. Althaver said a company official in Saginaw did express disappointment over the telephone that the council had decided to commence condemnation proceedings, that he thought the village was satisfied with Wickes' promise it would have them demolished by summer.

It was also reported the county filed a condemnation suit to have the Margaret McNeil covered basement at Brooker and Houghton Streets torn down. (See story elsewhere in this issue.)

OTHER ITEMS

The council gave its informal assent to the police department having enforcement powers at the high school parking lot, authorized by the school board April 17. The police will now be able to issue tickets for cars parked in the fire lane, for student cars parked in areas not designated for them and for improperly parked cars causing disruptions.

Highest of three bidders for purchase of the village's 1967 pickup truck was A.T. Sandman of Dodge Road, Gageton.

Unless the cost is prohibitive, a drinking fountain will be installed by the softball diamonds in the park.

Village clean-up days were designated May 7-8, during which time village crews will provide free pick-up of all discards.

Next scheduled council meeting date would be May 26, which is Memorial Day, so it will be rescheduled.

Await layoff word at regional center

The Caro Regional Center won't be laying off any employees as of this Thursday, the date layoffs were to

start, but after that is still a question mark.

According to the center's director, Dr. Marlin H. Roll, the mandate from the Michigan Department of Mental Health was that the center was to reduce its staff of 820 by 210, with 10 percent of the reduction (21 persons) to be made each pay period, starting May 1.

However, since the time the staff count was made, he said, enough persons either retired or quit to avoid having to make any layoffs this Thursday.

Before the next pay period in late May, he hopes to have heard whether the center will have received any supplemental funds, which might reduce the number to be laid off or eliminate the need to do so.

The money would have to either come from the legislature or the mental health department's limited discretionary funds.

There aren't enough discretionary funds to cover all state mental institutions which are being cut back in personnel, he pointed out, so cuts will have to be made somewhere.

If no additional funds are

forthcoming, he indicated, he and the center's employees will at least know what the future holds. For starters, no more funds will mean 21 persons will lose their jobs in mid-May. Roll declined to speculate what might happen.

The state institution is close to the minimum staffing standards now, he pointed out. Once it falls below the standards, it won't receive federal funds. The loss of federal funds would be more than would be saved by the axing of 210 employees.

The regional center presently has about 620 residents. Except for one 18 bed unit for persons mentally ill, the rest are mentally retarded.

The need for around-the-clock care, seven days a week, is why there are more employees than residents, Roll explained.

Because of the state's money crunch, the mental health department is aiming to start the new fiscal year Oct. 1 with 1,625 fewer employees than it has now, with half the reduction to come from attrition, the rest from layoffs.

Apparent fire was deceiving

Appearances can be deceiving.

There was a fire, all right, but it wasn't what the person who reported it thought it was.

Elkland township firemen responded to a reported fire in the Wickes Agriculture office on Main Street at 8:10 p.m. Saturday. All they

found was trash burning in a barrel behind Veronica's Restaurant next door.

Investigation found that a patron at the Big D Restaurant across the street had spotted what he thought were flames inside the Wickes office. They were actually the flames from the trash barrel fire reflected through the windows.

Kingston youth dies in Sunday accident

Funeral services were held Wednesday for Mark R. Shorland, 20, of 5002 Phillips Road, Kingston, who was killed Sunday night in a traffic accident in northern Lapeer county.

According to Lapeer state police, Shorland was northbound on Fish Lake Road, north of Norway Lake Road, when he lost control of his car, which flipped over.

He was pronounced dead on arrival at Lapeer County General Hospital. The accident took place at 11:23 p.m.

The victim was born June 4, 1959, in Pontiac, the son of Walter and Marion (Kardwell) Shorland.

He was a truck driver for Long's Furniture Store in Marlette.

He is survived by his father and mother of Kingston; four brothers, Gary, Lake Orion, Dave, Oxford, Steve, Pontiac, and Scott, Metamora, and his grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Shorland Sr. of Allanta, Mich., and Mr. and Mrs. Einar Kardwell, Pontiac.

Funeral services were held Wednesday afternoon at Kingston United Methodist church, Rev. Gilson Miller officiating.

Burial was in Kingston cemetery. Arrangements were by Harmon Funeral Home, Kingston.

sent a Decker couple to the hospital.

Injured were the driver, Raymond Parkin, 62, of 2801 N. Van Dyke Road, who was treated and released from Marlette Community Hospital, and his wife Velma, 65, who was reported in satisfactory condition there Tuesday afternoon.

Sandusky state police reported they were northbound on M-53, near Mushroom Road, when their car was struck in the rear by a vehicle that was passing it.

The driver of the other car continued on without stopping.

Parkin lost control of his car, which went into the east side ditch.

Tuscola county deputies reported that at 12:30 a.m. Please turn to page 18.

OTHER ACCIDENTS

A hit-run accident at 11 p.m. Wednesday, April 23,

SPRING RUMMAGE SALE at First Presbyterian church basement - Saturday, May 3. Doors open at 9, 5-4-17-3