

Last chance Monday for school millage

It will be make it or break it for the Cass City schools Monday, when district residents will be asked to approve a one-mill levy for one year for school operations. Defeat of the proposal, school officials warn, will mean elimination of some teaching positions and elimination of all interscholastic athletics except for boys' basketball and girls' volleyball.

The polling place at the high school will be open from 7 a.m.-8 p.m. Passage of the millage will give the district 21.9 mills, still low by county standards.

For the 1979-80 school year, Cass City levied a total

of 21.077 mills (19.977 for operations; 1.1 mills for debt retirement), the lowest of the nine school districts within the Tuscola Intermediate School District. Vassar was next lowest at 22.13 mills and Akron-Fairgrove was highest at 30.94.

The Cass City School Board scheduled the special election after two of three proposals on the June 9 ballot were defeated. Voters approved a 3.5 mill renewal for school operations but defeated a 6 mill increase and a repeal of provisions of the Headlee tax limitation amendment.

It wasn't known then, but is known now, Supt. Donald Crouse said, that there won't

be a rollback this year because the rate of inflation was higher than the increase in assessments.

Thus if the levy is approved Monday, Cass City will be able to levy a full 21.9 mills on December tax bills.

CUTBACKS

Approval of the levy will mean an additional \$94,000, about the same as what the two defeated proposals in June would have raised. Rejection this time, the school board has decided, will mean the following:

- Elimination of one teaching position in the high school. Due to some reshuffling of staff members, the

resulting classes that will be eliminated will be Home Economics III, Economics and one section of Elementary Algebra.

- Elimination of the vocal music. Last year, 770 students were enrolled in the program at the high school and grades K-4.
- No elementary art. Last year, 741 students in grades 2-6 received instruction from the special art teacher.
- Elimination of all interscholastic sports except for boys' basketball, kept as it is the only sport that pays its own way, and girls' volleyball, kept because the board might be charged with discrimination if it only offered a sport for boys. Both junior

varsity and varsity teams would participate in both sports.

- No new books purchased for the elementary, intermediate and high school libraries.

Even if the extra millage is approved, school board members decided in late June, there will not be enough money for the upcoming school year to maintain the present staff.

It thus voted to eliminate 4½ positions, first and second grade teachers at Campbell Elementary, sixth and seventh grade teachers at the Intermediate School, and the high school remedial reading teacher.

Because of an increase in

enrollment, it will add a half-time kindergarten teacher at Evergreen Elementary.

Elimination of the four regular classrooms positions, which had an average enrollment of 25 or less, will mean an increase in the remaining classes at those grade levels to an average of 30 students.

Those staff cuts will remain, even if the millage passes.

Although some teaching positions will be eliminated, Crouse said, with or without the millage increase, it isn't possible to say yet how many teachers will actually lose their jobs. That depends on how many other teachers

resign, seniority and whether teachers with seniority whose positions are eliminated can teach other subjects.

FINANCES

Of the district's 1979-80 school year general fund budget of \$2.75 million, \$1.58 million or 57½ percent came from local property taxes and \$1.1 million or 42.5 percent from the state.

In addition, the district gets a big chunk of money each year from Washington, of which the biggest portion -- \$136,783 last year -- is for the Title I remedial education program.

Although the start of

school is less than a month away, the legislature still has not decided on what the 1980-81 state school aid will be.

Because of the state's depressed financial situation, according to the superintendent, Gov. William Milliken has proposed a \$100 million cut in state aid, although there are indications legislators will oppose that big a cut.

It appears Cass City may not be hurt too bad in the general state aid category, Crouse said, but the governor is proposing a 50 percent cut in the reimbursement for school bus transportation.

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CASS CITY CHRONICLE

VOLUME 74 NUMBER 17

CASS CITY, MICHIGAN—THURSDAY, AUGUST 14, 1980

Twenty

TWENTY PAGES

School calendar must wait

School and union talks are stalled

The Cass City School Board voted to start school this year on Sept. 2 and the tentative calendar calls for the last day of school to be June 11.

The action was part of a brief, mostly uneventful board meeting Monday night at Cass City High School.

While the board voted to open school Sept. 2 it's possible, but not probable, that they will rescind the motion. That's because of the bargaining with the Tri-County Bargaining Association.

The school wants to correlate school days with the newly opened skill center in Caro because students will be sent there for training.

The skill center is proposing a calendar that the Cass City board tentatively approved Monday. The school calendar is a negotiable item and could be changed in bargaining sessions. The board has the right to set the opening day of school.

The Tri-County Bargaining Association represents teachers in both the Tuscola Intermediate School District, which operates the skill center, and Cass City Schools.

In addition, according to Supt. Don Crouse, the association also represents teachers in USA, Lakers, Akron-Fairgrove, Millington and Deckerville.

He says there has been no agreement on anything between the various school districts and the union.

STANDING COMMITTEES

Much of the brief session was devoted to the establishment of standing committees under a program presented by Trustee Dick Albee.

He suggested a personnel committee, curriculum and finance committee and property committee. The board appeared to agree with the curriculum and finance and property committees but ob-

jected to the personnel committee.

The stickler for board members was that the personnel committee was to hear teacher evaluations from principals and report to the board at large.

Several board members felt this was a duplication of effort and wanted to hear the evaluations placed before all the board.

Albee told the board that in another part of the state committees like the ones he proposed were accepted procedure.

After more discussion it was decided to table the suggestions for a month while checks were made with other area school districts and members could decide the best way to proceed.

OTHER BUSINESS

Linda Derfny and Kathleen Bliss have resigned teaching positions. Taking an unpaid leave is Kay

McCrea.

New teachers signed are Gretchen Shebel, high school English; Polly Boshore, high school English, journalism and publications, and Denise Kling, speech, English, debate and forensics.

Hot lunch guidelines for free or reduced price hot lunches were revised to meet new Federal standings. A family of four can have an income of \$16,250 and still qualify this year as compared to \$8,940 last year.

The Federal reimbursement is greater than the normal charge for the lunches for paying students.

Finally, J.D. Tuckey and Dean Hoag were appointed to a committee to review bids for bus insurance and award contracts subject to board approval.



STILL COOKING -- Anne Mitchell spent her 80th birthday last Wednesday doing what she does six days every week, working at her Crossroads Restaurant at M-53 and Bay City-Forestville Roads. What was different was her loyal customers brought her the flowers seen here and after closing, her nephew Ken McCrea and his wife, and niece, Flora McCrea, took her to dinner in Frankenmuth. She has operated the restaurant since 1961.

County may seek mill again

The one-mill levy defeated by Tuscola county voters Aug. 5, 3,518-3,333, will probably appear again on the Nov. 4 ballot.

In discussing the defeat Tuesday, county commissioners were in favor of giving voters a second chance, according to Commissioner Royce Russell of Elmwood township.

The feeling, after having talked to voters, was that if advertised right and understood, given the relatively narrow margin of defeat, the outcome will be different the second time.

If approved, a half-mill will be used for county operations and a half-mill for replacement of decaying bridges.

Before voting to place the proposal on the November ballot, the board will meet with the county Road Commission.

Sheriff Hugh Marr reported that the June sheriff's auction of recovered stolen merchandise resulted in proceeds of \$16,235 being placed in county coffers.

No high school study halls, Owen-Gage board decides

Owendale-Gagetown students will have to do their studying at home, as the school board decided Monday evening it won't reinstitute study halls.

The possibility was first proposed by some parents at the June board meeting.

At the July meeting, Supt. Ronald Erickson presented two proposed schedules for

this fall. With the present six-hour schedule, school will end at 2:47 p.m.

Addition of another hour for study hall would mean school would get out at 3:45. The schedules were sent to district residents, with a request for comments.

About 20 persons, parents and teachers, showed up at Monday's meeting to comment and all of the comments were negative.

English teacher Nancy Folk expressed most of the comments for the teachers, the gist of which was that, "By 2:47, those kids are absolutely exhausted." Adding an hour to the day, she said, would even make matters worse. "I am really concerned about what that

will do on our effectiveness as teachers."

Also questioned by both teachers and parents was how many students would actually study during study halls.

Parent Joan Alexander recalled that when she was in school, 5 percent of the students worked during study halls and 95 percent "goofed off."

Two parents said they had questioned their children and they also didn't like the idea. Joan Andrakowicz said her children didn't feel the study halls would be useful and with school getting out an hour later, they would be getting home even later from sports practice, which would mean they would have less time to study at home.

Board President Ronald Good finally asked if anyone present favored study halls. No one did, which ended the discussion.

The board didn't need to vote either way, as its lack of action meant the schedule of past years, minus study halls, would continue.

School is scheduled to start Aug. 27.

New classes being added this year, in response to results of the state assessment tests, will be remedial reading at the junior high and high school levels and pre-algebra.

Water does mix, for 3 mpg gain

Otto Bacon describes himself as "basically cheap," thus when he read about an inexpensive means of increasing mileage in his car, he tried it.

For an investment of zero dollars and about 10 minutes of his time, he says he gained three miles per gallon.

What Bacon did was install a water injection system.

He will be showing it and explaining how it works at this Thursday's meeting of the Tuscola County Energy Society. The meeting starts at 7:30 p.m. in the basement meeting room of the county jail in Caro.

Bacon, of 6167 Main Street, Cass City, doesn't claim credit for the idea. He first read about it last year in Mother Earth News (MEN) magazine.

Normally, water and gaso-

line don't mix. With a water injection system, the water in a form of a vapor is mixed with the gasoline-air mixture coming from the carburetor as it flows to the cylinders.

The result, Bacon said, was a gain of three miles per gallon in his 1975 Volkswagen Dasher, with 82,000 miles on the odometer, from its previous 25 mpg to 28. The engine is a four-cylinder.

Bacon, a pharmacist by trade, has also installed the device on some V-8s, but the owners haven't bothered to keep track of the mileage. He isn't looking for business, but is willing to offer advice.

HOW AND WHY THE water injection works is somewhat complicated to explain. In simple terms, the water turns to steam as the air-fuel mixture is burning inside the cylinder, resulting

in reduced temperature and because of the cooling effect. That allows the mixture to continue burning rather than self-igniting prematurely.

The self-ignition or detonation reduces efficiency and over a long period of time can result in damage to the engine. It is more of a problem now due to exhaust emission requirements and decrease in lead content in gasoline, as lead has good anti-knock (detonation) qualities.

Water injection is not a new idea, Bacon pointed out. World War II aircraft engines used it and a farmer at an Energy Society meeting said he had an old John Deere tractor that used it.

The device described in the Mother Earth News article costs \$3.72 for the

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ing fund raising activities to pay off the past debt.

The debt owed, accumulated over about five years, is \$1,893.

For the 1979-80 yearbook, according to Mrs. Kleinau, it was necessary to sell 100 yearbooks and \$1,000 in advertising to break even. Seventy yearbooks were sold and \$700 in advertising. She suggested a paper cover be used on the 1980-81 book to cut costs.

The board didn't make a decision about the debt.

ATHLETIC BUDGET

Athletic Director James Barr presented the proposed 1980-81 athletic budget, which the board took under advisement.

Proposed is \$12,500 in expenditures, plus \$1,000 for contingencies, the same as for 1979-80.

During the past school year, however, athletic expenditures totaled only \$10,778, which was \$691 less than was spent the year before.

Athletic income last year totaled \$6,931, of which \$4,806 came from regular event ticket sales, \$1,726 as Owen-Gage's share for the state district tournaments it hosted, and \$300 state reimbursement for having participation in the state football playoffs.

Barr's only recommended change in ticket prices was boosting the adult admission for volleyball games to \$1.50, the same as it presently is for all other sports.

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GAS SAVER -- Otto Bacon's hand is over the water bottle, from which water vapor is injected into his engine. He says it has boosted mileage on his 1975 Volkswagen Dasher from 25 to 28 miles per gallon.