

## Ugly board okays 10% teacher pay hike

The Ugly Board of Education Monday night approved a two-year contract with its teachers that gives them a 10 percent pay increase each year.

The 10 percent is applied to each year of the pay scale, so teachers who haven't reached the top of the scale (11 years) will also advance a pay grade higher.

The new contract will give beginning teachers with a bachelor's degree, \$12,035; master's, \$12,734, and master's plus 15 additional credit hours, \$13,099.

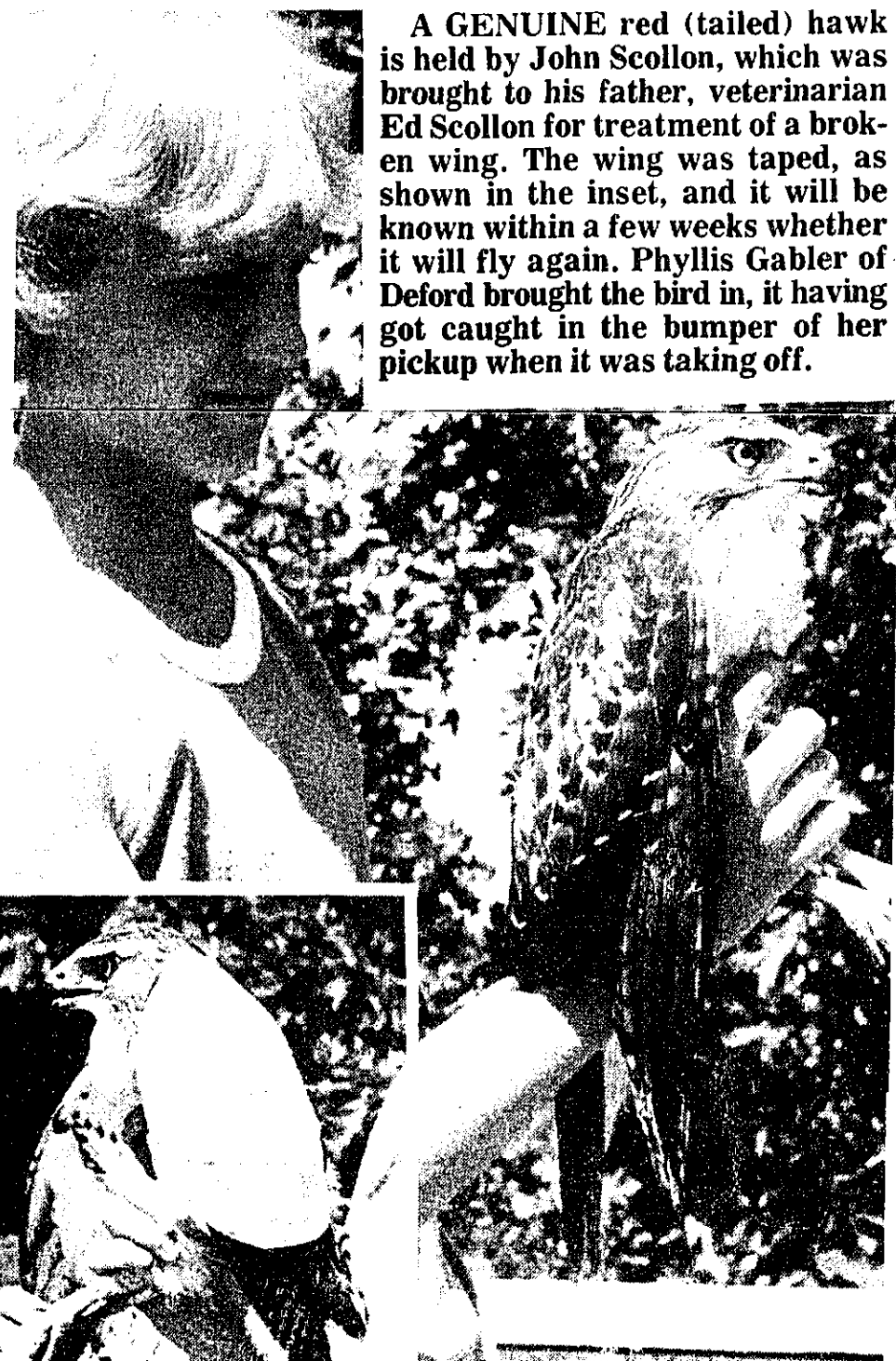
Teachers with 11 or more years of service will receive \$18,185 if they have a bachelor's degree; master's, \$19,515, and master's plus 15 hours, \$19,861.

Other than the pay increase, Business Manager Mark Tenbusch said, benefits stayed the same and changes in the contract were minor.

The members of the Ugly Education Association approved the pact Aug. 14 by a vote of 37-6.

Also Monday, new lunch prices were approved. Elementary lunch prices were boosted from 40 cents to 45; grades 7-12, from 45 cents to 50, and adults, from \$1 to \$1.25.

The board authorized borrowing \$327,000 in anticipation of state aid.



A GENUINE red (tailed) hawk is held by John Scollon, which was brought to his father, veterinarian Ed Scollon for treatment of a broken wing. The wing was taped, as shown in the inset, and it will be known within a few weeks whether it will fly again. Phyllis Gabler of Deford brought the bird in, it having got caught in the bumper of her pickup when it was taking off.

## Negotia-

# Teachers decide — No contract, no work

No contract, no work.

By a reported 90 percent vote, Cass City teachers decided Friday that without a contract with the school board by the Sept. 3 scheduled start of school, they will go on strike.

Although lots can happen between now and then, as of the beginning of the week, both sides still appeared far apart. The next negotiating session was scheduled this Wednesday (Aug. 27).

Whether sports programs continue during the strike, if there is one, will be up to the coaches.

The two sides met from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Friday.

Cass City teachers assembled at 5:30 at the local Michigan Education Association (MEA) office, for a session that lasted about three hours. Their chief negotiator, Phyllis McCoy, declined to say what the exact vote was, only that 90 percent had voted in favor of striking.

The district has about 80 teachers, and 41 signed in at the Tri-County Bargaining Association (TCBA) rally at the Colony House following their meeting. More than that voted, Ms. McCoy said, as some of them didn't go to the rally. (See related story elsewhere in this issue.)

So far in the 24 hours of bargaining, she said, "We've had absolutely no agreements, nothing."

THE ONLY ACTION THAT has taken place is that the teachers, in response to a request from the board's negotiators, presented a list of minimum demands at the Aug. 13 negotiating session.

The list was pared down from their original set of proposals, but the individual items the teachers still want remain the same.

There are 14 items listed, chief among them a pay increase based on the increase in cost of living plus an increase in each pay step, that works out to an increase of about 22 percent the first year.

The teachers want the dis-

trict to pay the premium for the MEA affiliated MESSA Super Med II health insurance, which has a higher premium and benefits than the Blue Cross-Blue Shield the district paid for in the old contract.

At the high school level, teachers are seeking a five-hour teaching day (now six) and shortening of the school day by 50 minutes.

Some of the teachers' minimum demands are non-economic, covering such items as a grievance, evaluation and discharge procedure and establishment of a joint curriculum committee.

MS. MCCOY SAID, AND Supt. Donald Crouse agreed, that the board has yet to budge from its original four proposals. On the crucial issue of pay, the superintendent pointed out, the teachers haven't moved from their original demand.

The board is seeking a three-year contract (the teachers want two), a 7 percent pay increase over what each teacher received last year, with no advance in pay step; the same calendar as

established by the Tuscola Intermediate School District, because of the opening of the county-wide skill center, and no extra pay for elementary teachers should the board ever eliminate the elementary art and music teachers.

Those two positions would have been eliminated had the extra millage been defeated Aug. 18. As the added levy was for one year only, Crouse pointed out, the same circumstance might exist next year should the board again seek an added levy.

CROUSE IS DOING THE bargaining for the board, along with professional negotiator Al Luce.

Ms. McCoy and some teachers at the Tri-County rally Friday night complained that Luce is representing so many school districts in bargaining that he isn't always available in Cass City, which thus slows the negotiations.

For that claimed reason, the TCBA has filed a complaint with the Michigan Employment Relations Commission charging the board with failure to bargain in good faith.

The union has offered to bargain through the Labor Day week end in order to reach a settlement, if necessary.

Crouse said there were times earlier in the negotiations when the two sides couldn't meet because Ms. McCoy had to be elsewhere.

He was confident that when a settlement does appear in sight, Luce will be able to alter his schedule in order to participate in last minute talks needed to reach agreement.

ALTHOUGH THE TEACHERS will strike without a contract, athletic events and practice might continue.

According to coaches contacted by the Chronicle, not necessarily involved in fall sports, the union would prefer that practice and games not be held during the strike, but the decision to continue during the strike will be up to the coaches.

The coaches presumably won't make a decision until Sept. 3, when school or the strike begins, in hopes they won't have to decide.

Two coaches contacted felt cancellation of sports events would hasten a settlement.

# Cars to yield at Garfield crossing, council decides

Cars crossing the railroad tracks on Garfield Street will have to slow down, the Cass City Village Council decided Monday evening.

Trustees voted to have yield signs erected at the tracks, the site of two car-train collisions within the past year.

They did so despite a warning that doing so apparently absolves the railroad of liability in case of such collisions.

Problems with obscured visibility for westbound cars at the crossing are no more, with the demolition of the old grain elevators there last week. Two storage bins still on the Wickes Agriculture property, close to Garfield, are for sale, which will further improve visibility once they are gone.

The old railroad depot on the south side was torn down several months ago.

The Grand Trunk Railroad originally made the request that stop or yield signs be erected at the crossing.

The council sought the advice of its attorney, Clinton House, because of a new state law. His written opinion, read at Monday's meeting, was that the law says that erection of signs or failure

to do so cannot be grounds for legal action against the village in case of an accident.

Although some reservations were made about the railroad not being responsible if signs were erected, James Ware commented, "I would rather see an accident prevented than to stick the railroad with liability."

The council could have ordered stop signs erected at the crossing, but it was feared traffic tieups and worse would result during heavy traffic with workers going to and from the factories on Garfield.

The yield signs, recommended by the public safety committee, will be placed on the posts supporting the railroad crossbars.

## CABLE TELEVISION

In August, 1979, the council approved a \$1 per month increase in the fee charged for cable television service, from \$7 to \$8, contingent upon improvement of service, plus \$10 extra for the Home Box Office channel.

A year has gone by, the rate is still \$7, service hasn't improved and there

is no HBO or the other additional stations promised.

At the request of the council, Arnold Witherspoon of the First Michigan Cablevision Corp. appeared to explain what had happened.

The then TV Cable Co. was taken over by First Michigan in September. The problem essentially was that the former owner wasn't able to deliver what he had promised, at least as soon as he promised.

But within the next two months, Witherspoon promised, the picture will get brighter.

An engineer has been hired, to start work in two weeks, whose task will be to improve reception.

The satellite reception dish will be installed within six weeks, which will pick up HBO, WTVS from Atlanta and WFUM, Channel 28, the new public broadcasting station from Flint.

At present, the service offers eight channels, though council members and one member of the audience who have cable TV agreed service is often poor.

Witherspoon said Channel 2 from Detroit may be dropped because it is too

far away. Channel 11 from Alpena may be substituted.

In response to a question, he said the only way to extend service to the newly developed northwest corner of the village may be to charge customers there extra.

He will report back to the council at the October meeting.

## PAVING

The bill from Frank Strausberg and Son for paving on Houghton, Brooker and Downing Streets, plus two alleys and parking lot at Pine and Leach Streets was \$19,854, less than the \$25,645 budgeted.

The primarily federally financed Doerr Road and Garfield Street rebuilding project should be completed this week. All that remains to be done by the contractor is putting fill behind the curbs.

The council voted to have Brooker Street in the vicinity of Third and Houghton Streets double sealedcoated. Total cost, including tearing up the old sealcoat and grading by village crews, will be \$2,832. Hunt Construction will install the sealcoating.

The present surface is deteriorated.

## OTHER ITEMS

The village has until Dec. 31, 1981, to complete the new tennis courts, for which it has received a federal grant of \$30,800. The village must provide an equal amount, for which it is soliciting donations to defray its share.

It was originally thought the grant would expire at the end of this year, which would have ruled out the four new courts as the village doesn't have the money this year.

Deadline for payment of taxes was extended one month. As of Monday, 92.2 percent (\$273,740) of taxes had been collected, compared to 80.3 percent as of the same date last year.

As of Aug. 18, 11,988 swimmers had used the Helen Stevens Memorial Pool so far, an average of 171 per day. There were 211 who took swimming lessons, an increase of 52 over 1979.

The pool will be open from 1-5 p.m. each day through Labor Day, except Sunday, when hours are 2-5 p.m. There were 207 children taking part in the arts and crafts program, an average of 16 per day in August, and 16 per day checking out.

The hearing will be at 1:30 p.m.

# Damage heavy in house fire

Damage was estimated at \$20,000 in a Tuesday afternoon fire that heavily damaged a home on Lamton Road.

Its owner is Ann McGrath, who lived there with at least one son. No one was home when the fire began.

The fire was reported to the Elkland Township Fire Department about 4 p.m., having been discovered by a neighbor.

Assistant Fire Chief Jerome Root Jr. said the apparent cause was electrical and that the home had been burning for several hours before it was discovered.

The outside of the frame home remained intact, so the fire wasn't immediately noticeable.

Inside, Root said, "I don't think there was much that wasn't damaged." Heat and smoke were intense. A hole burned through the floor and the ceiling of the one-story structure was also heavily damaged.

Areas not directly affected by the fire were affected by the smoke and heat. Root recalled seeing one item in a bedroom, where there was no fire, that had melted into a form that wasn't immediately recognizable.

He said the frame structure appeared rebuildable. Firemen were at the scene 1½ hours. The home is located about a half-mile north of Deckerville Road.

## CAR FIRE

At 7:05 p.m., firemen went to their second fire of the day.

The scene was on Kelly Road, about 1¼ miles east of Cemetery Road.

Back from the road, Fire Chief Jack Hartwick said,

The new Tuscola Area Skill Center is set to open Sept. 3.

Whether it does may

Skill center ready to open doors, page 20.  
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depend on whether the Tuscola Intermediate School District Board of Education comes to an agreement on a new contract with its teachers for the skill center and its larger staff of special education teachers and nurses.

Special education facilities are also supposed to open Sept. 3.

Negotiators were to have met Wednesday morning, the first time since Aug. 13. Teachers met Tuesday evening to decide whether they will start work Sept. 3 if there is no contract or go on strike.

The two sides are still far apart and one of the issues keeping them apart is recognition of the skill center teachers as part of the bargaining unit.

The special education teachers belong to the Tuscola Intermediate Education Association (TIEA) and are represented in negotiations by the Tri-County Bargaining Association (TCBA).

Phyllis McCoy, chief negotiator for the teachers (she performs the same function for Cass City teachers) criticizes the ISD

negotiators for unwillingness to include the skill center teachers under the recognition clauses of the proposed contract, even though three or four of them, having previously worked for the district, already belong to the TIEA.

According to ISD Assistant Superintendent Jerome Thienes, the position of the district is that it first wants to negotiate the issues of salary, sick leave, etc. for the skill center staff -- that the provisions shouldn't necessarily be the same as for special education teachers and then include them in the bargaining unit.

The two sides haven't started discussing money. The board has yet to make a financial offer.

It has made some proposals concerning contract language, such as for evaluations, Thienes said.

Ms. McCoy had the same criticism for the ISD's professional negotiator that she had for Cass City's, who happens to be the same person, Al Luce. She claimed he hasn't always been readily available for negotiations.

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# School starts at O-G minus contract

School got underway in the Owendale-Gagetown District Wednesday, despite lack of a contract between the school board and teachers.

Supt. Ronald Erickson, the school board's lone negotiator (board members sometimes sit in) met with the teacher negotiating team for more than five hours Monday.

"I feel very satisfied that progress is being made," he commented shortly after the session ended.

The teachers are being represented by the Tri-County Bargaining Association. "They are not threatening anything," he continued. "We are not threatening anything. We are just negotiating."

Owen-Gage Education Association President Manuel Thies, a member of the negotiating team, gave a similar account of the ne-

gotiations. "Both sides are very friendly, very cordial."

Monday's session was the eighth one so far. Indicative of the relaxed pace of negotiations, the next session isn't scheduled until Sept. 10.

Thies discussed with his fellow teachers Tuesday the status of the negotiations. Chief negotiator for the teachers is Tom Neuhaud, a Michigan Education Association representative in Lapeer county.

According to Erickson, the two sides are going through the old contract page-by-page and discussing desired changes. Neither side has made a financial proposal yet.

In another matter, he said the state Senate Education Committee will conduct a public hearing Thursday, Sept. 4, on House Bill 5411 which concerns the 10 percent property transfer rule. The bill, introduced by

State Rep. Quincy Hoffman, R-Applegate, was approved by the House of Representatives a few months ago, 75-6.

It states that no school district organized after 1957, with fewer than 1,000 students, can have more than 10 percent of its territory transferred to another school district without a vote of the people.

In the Senate, the bill ran into the opposition of Sen. Alvin DeGrow, R-Pigeon, who is not a member of the committee.

Erickson credited Hoffman, and Tuscola County Democratic officials Bob Russell, Ken Kennedy, Margaret Wentz (county commissioners), Kathleen Asher, who ran against DeGrow two years ago, and George Ellesin, county chairman, for persuading the Senate committee to schedule the hearing.

The hearing will be at 1:30 p.m.



GETTING READY -- Unloading supplies in a classroom at the intermediate school Monday, in preparation for the intended Sept. 3 start of school, were Robert Grice (left) and Roger McKee.