

Springport Bindery X  
Springport, MI 49284

## Skill center opens

# Intermediate district settles with teachers

The new Tuscola Area Skill Center and county special education programs got underway Wednesday, following tentative agreement Tuesday by the Tuscola Intermediate School District (TISD) and its professional staff on a new three-year agreement.

The settlement meant an end to the strike by the 103 members of the Tuscola Intermediate Education Association (TIEA), which began Sept. 3.

Still to be worked out, is how the days missed by the employees will be made up, which will be complicated because many of the professional staff work in local schools, where there was no strike.

The TISD also must reach an agreement with aides, bus drivers, secretaries and custodial workers, who belong to the Michigan Educational Support Personnel Association (MESPA), who are continuing to work under their old contract, which expired June 30. The union has more than 100 members.

The tentative agreement, according to Phyllis McCoy, chief negotiator for the Tri-County Bargaining Association, provides a 9.5 percent pay increase the first year, 9.8 percent the second and 10 percent the third, plus those not at the top of the pay scale will continue to receive their annual increments.

There were also "much improved" fringe benefits.

Full details of the agreement will be released once it is ratified by the two sides.

The Chronicle was unable to talk to TISD Supt. Bruce Dunn Wednesday morning because long-distance telephone service was not functioning. It talked to the union representatives Tuesday.

The TCBA, which represented the teachers in negotiations, had sought a two-year pact; the TISD Board of Education wanted the three years.

Tentative agreement was reached at 2:45 p.m., the negotiators having worked straight through from 10 a.m.

It was the first negotiating session since a more than eight hour meeting Sept. 2. At that time, agreement was reached on all issues except pay and fringe benefits.

Present Tuesday for the first time was state mediator Gordon Lee, whose being there had been requested by the TCBA.

"We think his presence was a help," Ms. McCoy said after the settlement was reached. In addition, "Both sides were ready to settle and we both came in and gave it our best shot."

The TIEA members — teachers, special education consultants, therapists and nurses — had the proposed agreement explained to

them late Tuesday afternoon. They will be voting on it in about two weeks, after it is first approved by the TCBA bargaining council and the TIEA members have had the final written agreement for at least five days to study it.

### CONFUSION

Skill center teachers and the itinerant staff — those social workers, therapists, speech therapists, teacher consultants, etc. — who travel to local schools work a 180-day year.

The ISD staff who work at the Darbee and Fostoria schools and Caro Regional Center (most of whom will transfer along with their students in October to the new special education center) work 230 days a year.

Their students live or are bused there, so making up the 10 days lost shouldn't be much of a problem, although the days will be mostly made up during what would otherwise be Christmas and spring vacations. Affected are about 340 special education students.

The problem is with the 180 day personnel.

The approximately 725 students who started attending the skill center Wednesday go there a half-day and attend their regular high schools the rest of the time.

If those students have to make up the lost time during vacation periods, is that fair to them when their fellow students in their home high schools are on vacation? And how will they get to the skill center when their local district school buses aren't running?

The itinerant staff travels to local schools to work with students and teachers. How are they supposed to make up their time during the vacation periods when the schools are closed?

The TISD administration will have to work out a solution with the local school districts, Ms. McCoy said, with the approval of the TIEA.

### SUPPORT STAFF

In contrast to the agreement reached with the professional staff, Tuesday, the negotiating session which followed with the MESPA negotiating team ended without coming to an agreement. The session lasted about 2½ hours.

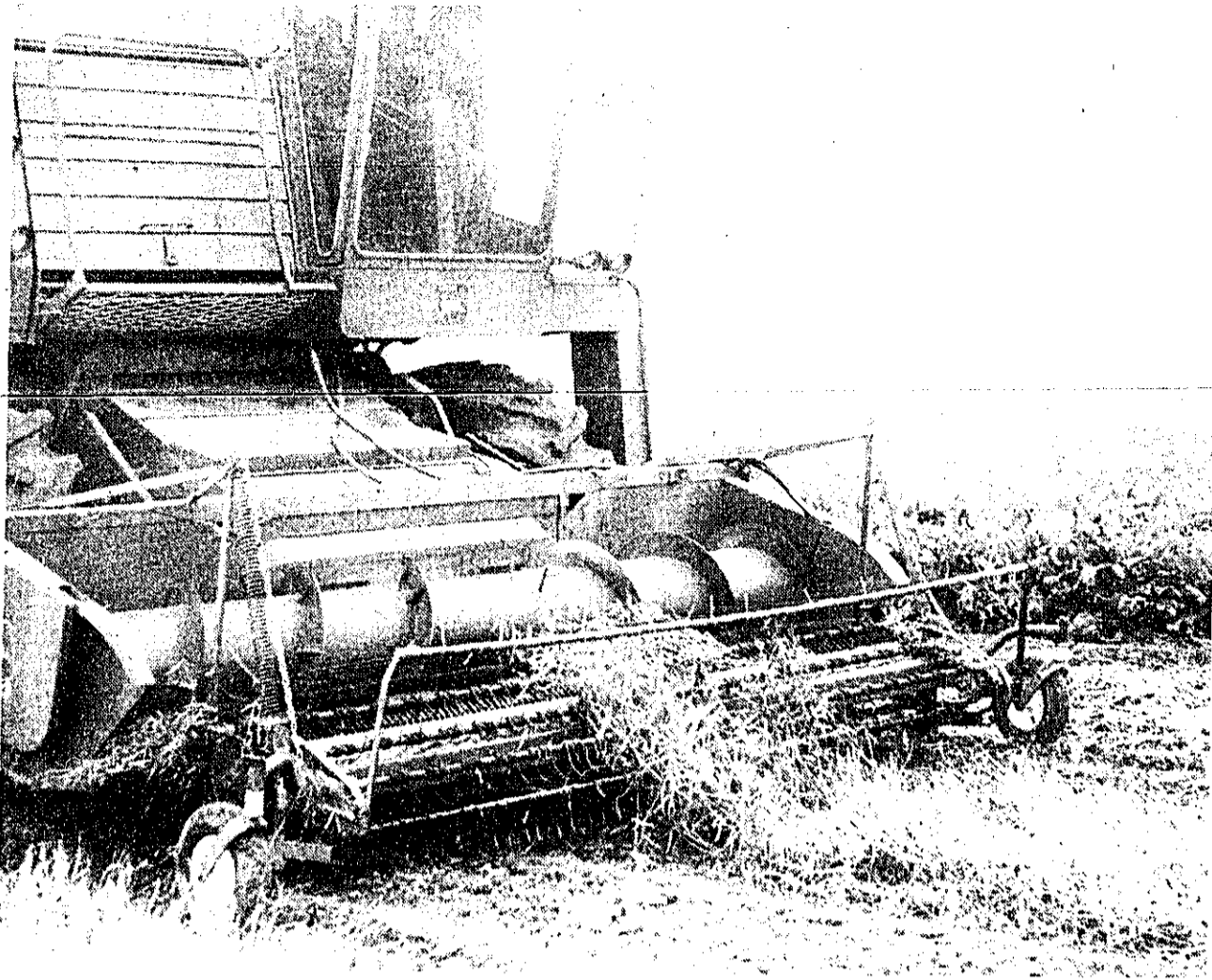
According to Richard Pomeroy, public relations co-chairman for the union local, only two negotiating sessions had been held prior to last Wednesday, when for the first time, there "was some movement."

However, at Tuesday's session, the MESPA negotiators "could not accept any proposals offered." No date was set for another negotiating session.

As mentioned, MESPA members are working under an extension of their old contract, which they can terminate on five days' notice. "I'm not saying we're going to strike or we're not going to strike," he commented before the bargaining session began. "It all depends on how things go tonight."

Under procedures of the old contract, aides and bus drivers have filed a grievance, protesting that what they said was their layoff as of Sept. 4 during the teachers' strike was a violation of their contract, which requires 30 days' notice of any

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**TIGHT SQUEEZE** -- Some farmers were able to get some bean harvesting done Tuesday before it started raining again, including this farmer combining a field along M-81, west of Cass City.

## Repeat of 1977?

# Bean crop not too bad, but rain making it worse

For most area farmers, the dry bean crop now being harvested isn't as bad as it could be, but if it keeps raining, it might.

The rain the past several days has started farmers wondering whether this fall will be a repeat of 1977, when continual rains made harvesting difficult and beans rotted in the fields.

Tuscola County Extension Agricultural Agent Don Kebler estimated Monday that 45 percent of the county's crop had been harvested, with the edge in favor of white beans over colored ones.

Yields vary widely depending on the area, but the present estimate for navy beans, he said, is almost 22 bushels per acre (13 hundredweight). It's 13-14 hundredweight for colored beans.

But, he pointed out, those averages mean some farmers are getting 25 plus bushels to the acre and others are getting 15.

Some aren't even getting that much. He saw a strip in the Fairgrove area that was yielding 8 bushels per acre.

The Fairgrove-Gilford-Reese area of the county had more rain than elsewhere, Kebler said, which has hurt yields the most.

At the Wickes Agriculture elevator in Cass City, Man-

ager Bob Wischmeyer said, yields have been averaging about 20 bushels per acre, about 20-25 percent less than normal. He estimated 55-60 percent of the harvest is in.

In the Gageton area, Blount Agriculture elevator Manager Jim Turner said, yields have been averaging about 20-24 bushels per acre, which he termed about average. About half the harvest is in in the area.

According to Kebler, the Cass City-Gageton area didn't get as much rain, so yields are better than, for instance, in the Fairgrove-Gilford-Reese area.

Harvesting got off to a slow start at the beginning of the month and was hitting high gear last week when rain started Friday.

"Right now is the difference in between good and bad," Turner said Monday, when asked what the effect on the bean crop would be if it continued raining.

With a week of good weather, he said, 90 percent of the crop would be in, with some of the colored beans coming in a little late. Harvesting is about 10 days behind normal.

Wischmeyer also said it would take about a week of good weather to finish most harvesting, though he didn't expect some slow maturing varieties will come in until October.

### QUALITY

Both managers said the quality of the beans coming in has been excellent.

White mold and rust this season, to which excessive rains in July and August were a major contributing factor, hurt yield, but not quality.

To save their crop, many farmers had their fields sprayed by airplane, at a cost of \$10 per acre for rust protection and a minimum of \$20 for mold.

Whether their investment paid off apparently isn't known yet. Kebler said unless farmers left part of a field unsprayed for comparison, there is no way to determine whether the spraying did any good.

The known effect of the spraying is that it means farmers are going to have to make more money off their crop in order to break even, much less make some money.

Both Wischmeyer and Turner said it's possible at present prices for farmers to break even or make a slight profit — if they have a decent yield. "Farmers can make some money unless someone had a terrible yield," the latter commented.

The elevator managers may have a problem of their own. There's plenty of stor-

age space for beans, but storage space could be short when corn starts coming in next month.

The elevators are having a hard time getting rid of the sprouted wheat they have in storage, and unless they can move it out, they may not have enough storage space for corn. The sprouted wheat is also the result of rain coming this summer when it wasn't needed.

### OTHER CROPS

The corn crop looks good, Kebler said, but appearances can be deceiving. Some cobs, he has found, don't have kernels all the way to the ends, which means reduced yields.

It should be a good year for sugar beets, but cool nights are needed for best yields and high sugar content.

Soybeans have looked "fairly decent" all year.

Despite all the rain this summer, he concluded, "Crops look a lot better than everyone surmised they would be."

The same can't be said for present prices farmers are getting for their crops, at present levels, which haven't kept pace with inflation and are "not ... up to where they should be."

(Related story, page 8)

# TRA benefits go to Krome workers

Employees of Kingston Krome Co. have been declared eligible for Trade Readjustment Act (TRA) benefits by the federal government.

Affected are 10 or 11 people, now back to work. The TRA benefits will compensate them for the difference between what they received in unemployment benefits and 70 percent of their salaries for the period they were out of work.

The federal Trade Adjustment Assistance Program provides the additional benefits for employees of American companies whose operations have been severely affected by foreign competition.

Kingston Krome is the last of four companies in Tuscola and Huron counties owned by Trim Trends Inc. of Clawson whose employees were found eligible for TRA benefits.

One of the companies, Mayville Moulding, was closed by Trim Trends about six months ago, which meant permanent loss of employment for about 85 workers.

The others and the approximate number of employees eligible for TRA benefits were Snover Stamping, 35, and Deckerville Die Form, about 50. All are now back to work. Snover Stamp-

ing employs 85-90 persons, not all of whom were laid off.

Trim Trend plants only make parts for the auto industry, according to Lowell Driver, general manufacturing manager. The present full employment at its three upper Thumb plants is due to heavy production by the auto makers of the new 1981 model cars.

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# State budget cuts have effect in Tuscola, but worst ahead

By Mike Eliason

Most of the news of late out of Lansing has been about the latest budget cutbacks as the state attempts to keep its budget in line with shrinking revenues.

Whatever happens in the state capital has an effect throughout Michigan.

It appears that in Tuscola county, most of the shocks are still ahead, because most of the cuts announced of late are proposed for the 1980-81 fiscal year that starts Oct. 1.

Adding to the uncertainty is that the legislature has yet to approve the budget. It normally does that by June.

That makes it tough for school administrators, for instance, to plan their budgets since it isn't known what the amount of state aid will be.

The latest recommendation from the governor is a reduction of \$150 million for education in grades K-12 from earlier recommendations.

According to state Rep. Loren Armbruster, R-Caro, \$350 million has been cut from the present fiscal year budget and another \$150 million has to be cut out in order to finish the fiscal year which ends Sept. 30 in the black.

More than \$300 million has to be deleted from the budget for the new fiscal year that starts Oct. 1 to get it in balance.

The latest recommendation of Gov. Milliken to the legislature calls for a 1980-81 budget of \$4.57 billion, down from \$4.75 billion in 1979-80. That's the first time in 40 years that the state will spend less than it did the year before.

The Senate has basically completed work on the budget, according to Armbruster, but the House of Representatives hasn't.

**RUMMAGE SALE**  
Saturday, Oct. 4, at Presbyterian church basement. Doors open 9 a.m. 9-18-3

He said House Speaker Bobby Crim, D-Davison, was recently quoted as saying he doubted the House will be done with the budget by Oct. 1.

Part of the problem, according to the Caro Republican, is the uncertainty of state revenues and a reluctance by some legislators during an election to cut popular programs. "Some don't want to bite the bullet."

The following examines the effects of some state budget cutbacks in Tuscola county.

### REGIONAL CENTER

In June, members of the union which represents 572 employees at the Caro Regional Center were picketing to protest planned layoffs at the state facility.

At that time, 16 had lost their jobs and the latest plan was to eliminate 179 of 793 positions. Sixteen is all that have lost their jobs, Dr. Marlin H.

Roll, the center director, said Friday.

What happened was that Roll's request to the State Department of Mental Health for increased staffing ratios for the four buildings with 12 residents was approved. The new ratios are one attendant for six residents daytime and 1:12 nighttime, versus 1:8 and 1:16 in the older residential units.

That meant an end to layoffs, but as of now, Roll is barred from filling any vacancies, though that may change shortly.

As of Aug. 30, the center was 25 employees short of its authorized level of 735.5 personnel.

### LAW ENFORCEMENT

As part of a \$9.6 million cut in the state police budget, 80 troopers will have their last day on the job Sept. 27, of which 77 graduated from the state police academy last year. The Caro post will lose one

officer of its present 10 road patrol officers; Bad Axe post, one trooper, leaving 11 for road duty, and Sandusky, two troopers, leaving only eight.

State funding for the Tuscola County Sheriff's Department special road patrol unit, which consists of three deputies, expires Sept. 30.

Sheriff Hugh Marr expects the statewide program will be continued, although funding may be reduced, which could mean a layoff.

### WELFARE

In order to save \$144 million, Gov. Milliken has proposed eliminating general assistance payments for all able-bodied persons who are single and under age 45.

In Tuscola county, according to Onalee Detwiler, director of the county Department of Social Services, it would mean 86 persons will lose their benefits, at a savings of \$21,000 a month. General assistance, she

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**SUPER SPUDS** -- Believe it or not, these are only four potatoes, grown by Donna Rockwell (right) of 5585 Germania Road, Snover. Also examining their mother's unusual spuds, shown in closeup at left, are Kathy, 9, and Brenda, 5.