

Local Schools Not Alone With Problem of Getting All The Funds They Are Asking

By Jack Rider

Although it is recognized to be of extremely small value it may be some consolation to local school officials to know that

they are not alone in their problem of getting all the money they want to spend.

Last year across the nation 1341 school bond issues were

voted upon and 579 of the total were rejected by the voters and this 44 per cent vetoed by the voters included a majority of the total money asked. Just

43.69% of total funds asked were approved.

In 1965 only 516 of 2,041 bond issues were rejected, or 25 per cent. In 1966 28 per cent were turned down; in '67 33 per cent got the axe and last year 32 per cent were vetoed.

Locally there are two sources of disenchantment with the public schools: Racial integration and extravagance of school administrations, and in that order.

In North Carolina the overwhelming majority of the taxpayers feel that since they have no control over their schools they will put no more money into them. It is likely that if a referendum were held today even on holding the line for public schools a very close vote would result, forgetting expensive expansion programs on the drawing boards of all school districts.

In some parts of the nation the fight between public and private schools has been going on for a very long time. Areas in which large numbers of Roman Catholics live have been exposed to the double-cost argument practically since public schools began, because Catholic parents felt and still feel it is a gross imposition for them to have to pay taxes to support public schools their children were not using and at the same time have to underwrite the cost of operating the schools of their church.

A running battle — not yet ended — in states with heavy Catholic populations has seen state legislatures going in both directions at the same time and have also painted federal courts into corners where about all they could do was climb the walls.

A recent survey paradoxically enough indicated that the support of public schools was still stronger in the South than in the rest of the nation, so it may be reasonably presumed that the racial issue is not the major source of discontent.

Southerners still voted at about the rate of 50 per cent to increase funds for public schools, but in the middle west only 40 per cent of those asked were willing to increase school budgets.

Another extremely pertinent point is that school capital outlay programs which nearly always have to be approved in bond elections happen to be one of the few things the beleaguered taxpayer has any direct control over. They cannot materially change the extravagant habits of congress, nor even of their state legislatures, but they can and are cutting expenditures over which they retain direct control.

Poor public relations by school administrators are a source of trouble, since all too many taxpayers who have no children in school are not kept fully informed about the use of their contributions to the schools.

Most schools will mount an all-out public relations campaign when an election is called, but the rest of the time no effort is made to fully convince the average taxpayer that his money is being wisely used.

Some argue that no effort is possible since a very large part of the money handed to school boards is not wisely spent. People who are familiar with the operation of private schools, and just plain private businesses wonder why the same rules of sound business cannot be applied to public schools. General-

ly if they ask pointed questions they are immediately painted as anti-education and although this may silence the questioner it does not cause him to continue voting a blank check to people who have countered his question with a false accusation.

Those who ask such questions about the efficient use of plant and personnel cannot understand why billions of dollars worth of plant is used only 1080 hours per year, while industry must use its plant investment a minimum of 2080 hours per year, and a great many industries because of technology use their plants 8760 hours per year.

The education profession has resisted innovation and a lower per cent of total budget is spent on research by education than by any industry in the nation. The nine-month school system, a hand-me-down from an agrarian society makes no sense in an urban society in which less than three per cent of the total population is engaged in farming, and even that three per cent has little to no need for their school aged children for farm chores.

Yet in the minds of most educators there is something bordering on the sacred about a nine-month school system. The loss in time, the cost in money and the waste of talent caused by such obstinacy is just one more of the straws that have weakened the back of the tax-paying camel who picks up the bill for such backwardness.

Even if children were still assigned only for nine months out of 12 the school and teachers could be used throughout the year. Four 12-week terms, with a one-week break between each of the four terms would still give teachers plenty of break from the classroom grind, and working 48 weeks rather than 36 weeks as at present would be a logical basis for paying teachers a decent salary.

However, in a state such as North Carolina where the per capita income is below \$3000 not a great deal of sympathy can be worked up for teachers whose average pay is well over \$5,000 for 36 weeks of work. Most teachers want the extra money fulltime teaching would earn them and the savings in capital outlay to be gained by fulltime use of buildings would offset the increased pay for teachers.

Even then further research in teaching technology might extend the power of the really expert teacher beyond a single classroom through the force of television. Savings in laboratories, safety and greater use of the really fine teacher are just a few of the immediate gains television offers in this field.

In one respect, however, educators are little different from the rest of us: They will not get out of their fur-lined rut until something jolts them out. There is growing evidence that the taxpayer is about to drop a very large rock in several of those fur-lined educational ruts.

Thursday Suicide

Forty eight year-old John Franklin Harper of 507 Jackson Lane, Kinston, died last Thursday on the way to Pitt Memorial Hospital. Harker, a Kinston meat cutter, shot himself in the head at his home with a small caliber pistol at about 6:45 and was being rushed to the Greenville hospital where services of a brain surgeon were available. Ambulance attendants say Harper died at about the time the ambulance reached Grifton. —

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Tri-County Better Homes Council to Bring Public and Private Efforts Together to Improve Living Standards

Home improvements are the aim of the newly organized Tri-County Better Homes Council. This group, including Jones, Pamlico and Craven Counties, met recently in the first regular session to discuss the proposed by-laws of the group.

Jake Hooks, President, presided, and J. T. Herring, Secretary, read the minutes of previous committee meetings. L. W. Bray was elected vice president.

"The purpose of this group is to coordinate the efforts of public, business and private organizations to help upgrade the living standards of people in Jones, Craven and Pamlico Counties," according to Hooks. "We want more people to join this effort, and invite anyone interested to contact their County Extension Office for more information, or one of the people already involved in this project," Hooks added.

The organization is composed of representatives of the three counties, including business, public agencies and citizens. Present for the recent meeting were: Hooks of Servisoft; J. T. Herring of Eastern Rulane Sales Corporation; Dan Cope and Lee Williams of Carolina Power and Light Company; Mr. and Mrs. L. W. Bray of Farmers Supply House; Mrs. Doris Howard of Home Economics Committee of the Neuse Area Development Association and Jones County

Bobby Cox Hog Places 9th in Big National Contest

A 215 pound porker from the herd of Robert E. Cox & Sons of Trenton placed 9th in the pork carcass contest at this year's National Barrow Show held at Austin, Minnesota in mid-September. 311 head from 19 states were entered in the quality pork contest by swine breeders from coast to coast.

Rope Was Too Long

Tuesday night at about 10:30 36 year-old Major Edwards of 26-0 Simon Bright Homes in southeast side of Kinston was arrested on charges of assault upon a female and assault on a minor child. After being released from custody he went home and at about 11:30 he tied one end of a rope to a bed and the other end around his neck and jumped out of a second-floor window of his apartment. The rope was too long. He was treated and released at Lenoir Memorial Hospital for minor bruises and contusions.

Hunting Tragedy

Just before 7 Wednesday evening 20 year-old Ivey Lee King and 15 year-old Robert Heath, next door neighbors on Kinston route 3 in the northern part of Jones County were returning from a squirrel hunt. Heath jumped a ditch and his 12 gauge shotgun loaded with No. 4 shot was accidentally fired. The full blast of the gun struck King in the left side. He died soon afterwards. Authorities have ruled the death accidental. King is the son of Mrs. Mildred King.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 12, at 1 P.M., at the Berne Restaurant in New Bern.

Jones Arrests

Leslie Jones, Cleo Koonce, James Green, Robert Brown, and Frank Brown all of Trenton were arrested during the past week end and charged with breaking and entering. Leon Fells of Maysville was also arrested over the week end and charged with breaking and entering and assault. Other arrests include Walter Foy of Pollocksville who was charged with assault and Robert Dove of Trenton was charged with driving under the influence.

MILLS IN VIETNAM

Private First Class James V. Mills, son of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Mills, Route 1, Pink Hill, was assigned September 8 to the Americal Division in Vietnam as an infantryman. His wife, Minnie, lives in Beulaville.

Wife Cutter Fails In Suicide Attempt

Coy R. Brown of 1100 Boston St., Kinston, used a pen knife to slash his arm and stab himself in the stomach in the Kinston City jail over the weekend.

Brown was under indictment for assault with a deadly weapon with intent to kill for the cutting of his wife Gracie early Friday morning.

Police found Mrs. Brown almost dead from loss of blood after her left arm had nearly been cut from her body. About an hour later Brown was found nearby in a drunken stupor.

His wife was given emergency care at Lenoir Memorial Hospital and transferred to the university hospital at Chapel Hill in an effort to save her arm. She was given several transfusions before leaving the Kinston hospital.

Brown was released from the local hospital, transferred back to jail and is now under observation at Cherry Hospital in Goldsboro.

Fish Fry

The Jones County Lions Club is planning a fish fry for October 25 to be held on Highway 17. All proceeds will be used to help needy families at Christmas time this year.

Land Transfers

The following land transfers were reported last week in Jones County by register of deeds Bill Parker.

From Ray Harrison Jr. to Buck Harrison a tract of land in Chinquapin township.

From Ray Harrison Jr. to Kenneth Harrison a tract of land in Chinquapin township.

From Charles Franklin Bryant to Charles Franklin Bryant and Lillie F. Bryant 2.5 acres in Trenton township.

From Jones County to Carl Bryant a tract of land in Pollocksville township.

From Harold J. Mattocks Jr. and Pinkie P. Mattocks to June S. Mattocks and Harold J. Mattocks guardian of Lilla Ellen Mattocks a tract of land in White Oak township.

From Charles C. Jones and Jean P. Jones to L. S. Cotton 87 acres in Cypress Creek township and 140 acres in Trenton township.

From L. S. Cotton and Jean Cotton to Charles C. Jones 524 acres in Trenton township and 386 acres in Cypress Creek township.

From G. E. Jackson and Inez Jackson to Margaret Jackson Weatherly 2285 acres in Pollocksville township.

From Joseph Wesley Jones and Elsie S. Jones to Kenneth Wesley Jones 44.46 acres in Tuckahoe township.

Held for Murder

Sadie Bell Johnson of 708 Dudley Alley in the southeast area of Kinston was given a preliminary hearing in Lenoir County District Court Monday on charge of murder. She is accused of inflicting a stab wound in the chest of Robert Taylor of the same address with a paring knife Saturday morning which caused him to bleed to death before medical aid could be obtained. Probable cause of her guilt was found and she is held under \$10,000 bond, pending trial in superior court.