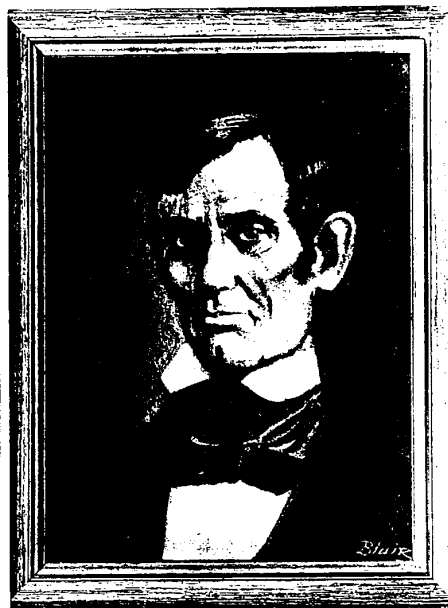


Why Additional School Tax? Basis Given For 3.5 Mills



AT AGE 37, Abe Lincoln was photographed by N. H. Shepherd in 1846 just prior to the young attorney's entering the 30th Congress as an Illinois representative. Using the photo, James Blair of North Farmington High has painted this oil portrait. (Evert photo)

By MARTHA MAHAN
The Farmington Board of Education "definitely" will decide the date for a new millage election, the amount to be sought and for how long when it meets next Tuesday night.

Action had been expected last Tuesday but was put off when two members were absent.

"We want to make it very obvious the millage has unanimous board support," explained President Richard Peters who added that "there definitely will be action at our next regular meeting."

A "very strong" recommendation that the schools seek an additional 3.5 mills (3.5 per \$1,000 state equalized valuation) for three years came from the School's Citizen Advisory Council's (CAC) finance committee.

JACK JACKSON, CAC chairman, reported he had polled the council's entire membership by telephone, and the consensus was "the schools do have a responsibility to come back to the electorate" no matter what chances of passing millage might be.

At the same time, the board acknowledged any new millage will find tough going.

"We know the Legislature and the courts both are considering the property tax situation," Peters said, "but it doesn't appear there is going to be any relief or bailing out of the school districts for perhaps the next several years."

The federal government, too, "has been talking about some other method of financing than the local property tax, but again is some time away from anything being done," he said.

MEANTIME, the board is

concerned with "general erosion of the school program," the board president said.

John Washburn III, former board president, said a study of anticipated revenue and costs showed an additional 1.5 mills is necessary "just to hold even" for the coming year. Restoration of program, as it was two years ago before a tightened budget dictated program cuts, would require an additional 4.3 mills, he said.

The 3.5 mills was described by Peters as "an intermediate point suggested by the finance subcommittee as a means of partial restoration of program."

Four hundred students were added to the school rolls this year, while the teaching staff was reduced by 53, Peters said. Total enrollment is expected to climb by another 100 students next year.

Library books are not being replaced and others not purchased in the first place; supplies are dwindling and building maintenance has declined drastically.

"We're coasting on the value of new buildings and doing very little on old buildings," Business Administrator William Prisk said.

The district's \$320 million state equalized valuation last year brought in \$9,566 million, Prisk told the Farmington Enterprise & Observer. Next year's predicted \$332 million valuation should bring in an extra \$361,225, but there's a catch. All things being equal, the state will reduce its regular state aid contribution by \$191,160 for a net plus to the district from increased valuation of only \$170,000.

Jim Blair's Oil Portraits Depict Abe Lincoln Stress

By JAN LELAND
Special Writer

When you look at a friend or stranger often, what is seen is just another face. But occasionally, there is an artist who sees beauty to be captured in every face. James Blair, junior at North Farmington High School, is such a person.

"I paint people because they are the most interesting subjects with the best possibilities," comments the aspiring high school artist.

HE RECENTLY completed two paintings of Abraham Lincoln for a civil war class and gave them to Weldon Petz who came to NFHS as a guest speaker.

Petz, principal at Forrest Elementary of Farmington Schools, is a national authority on Lincoln and a consulting professor of the Lincoln Memorial University in Cumberland, Tenn.

"Jim used the first and last known photographs of Lincoln to paint two masterpieces of perfect expression," remarks Petz. "They are as good and even better than those done by professionals."

TO EXPOSE Blair's talents, Petz has sent photographs of the two paintings to one of the nation's leading authorities on Lincoln paintings, Dr. Lloyd Ostendorf.

The early Lincoln painting is done from the earliest known photograph of Lincoln, a daguerrotype by N. H. Shepherd in 1846.

The second painting is based on the last photograph of Lincoln taken by Alexander Gardner on April 10, 1865.

Blair says he chose these two photos to depict in oils the physical changes that occurred in Lincoln during 19 years which included years of crucial stress.

Petz adds he is proud of the presentation made to him by Blair and feels indebted to Mrs. Caroline Russell, Blair's history instructor of the civil war class at North.



AT AGE 56, Abe Lincoln was photographed by Alexander Gardner on April 10, 1865, four days before the assassination. A century and half a decade later, the portrait has been reproduced in oil by James Blair, junior at North Farmington High. (Evert photo)

Year-Round School Will Be Topic

Farmington residents interested in the concept of a 12-month school year may attend a meeting Monday evening, Feb. 21, and they won't be asked to join committees or do any work.

That's the promise of Richard Pryor, chairman of an extended school year study committee, who called the 3 p.m. meeting at the school administration office on Shawassee just west of Power Rd.

The meeting will hear reports on the progress of two year-round school efforts, one at Utica and the other at Atlanta, Ga. Atlanta uses a voluntary four quarter plan for secondary students. Utica contemplates a variation of the so-called 45-15 plan, now in use in elementary grades in an Illinois district.

The plan has groups of children, at staggered starting dates, attending school 45 days followed by 15 days off throughout the calendar year.

Fake Jaycee Making Calls

The Farmington Area Jaycees are NOT sponsoring a fashion show, and women should be cautious of telephone calls inviting them to audition as models.

An unknown man has been calling young girls in Farmington claiming to be a Jaycee and telling the girls they have been selected to model in an upcoming Jaycee fashion show.

The would-be models are asked to appear at a nearby shopping mall. However, no one shows up for the appointment.

Any one receiving such a call should contact city or township police.

today's hot line

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what's inside

Judge Hand's Past

Friends are planning a testimonial to honor Michael J. Hand as he is nearing completion of his first term as Farmington district judge. Martha Mahan has interviewed Hand and discovered interesting things in his past as well as many of the qualities which make up the man.

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Less TV, Burgers

If you still think youth spends hours before the television set or at hamburger stands, read about the hours of time being devoted by the Harrison High debaters and the Farmington High dramatists preparing for their one-act plays on Feb. 17.

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Harrison Wins

The Hawk eagles blitzed Utica and North Farmington scored a surprising gymnastic win over defending state champion Taylor Kennedy. For complete details, see today's sport section.

Page 8A

Another Chance

They say that opportunity doesn't knock twice. Well, there's another saying shot down in flames. An Oberlinland police officer is getting another chance at a musical career, and his friends and neighbors will be watching the Stan Kenton Band with greater interest from now on.

Page 10A

Martha Coming

Michigan's lady congressman, Martha Griffiths, is the next speaker for the St. Athalia forum, and she'll be in the area Thursday. Details are in our Church Section.

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FOCUS: Suburbia



Walk with us into the land of hearts and flowers... read FOCUS: Suburbia in today's Observer.