

SEV and millage make deceptive mixture

By SUBAN AVERILL

FARMINGTON—In any discussion on State Equalized Valuations (SEV) and school district revenues, Bob Coleman demands honesty.

"Many people have defended the millage request by saying that no matter how much we raise our property taxes, the state aid will decrease by that much and we'll end up with nothing extra."

"But that's not quite true, because it doesn't include all the factors. It's dishonest to say that as the property evaluation goes up, the de-

crease in state aid will cancel it because you haven't taken a decrease in enrollment or a possible new state aid package into account," he explained.

Coleman is director of labor relations for the school district and has been active in the millage campaign. He is a member of several teams giving presentations at elementary schools throughout the district.

THE DISTRICT does receive an increase in revenues because of higher SEVs, but it is not as high as the increase percentage itself.

"Last year's 14 per cent increase in

SEV meant only a two per cent increase for the schools, and next year's 11 per cent increase may give us an additional four or five per cent increase, depending on which state aid formula is used."

In budgeting for next year, the district has gone with the higher percentage of state aid which would be af-

fected by Gov. Milliken's proposal.

Even including the more favorable state aid formula, the revenue would finance only an austere budget, he said.

The SEV increase resulted from a county check, and not a whimsical decision from either Farmington or Farmington Hills city governments.

"PERIODICALLY, the county takes sales slips from houses that have been sold in the area, and checks them against the valuation. Then they establish a factor and that's what you're assessed."

The actual assessment is based on one-half the market value of the home.

"This is because the state wants to make it equal for everyone. The increase in valuation of property in this

district has happened to the homeowner because his house in Farmington is worth more than it was last year."

"I personally hope the value of my home would increase," he said.

Coleman said he understands the reluctance of homeowner to pay more taxes, but prefers to think of the higher taxes in the form of an asset.

"If the property values don't rise, it sure doesn't do anything for you when it comes time to sell your home."

Harrison students win design awards

FARMINGTON—Thirteen Harrison High School students won awards in the Michigan Industrial Education Awards competition sponsored by the Michigan Industrial Education Society and the Detroit News.

The awards from the regional competition were displayed at Pontiac Central High School.

Seniors Rick Witt and Lisa Mielche won first and second place respectively in the field of residential models, while seniors Bonnie Kern and Doug Polkinghorn each placed third.

In architectural working drawings, junior Dave Fleisher took first place. Damm Kim won second and Dave

Humphries received an honor award.

Sophomore Mark Mehall won first place in sheet metal development drawings, while Kurt Kaufman took second and Rob Wieland earned third.

Duane Merrell won second place for his architectural presentation, and John Truitt placed third in the same category.

Doug Polkinghorn also won a first for his Enduro Go Cart in the open division, and Mark Ray took a second for his electronic plant polygraph.

Of the 18 Harrison entries, 13 won awards. All first and second place winning projects will go on to state competition in Grand Rapids.

Increases in SEV don't help schools

FARMINGTON—Higher property valuations have increased the flow of local tax dollars into the school district, but haven't really resulted in increased revenue said business manager William Prisk.

"Under the Burley Bill school revenue as a result of local SEV (State Equalized Valuation) increases is directly offset by a dollar by dollar decrease in state aid," he said.

Many residents in the district have believed that rising property assessments mean more money to the district's school. Such isn't the case, Prisk said.

"As a result of the SEV increase,

we have generated tax, but get that much less in state aid."

State equalized returns depend on the amount of local millage and its relationship to the state's \$40,000 per student ceiling.

"Farmington still has a long way to go to reach that. We're at \$1,000 now. Southfield, Grosse Pointe and Dearborn, for example, all exceed \$40,000 and receive no state aid," he said.

The Burley Bill, which stipulates the balance between state aid and locally generated tax monies, was the Michigan Legislature's response to Supreme Court cases in Texas and California, he said. It is based on the concept of equalization in educational opportunities.

Limited to three years, the bill is slated to expire this year.

May in Farmington beautification month

FARMINGTON—The beautification committee wants to give the city a facelift for spring.

The group designated May as Keep Farmington Beautiful Month with its goal to promote beautification, spring clean-up and pride in the city.

Within the next two weeks, committee members will be contacting merchants and garden clubs and circulating 1,000 flyers explaining special activities.

Merchants are being encouraged to hold "spruce up" sales of items related to spring gardening and clean-up.

Other activities planned include a school clean-up week, a beautification sketch contest for youths aged six to 10 years, the committee's annual flower and shrub sale.

One pledge of merchant involvement has come from Ed Balden of the Farmington Downtown Center who wants to organize a street clean-up using fire hoses from the public safety department.

Also planned is a seed sale.

Kindergartens begin their fall registration

FARMINGTON—Public elementary schools will register eligible children for kindergarten classes beginning May 1.

Children eligible are those children who will be five years old on or before Dec. 1, 1975. Birth certificates are necessary to register.

Pre-school get-together programs will be held on either May 15 or 16.


For further information, contact your local elementary school.

Festival committee will meet April 22

Persons who are involved in planning the upcoming spring festival, "Gateways to the World" will meet Wednesday, April 22. The meeting will get under way at 8 p.m. in the Farmington Community Center.

The festival will bring together persons of diverse backgrounds to expose the food, arts and cultures of their heritage for a two-day event on the center grounds May 31-June 1.

Residents who would like to share in the preparations are invited to attend the session.



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May 7, Wed. 9:00	Ladies Morning Coffee League, 4 Gal Fun League-Silver
Wed. 1:00	Ladies Afternoon Swingers, 4 Gal Fun League-Silver
Wed. 8:30	Bel-Air Students Afternoon Fun League, Age 10 to 15 Years
Wed. 7:45	4 Man Fun League (135-175 Average)
May 14, Wed. 8:00	Bermuda Shores Mixed League, Handicap, Sanctioned
May 15, Thurs. 7:30	Youth Student League, Fun League-120 Average & Up
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