

Patterson attacks parole practices

By NANCY KASSEN LIESSE

The meeting of the Farmington Republican Club Wednesday was a night intended for residents to meet their council candidates but it was also a night for L. Brooks Patterson, Oakland County Prosecutor, to repeat his criticism of the Michigan Parole Board and its early release of criminals.

The guest speaker, Patterson took 45 minutes between performances of the Power Junior High Madrigal Singers to ask for support of his legislation currently in Lansing to end early paroles of prisoners.

With black covered notebook in hand, he recited case after case of criminals in and around Oakland County committed by early paroles. A policeman killed in Oak Park; a 17-year-old girl strangled in Milford; a col-

lege graduate shot as he jogged along a road near her home.

Those cases, and the news headlines which followed them, were all too familiar and predictable, Patterson said. He assured the audience it would see similar headlines again, until the question of when to parole criminals was resolved.

WHAT PATTERSON said he wanted to do Wednesday night "was point out the policies of the Michigan Parole Board and how reckless those policies are."

Because of a current Michigan law, the "good time law" which the parole board uses, inmates are given time off their sentences for good behavior.

The result, Patterson said, is that inmates are paroled early, not because they are rehabilitated, but because of a mathematical computation.

According to charts Patterson dis-

played Wednesday, a prisoner sentenced to a minimum 10 years, can with "good time" be paroled after seven years and six months.

Good time is given automatically in most cases, Patterson said. A first-degree murder sentence is the only one to which good time cannot be applied.

The same prisoner, if given "special time" in addition to his "good time," can be paroled after serving six years and four months of his 10 year sentence.

Special or "warden's time" is given to prisoners at the discretion of the warden for extra good behavior, Patterson said.

IF BOTH GOOD time and special time were applied to a 30-year minimum sentence, Patterson said, the prisoner could receive a 50 per cent reduction in his sentence and be released after serving 13 years and one month.

Patterson's legislation, House Bills 4291 and 4292 and Senate Bill 48B, would require that prisoners serve at least their minimum sentence for all serious crimes. Patterson included as a serious crime rape, murder, armed robbery, sexual assault or kidnapping.

These violent crimes are his major concern, Patterson said, and he admit-

ted his bill "won't wipe out violent crime. It is a start."

Patterson denied charges that he was picking on the five-member appointed parole board. Even though the head of the board once publicly apologized for releasing a prisoner who later killed one girl and injured another, that apology "meant nothing" to him, Patterson said.

Forty-three states have good time laws, Patterson said, but only four, including Michigan, deduct good time from the minimum sentence.

"Thirty-six states now have a death penalty," Patterson added. And if it were brought back to Michigan "with all the safeguards," he would support it.

Patterson also has been criticized for suggesting the state build one more correctional facility to hold on to prisoners longer, at a cost he estimated at \$200 million.

"If money is the only problem, it can be found," he said.

The Michigan prison population increased by one person from 1960 to 1973, he said, yet statistics for the same period show violent crimes mostly have doubled.

Murder is up 219.6 per cent, rape 279.9 per cent, robbery 448.4 per cent, and aggravated assault 243.1 per cent, he said.

Schoolcraft opens doors to Clarenceville students

Clarenceville High students will soon be able to attend Schoolcraft Community College for programs not offered in their school.

The school board Thursday approved a recommendation from Supt. David McDowell to begin the program next January.

The college courses in subjects not offered in Clarenceville are primarily for seniors, but 10th and 11th graders would be welcome.

The school board would pay the students' tuition (\$11.50 per credit hour) if the courses are taken for high school credit, but not if they are taken for college credit.

push for a resolution limiting the state school board's powers over local districts.

In either case, Clarenceville students will have bus service to and from the central campus on Illegerty, north of Six Mile.

THE COLLEGE has agreed to set aside the 1-4 p.m. time block for high school students.

McDowell said Clarenceville is the first district to take advantage of the Schoolcraft program.

Dr. Ilay Benbarger, Clarenceville High principal, and principals of local districts in the Schoolcraft County District have met with college officials to arrange a program for students who want to continue academic programs not offered in their respective high schools.

McDowell said the program would continue through the 1976-77 school year.

He added that the board action allows the district to offer better programs for young people. It is more reasonable than the high school's offering the classes for a handful of students or being forced to drop a class for lack of enrollment, he said.

Students may register in December at the high school.

The courses offered include accounting principals (for college transfers), architectural drawing, basic drawing, ceramics, basic design, zoology, intermediate business, general chemistry, intermediate economics, principals of economics (for college transfers), electronics, intermediate Spanish, music theory, general psychology, and welding (if available).

IN OTHER action, the board approved free adult education courses for persons 62 and older, approved an operating budget of \$4.7 million for the current school year, and endorsed going through the state Legislature to

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