

How volunteers aid through 'bucket brigade'

A special report on the Bucket Brigade project was presented to the Farmington School Board this week.

Mrs. Florence "Dinghy" Sharp, resource consultant for learning disabilities, traced the history of the program from the time it was conceived five years ago.

The elementary school tutorial reading program uses volunteers who work with school specialists and classroom teachers, to design and execute prescription type reading programs for individual youngsters.

Mrs. Sharp said the program started five years ago in five elementary schools with 112 volunteers.

As of this fall, it is offered to students, kindergarten through sixth grades, in 15 schools and includes just over 200 volunteers. It is not offered in schools where there is a Title I program.

She described the special training program for volunteers which was given this fall adding, "Our volunteers do not teach anything. They practice, drill, support and work on problems with the children."

WISHING TO establish the value of the program to the children and to the district in dollars and cents, Mrs. Sharp told the board that multiplying the hours given by the volunteer tutors by an average fee established by Wayne State University, the tutors had given the district \$100,000 worth of time last year.

The amount of time given in 1974 is equal to that of eight fulltime teachers.

She was careful to explain that tutors do not replace teachers or assume teaching duties, but she noted, proudly, "A large percentage of our volunteers have been teachers."

Mrs. Sharp called the Bucket Brigade the "most unique program in the state."

She said, "We're the only district that has a fulltime coordinator of volunteers."

Requests for information and a visit from Mrs. Sharp have come in from all over the country. She told the board she travels almost every weekend to see people and give information on the program. All this, she said, she does at her own expense.

Dr. Mervyn Ross told her that if she would call herself a representative of the district, she could at least be reimbursed for mileage.

She replied that as a district taxpayer she didn't like that idea.

In answer to a question from trustee Michale Shipice, Mrs. Sharp said some high school students are involved in the program as volunteer tutors. They are from the psychology class at North Farmington High School. In the past students from Mercy High School have been tutors, too.

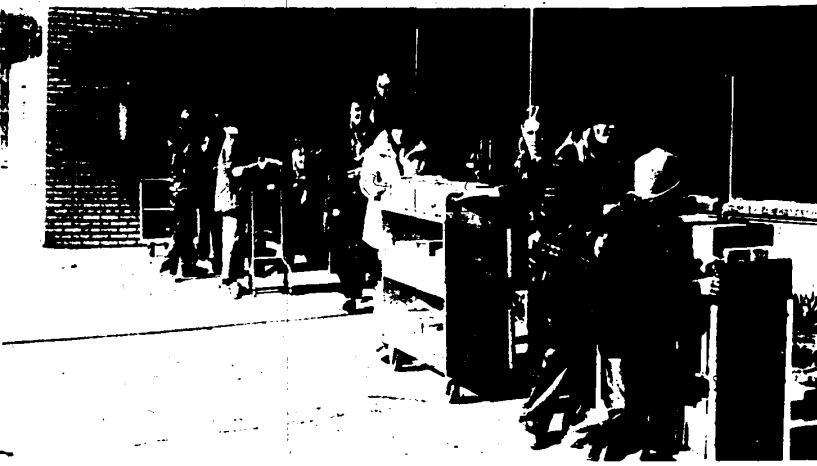
Asked by assistant superintendent Larry Freedman if she could see expanding the program to the secondary level, she said, "I can see a different role for a volunteer in junior and senior high."

SHE SUGGESTED volunteers could be used in the secondary schools in the resource centers to help with audio-visual equipment in the centers.

A member of the audience said that a tutorial program at the Orchard Ridge campus of Oakland Community College is available, and being used by Farmington district seventh through twelfth graders.

At the end of Mrs. Sharp's presentation, Mrs. Barbara Levinson a Bucket Brigade volunteer spoke about Mrs. Sharp.

"I must tell you what a jewel you have in this human being—she is so aware and so attuned to their (the children's) needs. What has been done by this individual is something every school system should have."



Moving day for the new Farmington library may stretch into several weeks. On a bright, clear Saturday, 20 Girl Scouts from Mrs. Sharon Poborka's Troop 607 helped move carts of books into the new building. In the afternoon, Sergey Poborka's Boy

Scout Troop 118 took over the mover's assistant chores. The Girl Scouts are working on a community service badge. (Photo by Jim Hug)

But board approves

PTA leader questions gift policy

By CORINNE ABATT

A policy statement about gifts to schools which was unanimously passed by the Farmington Board of Education at its regular meeting Tuesday, Nov. 18, was questioned by Ken Hixon of the Middlebrook Elementary School PTA.

The brief policy says all gifts become the property of the Farmington public schools, and may, in effect, be used at the discretion of the board. The policy also urges district-wide co-

operation whenever possible on fund-raising.

Hixon spoke against the policy saying, "You are cutting out individuality—equal gym equipment, equal trees everybody has to have access to everything. You're cutting out competition, and competition is the best thing you've got going for yourself. Give the individual the right to excel."

He stressed the importance of having goals and giving individuals the right to decide what they want to do.

Board president William Corbuss told Hixon the policy was a statement in line with state law that all gifts become the property of the district.

Trustee William Gravus, who said the gift policy had been his concern and one of the reasons he ran for the board, told Hixon, "This was my concern. I didn't want to jeopardize the individuality of schools."

He said he was satisfied the policy was not designed for that purpose.

Dr. Mervyn Ross added, "It is not the extent of this administration to disrupt accepted past practices of any school building. It is the same format, the same structure. These are guidelines, should anything unforeseen arrive in the future."

Trustee Anne Struble said the board doesn't intend to play roulette with school equipment, but if one school should have more tape recorders than it needed and another not enough, they would probably be equated out.

Hixon told the board after the explanation that he understood this was not a policy change, but merely a clarification of the present policy.



Dave Benham of Farmington was named to the 1975 all-Michigan Intercollegiate Athletic Association golf squad. A member of the Alma College golf team, the North Farmington High School graduate finished second in the MIAA tournament. He shot a 159 for 36 holes. Alma College won the tournament with a perfect 6-0 record.

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Bolton's beat Invincibles, 27-4, while Pub No. 2 stopped Fisher's Sporting goods, 26-14. Both games were played at Farmington City Park.

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