

# College Districting: How K.C. Went Wrong

By TIM RICHARD

How closely does Missouri's method of electing community college boards resemble the method used at Schoolcraft College?

What mistake did Missouri make that prompted the U.S. Supreme Court to rule last week that its election districts violated the "one man, one vote" rule?

Is Schoolcraft College making the same error?

THESE ARE the questions that Michigan lawyers and the Schoolcraft College attorney, Edward Draugelis, will be asking as they pore the case that will go down in history as "Della Hadley et al., appellants, vs. The Junior College District of Metropolitan Kansas City, Missouri, et al."

On their answers may depend whether or not the Schoolcraft board is malapportioned, and if it is, what should be done about it.

One of the ironies is that on the Schoolcraft board, there has been no effort at all to observe the "one man, one vote" concept. Each of the five member school districts elects one trustee - even though Livonia is nine times as big as Northville - and three are elected at-large. On the other hand, Missouri law made an attempt to observe the "one man, one vote" concept, but the high court called the attempt to feeble.

THE MISSOURI case facts, as stated in the Supreme Court opinion, are these:

State law says there shall be six trustees elected for every junior college district. If none of the component K-12 school districts has one-third of the population, then all trustees are elected at-large.

Population is determined by "school enumeration," the number of children between the ages of six and 20. The at-large el-

ection of trustees satisfies the "one man, one vote" doctrine.

If one of the component districts has as much as one-third of the population, the situation changes, and a formula is applied:

● A district with one-third to one-half the children gets two trustees. The other trustees are elected at-large by the remainder of the college district.

● A district with half to two-thirds of the children is awarded three trustees, the rest being elected at-large by the remainder of the college district.

● And a district with two-thirds or more of the children gets four trustees, and so on.

WHAT'S WRONG with that? Doesn't that follow the "one man, one vote" rule?

Yes, but not well enough, said the Supreme Court. The act necessarily results in a systematic discrimination against voters in the more populous school districts.

"This discrimination occurs because whenever a large district's percentage of the total enumeration falls within a certain percentage range, it is always allocated the number of trustees corresponding to the bottom of that range," said the court.

Thus, if a local district had 65% of the children, it couldn't get four trustees and have 65% of the vote; it would get only three trustees, or 50%.

"Thus, while voters in large school districts may frequently have less effective voting power than residents of small districts, they can never have more," the court said. "Such built-in discrimination against voters in large districts cannot be sustained."

WHAT COULD Missouri have done? The court only implies a solution, never states one dogmatically. But here's one possibility:

The Missouri law might be rewritten to give districts three trustees if they have 41.7% to 58.3% of the children (instead of 50% to 66.7%).

It could give four trustees to districts with 58.4% to 75% of the children (instead of 66.7% plus).

It would simply be a matter of making the population brackets mathematically fairer.

AND HOW DOES Schoolcraft College measure up?

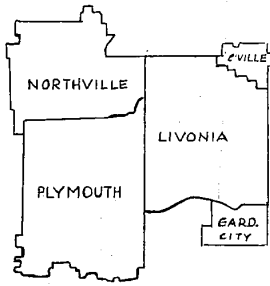
Badly, it appears. Livonia School District, which has more than half of the K-12 public school district in the entire Schoolcraft College district, gets only one allocated vote out of five.

Garden City alone comes out even - one-fifth of the children, one-fifth of the allocated votes.

Plymouth with 15% of the children, Clarenceville with about 7% and Northville with 6% - all get 20% of the allocated board votes.

Even considering that two of the three at-large trustees are from Livonia, that school district is still badly under-represented on the Schoolcraft board by Supreme Court standards. For Livonia has half the children but gets only three-eighths of the votes.

IF A LAW like the one suggested above



SCHOOLCRAFT COLLEGE District is composed of these five K-12 school districts. Livonia alone has more than half the population, Garden City one-fifth.

for Missouri were applied to Schoolcraft College, what would the board be like?

Livonia would elect four trustees from its own school district. Garden City would be entitled to one.

And three others would be elected at-large from Plymouth, Northville and Clarenceville school districts.

That would be a messy kind of an area to run in, because Clarenceville has no common boundary with Plymouth and Northville. It would be difficult to run a political campaign under those circumstances.

The U.S. Supreme Court, however, isn't concerned with how sensible an election area is from a political point of view. It is interested in "equal protection of the laws," as guaranteed by the 14th amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

That means "one man, one vote." And right now, Schoolcraft College district doesn't have it.

## Dissenters: Save 'Local Flexibility'

There was a vigorous dissent when the U. S. Supreme Court recently applied the "one man, one vote" rule to community college districts.

The three-man minority, composed entirely of Republican appointees, blistered the five-man majority, composed entirely of Democrats.

The dissenters, led by Justice John Marshall Harlan (an Eisenhower appointee), said in part:

"TODAY'S DECISION demonstrates, to a degree that no other case has, the pervasiveness of the federal judicial intrusion into state electoral process that was unleashed by the 'one man, one vote' rule."

"I believe, to the contrary, that the need to preserve flexibility in the design of local governmental units that serve specialized functions, and must meet particular local conditions, furnishes a powerful reason to refuse to extend the 'Avery' (county government) ruling beyond its original limits."

"If local units have general governmental powers are to be considered, like state legislatures, as having a substantial identity of function that justifies imposing on them a uniformity of elective structure, it is clear that specialized local entities are characterized by precisely the opposite of such identity."

"From irrigation districts to air pollution control agencies to school districts, such units vary in the magnitude of their impact upon various constituencies and in the manner in which the benefits and burdens of their operations interact with other elements of the local political and economic picture."

"Today's ruling will forbid these agencies from adopting electoral mechanisms that take these variations into account."

"The need for more flexibility becomes greater as we proceed down the spectrum from the state legislature to the single-purpose local entity."

CHIEF JUSTICE Warren Burger, a Nixon appointee, wrote an additional dissenting opinion which concluded:

"Yet the court (majority) has given almost no indication of which non-population interests may or may not legitimately be considered by a legislature in devising a constitutional apportionment scheme for a local, specialized unit of government."



'GRANDMA' Frankee LeMaigre helps Clarenceville youngsters cross a busy street. (Observer photo)

## Grandma Stands Guard On A Fast-Track Road

It's a simple enough matter. Frankee LeMaigre spends about two hours a day at Livonia's Angling Road helping youngsters cross on their way to Clarenceville's Botsford Elementary School because "I'm just a grandmother, and I love children."

The bouncy, 82-year-old Mrs. LeMaigre took the task on gratis last September after becoming alarmed at the traffic on Angling road and how that road is used as a race track.

And Botsford Principal Leo Larauve is glad she did. "We're grateful she volunteered to do this for us and hope she's with us for a long time to come," he says.

ABOUT 250 CHILDREN, including two grandchildren of "Grandma" Frankee, cross

Angling road each morning and afternoon. Most of them come from the Argonne Subdivision, bordered on the west by Deering Street and on the east by Inkster Road. They cross Angling and subsequently a 30-foot bridge over the Rouge River en route to Botsford.

A resident of Livonia for the past 1 1/2 years, Mrs. LeMaigre lives at 2046 Angling Road with her husband, daughter and two grandchildren. Last summer, as she explains it, "My husband and I were talking about just how much of a race track Angling Road is. I was concerned not only for my own grandchildren but for all the other children who would be crossing that road when school started."

"My husband said if you're so worried, why don't you cross the children yourself?"

"Me, at 82?" I asked. "You don't look 82," he replied.

Some weeks later, "Grandma" Frankee was riding in the car with her daughter. As they approached the school crossing on Angling road, Mrs. LeMaigre said she shouted to her daughter: "For heaven sakes, stop the car."

"There they were (the children), running down Angling Road in all directions on their way to Botsford. I herded them together and had them cross in an orderly way."

FROM THEN ON, "Grandma" had a steady "job." Through her efforts even children who don't live on Angling Road no longer walk to school on the road. She contacted a Livonia property owner who graciously gave her permis-

sion for children to cut through a pathway on his property from the Argonne Subdivision to her crossing station. Through her efforts, too, Boy Scouts from the Clarenceville Methodist Church cleared the pathway of brush and undergrowth.

"Grandma" has a new problem, though. It's spring mud. "I've made calls and had sand dumped on the pathway to Botsford, but what we really need is gravel." With her tenacity, she's apt to get it. With her yellow crossing guard uniform, Mrs. LeMaigre frequently is asked by children, "Are you a policeman?"

"No, just a grandma," she replied.

"I didn't take this job for gratitude. I just love children, and I'm concerned for their safety."

LOVING AND caring for children is hardly something new for "Grandma" Frankee. In addition to having two married daughters and six grandchildren, Mrs. LeMaigre and her husband reared several foster children when they made their home in California. While living in Salt Lake, Marie, they ran a Halfway House in their home. This house, Mrs. LeMaigre explains, was for children halfway between being reinstated with their parents or being adopted.

Although "Grandma" Frankee asks for no thanks, she did admit that at Christmas time her arms were loaded.

## Vance Packard Due At S'craft

Social critic-author Vance Packard will speak at Schoolcraft Community College Thursday, March 19.

The author of "The Status Seekers" and "The Sexual Wilderness" is being sponsored by the Campus Humanities Series Committee.

He will speak twice, at 3 p.m. and 8 p.m. on the subjects: "Sex Mures on the Campus Today" and "The Bewildered Sexes."

Dr. Ralph Atchley, Schoolcraft chemistry teacher who booked Packard, said he expects the largest crowds of the season for the noted author's talks.

Packard is internationally recognized for his incisive, meticulously researched investigations of trends in modern social life that bear on individual liberty.

THE TITLES of his books have literally become household words. He's the only American author in recent decades to have three successive books hit the top spot on the nation's best-seller lists in the non-fiction field.

Although he now devotes all his time to social comment, Packard is a former newspaperman and magazine writer and has contributed to most of the major American periodicals.

"The Sexual Wilderness" is his latest work. "The Status Seekers" is perhaps his best known. He has also written "The Hidden Persuaders," "The Waste Makers," "The Pyramid Climbers" and "The Naked Society."

HIS SCHOLICRAFT theme will be drawn from material of "The Sexual Wilderness," which documents "The Contemporary Uplival in Male-Female Relationships."

It is based on four years of study and personal interviews here and abroad. A native of Pennsylvania, Packard holds a master's degree in journalism from Columbia

**THE HARRIS BROADCASTER**

**American Legion Millionaires Party**  
SATURDAY, MARCH 14 - 8 p.m.  
American Legion Hall  
2061 Middlebell  
Tickets: Mr. Campbell - GA 1-4390  
Donation \$3.00

**FASHION SHOW and CARD PARTY**  
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11  
7:30 p.m.  
Bentley High School  
Tickets: Mrs. Jackie Hood - 422-7177  
Donation: \$1.50

**FESTIVAL OF ARTS**  
SUNDAY, MARCH 15 - 4-8 p.m.  
First United Methodist Church  
of Garden City  
6443 Merriman  
FREE

**BLOODMOBILE**  
THURSDAY, MARCH 19  
2-8 p.m.  
American Red Cross  
31228 Five Mile Road  
FREE

To publish the notice of your organization activity, contact, in person, Thomas F. Rest, Mgr., Garden City Chapel, or David R. Whitney, Mgr., Livonia Chapel.

R.G. & G.R. SINCE 1910

**Harris FUNERAL HOMES**

GARDEN CITY CHAPEL (Formerly LANE) Phone: 425-9200 31551 Ford Road, near Merriman

LIVONIA CHAPEL Phone: 422-6270 15451 Farmington Road, near Five Mile

ONTI OBSERVER NEWSPAPERS, INC.

**CIRCULATION DATA**

FRED J. WRIGHT, Circulation Director

NEWSPAPER	Current	CAC Audit
	Pass Run	Sept 1969
LIVONIA OBSERVER	29,500	29,220
REDFORD OBSERVER	20,700	19,956
WESTLAND OBSERVER	18,000	17,376
SOUTHFIELD OBSERVER	17,000	(116,000)
FARMINGTON ENTERPRISE & OBSERVER	15,400	14,501
GARDEN CITY OBSERVER	11,400	10,924
PLYMOUTH MAIL & OBSERVER	9,700	9,600

WEEKLY EDITIONS, WEDNESDAY NEW EDITION, February 1970 Will be included in March 1970 CAC audit.

Total Wednesday 122,200 116,577  
Weekend 93,900 88,277

FRED J. LEVINE, Advertising Director

Art Manager, Classified Mgr. 422-0900  
Joni Stark, Retail Mgr. 422-3175