



IT ISN'T FISH -- Fred Butcher, who used to make the trip from Detroit, to catch fish in Wilcox Lake, got a real surprise the other after-

noon. All he saw was weeds, and here he is with a broom filled with them. (Observer photo by Bob Woodring)

Regional Affairs

County Aids 2-Part Cleanup Of Rouge

By W. W. EDGAR
"Rescue The Rouge" is going to become an annual affair.

At the suggestion of the Wayne County Board of Commissioners, two groups -- the Rescue The Rouge Committee on the main branch and the Jaycees on the Middle Rouge -- have agreed to pool their efforts and wage the battle on the two fronts.

Appearing before the Board Monday morning to outline a program, Tom McPhail, of the Rescue Committee, and Al Thompson, of the Jaycees, promised that nearly 5,000 volunteers will be in the cleanup forces this year -- and they asked for help.

EARLIER IN the year the county board appropriated \$10,000 to the drain commissioner for work in the main branch, and there was a misconception of the appropriation.

The money was given "in kind," meaning the use of equipment and a force, with nothing in the appropriation for the Middle Rouge.

"These inequities will be straightened out after this year," Ervin A. Steiner, chairman of the commission's public works committee, explained, "and help will be granted wherever needed."

This year's battle will be fought on two fronts -- the main branch from Eight Mile Road to Plymouth Road -- on August 14-15, and the Middle Rouge on Sept. 19 or 25.

The main branch flows through northwest Detroit, the Middle Rouge through Northville, Plymouth, Livonia, Westland and Dearborn Heights.

AN ATTEMPT to combine the two groups for one big weekend failed when the Jaycees admitted they couldn't get the support of the school children in Plymouth, Livonia and Garden City in August, while McPhail and his group stated they worked with an older group because of the heavier debris in the main branch.

"This will make it better," Chairman Steiner stated, "because we now can shift the equipment from one area to

the other to the benefit of the entire program.

"We will have at least 2,000 volunteers this year," McPhail informed the commissioners, "and this number will increase in the years ahead."

"And we will have 3,000 volunteers because of the tremendous community participation," Thompson waging the battle this year.

WITH THIS enthusiasm, Mike Zolic, of the County Road Commission, suggested that the commissioners place an annual appropriation in the budget, and this will be recommended at the next meeting.

Adding to the enthusiasm of "Rescuing the Rouge," Al Pearson, lead of the Cherokee Circle Civic Association, remarked, "You fellows should float down the Rouge and see just how beautiful it is. It is as beautiful as many of the Northern Michigan rivers, and we should make the most of it by keeping it clean."

It was then agreed that three county agencies -- the Drain Commission, the Road Commission and the Department of Public Works -- would supply whatever help is needed.

A complete battle plan is to be worked out among the groups and reported at the next meeting on Tuesday, June 23 at 10 a.m.

Weeds: A Losing Battle

By W. W. EDGAR

County officials this week admitted they are fighting a losing battle with the weeds in Newburgh, Wilcox and Phoenix Lakes. What's more, the outlook for victory in the immediate future doesn't look bright.

"So long as people continue to fertilize their lawns," said Ike Porter, of Plymouth, who is director of parks and recreation for the Wayne County Road Commission, "we'll have trouble with the weeds."

"The lawn fertilizer washes down into the lakes and feeds the weeds -- and it is a never-ending battle."

MEANWHILE John McCann (D-Livonia), area representative on the Wayne County Board of Commissioners who also is very much interested in improving the lakes, voiced the opinion that there was little hope until the local communities joined with the county and the federal government in an ecology program.

"If the communities could work out a plan with the county, we may be able to get federal funding," he said, "and that requires a great deal of cooperation on all sides."

Lack of money in the Road Commission coffers for weed control and maintenance of the lakes is the big stumbling block, according to Porter.

"The ultimate solution", he said, "would be to dredge the three lakes. That would cost a fortune and I'd hazard a guess it would take a half-million dollars to do the job."

PORTER EXPLAINED that, so far as could be learned at this time, there are no federal funds for maintenance, and the money being spent on weed control comes out of general funds.

This far, a heavy shot of 2-4 D has been applied to the weeds in the three lakes, and plans are being made for another before the algae season comes along.

"The first dose seems to have had some effect," Porter stated, "and here and there, you see signs of the weeds breaking up. If that continues there is some hope that we can minimize the algae."

Then he sighed--
"If only we had the money, or could get it like the Huron-Clinton Valley Authority does through the levy of one-quarter mill tax, we'd be able to do the job. Without it, we're fighting a losing fight."

Lawmakers Maneuver On S'craft Vote Bill

A new twist in events could result in legislative action finally being taken on the method of electing trustees to Schoolcraft College.

State Rep. James Tierney (D-Garden City) introduced a bill into the House last week that would call for an at-large trustee election. His bill almost parallels Sen. Carl Pursell's (R-Plymouth) bill August 14-15, and the Middle Rouge on Sept. 19 or 25.

held in November of odd years.

Tierney's bill was referred to the House Committee on Colleges and Universities where he said he wants it amended to continue with the old method of electing trustees in June school elections.

Meanwhile, State Rep. Marvin Stempien's (D-Livonia) bill that would give college districts a choice in election methods could come

up for a vote this week.

Stempien's bill has been amended to have community college boards and college apportionment commissions decide whether to have at-large or single-member district elections. It was further amended to give the electorate a chance to put the matter to a public referendum.

IF STEMPIEN'S bill passed this week without further amendments, it would authorize the college apportionment commissions to draw up districts for each college district and then the commissions and college boards would vote on which method to use by May 15, 1972.

The community college apportionment commissions are to be made up of the county clerk, county treasurer, prosecuting attorney, and the statutory county chairman of each of the two main political parties.

However the public could have the matter put to a referendum by circulating petitions and asking for an election date to be set within 30 days of the May 15 deadline.

But prior to a final vote, the bill could be amended by Tierney requiring that a public election be mandatory, according to Stempien. Stempien said that he agreed to that compromise with Tierney though he does not approve of the Legislature mandating people to use public funds for an election.

If the bill passes, it will not affect the plans for a Sept. 13 trustee election at Schoolcraft. Stempien said.

HE SAID it would be "foolhardy" for the Legislature to act in a hurried way that would upset the current election plans.

Depending on action taken in the committee, Tierney's bill would probably not upset the election plan either.

Tierney opposes the November odd year elections because he said he "hates to see our schools put in a political realm that can do nothing but hurt the kids. Stempien's bill also calls for odd-year November elections.

Chimpanzee Act Offered At Wonderland

A chimpanzee act will be presented free at Wonderland Center, Plymouth at Middle Belt in Livonia, Thursday through Saturday, June 17-19, at noon, 3 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. each day.

The 25-minute show features the International Hippodrome Chimps, formerly known as Col. Jerry Lipko's Human Chimps. They have been in movies and on network television.

Skippy, one of the star performers, will present a routine of acrobatics and musical impersonations.

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