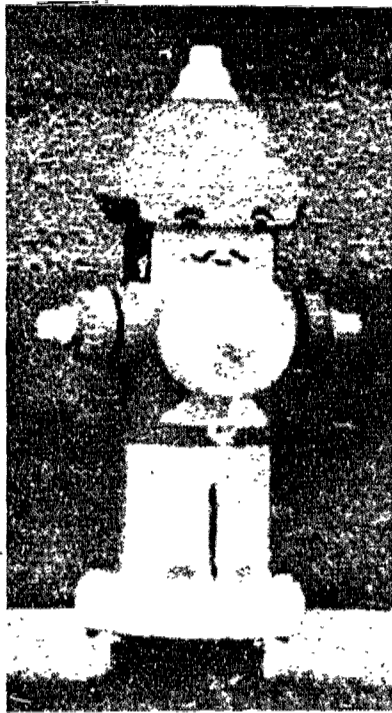


Fireplugs Ready For Bicentennial

Mrs. Norma Clark and Mrs. Audrey Martin, Fanwood Bicentennial Chairmen, have begun the painting of fire hydrants in the borough for the Nation's Birthday Celebration in 1976.



The first two hydrants completed resemble Revolutionary War heroes. The hydrant in front of the Slocum property represents Patrick Henry. The soldier at the corner of Martine and North Avenues is a French

Board Of Ed. Finds Illegal Tape Recorder In Meeting Room

About one hour into the five-and-a-half hour long Board of Education meeting last Thursday night, Board President Richard Bard announced that it was necessary to declare a ten-minute emergency recess due to discovery of something within the building at Shackamaxon School, where the meeting was underway. While members of the audience wondered whether the "something" was a bomb or a fire, board members filed from the auditorium and gathered behind the stage, where they summoned reporters to view a large tape recorder in action.

The recorder was in a box, marked "A.V.," apparently for Audio Visual. It was wired into the loudspeaker and recording system, thereby recording directly from the mikes being used by the board.

Tape recorders are permitted out in the audience, and in fact are used from time to time by members of the audience. It's legal to use them as long as they're seen, and battery operated according to board president Richard Bard. However, clandestine taping is illegal, in his view.

Local School District Releases State Dept. Of Ed. Test Results

The Scotch Plains-Fanwood school district has released test results of the New Jersey State Department of Education this week. The latest test scores, which represent another annual step in the testing program initiated by the state in 1972, represents tests administered in reading and mathematics given to all students in New Jersey in grades 4, 7 and 10. Because major revisions were made in computer programs used in reporting test data, results have not been released until now.

Overall performance in the tests was very satisfactory, according to administrators in the Scotch Plains-Fanwood district. District-wide student performance levels are generally equal to, or better than, the performance levels represented for each of the reference groups:

soldier, the Comte de Rochambeau, who led his soldiers in the battle which forced Cornwallis' surrender.

Would you like to "Paint a Plug for Fanwood?" The Bicentennial Committee encourages neighborhoods and citizens everywhere in the Borough to join in this project.

Any adult interested may obtain directions, patterns, expert advice, and painting kit from Mike Venezia, at Venezia's Hardware, 511 Terrill Road - Fanwood's Hydrant Coordinator. Please phone him if you would like to do a hydrant. 322-8133 or 889-2135.

Painting a hydrant takes about 8 man - or woman - hours, from the scrubbing with Comet to the final touches. We feel that this is a job for careful adults, not children. While not difficult, it must be done carefully.

This is a non-profit endeavor and a modest donation will help to defray the cost of materials. The Committee feels we should keep the cost down and the Spirit of '76 up!

Bard summoned a Scotch Plains policeman to the school, and asked that he impound the machine. The patrolman declined, suggesting instead that the recorder be unplugged and locked in the office of the school principal until the meeting was over. Board members agreed with this arrangement.

The policeman checked papers of identification on the recording equipment. The recorder itself was identified with the name of Charles Bihler, 2514 Tack Circle, Scotch Plains. One reel was marked "Bd. of Ed."

county, district, factor groupings, community type (regional district), state, individual school and class. As no norms nor statistical data were provided, comparisons could only be made in broad terms.

The reading test of 96 items ad-

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Bihler Sues Board Of Ed. And Both Governing Bodies

Listening Post Date Changed In Fanwood

Democratic Councilmembers John Swindlehurst and Carol Whittington have changed the date and time of their monthly Listening Post during the summer months from the First Saturday morning of the month to the First Thursday night at 8 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. The reasoning behind the change is to give residents and councilmembers the week-end free for trips and family life. There are no other board or commission meetings scheduled for the 1st Thursday so there would be no conflict of other meetings for residents to attend.

Bard said later that he did think the recorder did not belong to the Board of Education, but that the reel does. When board members played the reel back following the meeting, last Thursday night's meeting had been superimposed over a board meeting of two years ago. At that time, it had been Board practice to record each monthly session. This is no longer done.

Mr. Bihler, whose name was on the equipment, has held the post of Director of Media for the school district. That job has been eliminated for next year, along with six other directorships, and Bihler has been tentatively assigned to the position of librarian at School One instead.

Mr. and Mrs. Bihler were seated in the audience when the incident occurred. They left the school. Attempts to contact Mr. Bihler at home since last Thursday have been ineffective.

"So far, it has yet to be determined who did it," Bard said. He noted that an investigation will be made by the administration.

The board voted approval for awarding of bids for purchase of audio-visual, duplicating and girls athletic supplies, after a lengthy argument over audio visual inventories. The vote was split, with Shanni, Fallon, Festa and Labasi in negative.

Shanni claimed he had been told no physical audit has been taken in four years and he cannot see ordering more equipment until a detailed inventory is taken, Fallon agreed, wanting immediate discussion of inventory.

Assistant Superintendent for Business said some board members have been misinformed on inventory procedures. He said he furnished a step by step summary of ordering methods for board purchases of audio-visual supplies, that all were received from reliable, responsible bidders, and were within the amounts in the budget. The bids were for supplies necessary to operate audio-visual equipment already on hand, Klick said, and bear upon operations this year.

Seeks To Restore Cuts In 1974-1975 School Budget

Charles Bihler of 2514 Tack Circle, Scotch Plains has filed suit in Superior Court against the Township of Scotch Plains, the Borough of Fanwood, the Board of Education, the Union County Board of Taxation, and the New Jersey Commissioner of Education, charging that the local district was unable to furnish a "thorough and efficient" education here last year, due to a \$180,000 cut which was made in the 1974-75 school budget. Mr. Bihler seeks to have these monies restored.

Mr. Bihler has been associated with the Scotch Plains-Fanwood school district as Director of Media in recent years. However, that job title was eliminated by a newly elected Board of Education this spring. Bihler, who has tenure as a teacher in the district, has been tentatively assigned as librarian at School One for the 1975-76 school year. That assignment was an administrative one, not a board appointment, according to Board of Education president Richard M. Bard.

Bihler is also President of the Administrative - Supervisory Group - an arm of the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Education Association. He filed the suit in his combined roles of citizen, taxpayer, parent and officer of the administrative - supervisory group.

According to Fanwood Borough Attorney Edward Beglin, the three local groups named in the suit (the governing bodies and the Board of Education) will handle the legal action jointly, with attorneys for all three working together on a defense. Beglin said the suit had originally been scheduled to come up in court on July 11 but, at the request of Bihler's attorney, had been delayed. It is now slated to a July 25 date.

Bihler is involved in a second action involving recent budget cuts. In the second case, Bihler is joined by Mary Ann Pierce, a science teacher at Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School; Clayton S. Pierce; Betty F. Williams; Donald L. Williams; another high school teacher, Frank J. Volpe, Jr.; William E. Davis, and Ellen J. Davis.

The above named are residents, taxpayers and parents, and they have filed a petition before the New Jersey Commissioner of Education in which they challenge a cut of \$820,000 mandated by the governing bodies of Scotch Plains and Fanwood and accepted by the Board of Education for the 1975-76 school year. The group claim that the cut will mean that the district will be unable to provide a thorough and efficient education in the coming year. At the least, they seek restoration of \$714,000, which represents the amount which the Commissioner

of Education had ordered restored to the budget after his department studied it during the appeal procedure.

Beglin said he anticipated that, in the case of the petition by the group of taxpayers, the governing bodies, Board of Education, etc. would be alerted of their role as involved parties and would be provided with an opportunity to respond, with a specific number of days permitted for the response to be prepared and forwarded. Any further steps would depend upon the nature of the response filed, Beglin surmised.

In the past, private citizens or groups of citizens have filed petitions with the state Commissioner following financial settlements of budget disputes. However, the Commissioner's office has never accepted such petitions, and to date it has been the custom for that office to accept petitions only from school boards or governing bodies.

Last March, the Board of Education agreed on a \$1 million cut in school expenses here, spread over a two-year period. The first cut accepted by the Board was \$180,000 from the budget of the school year which finished last month. The decision on that \$180,000 cut ended a year of appeals and counter-appeals which began back in February of 1974. The voters defeated the budget at that time, the combined Councils of Scotch Plains and Fanwood removed \$969,000 from that budget, and the Board of Education appealed the \$969,000 cut at the state level in Trenton. Following state-level hearings, the New Jersey Commissioner ordered restoration of \$714,000 of the \$969,000. The combined Councils found that figure unacceptable and were in process of appealing that action at the time of this year's school budget election and accompanying defeat of the 1975-76 budget.

A newly elected board settled for the \$180,000 removed from the 1974-75 budget and subsequent cancellation of the appeal procedures, and for \$714,000 out of the budget for the forthcoming school year.