

Students Boycott School As A Protest At Brasie Corners

BY TERRY KOCH
BRASIE CORNERS — "Maybe now they'll listen to us," Ellen Shafer said. "We've let the school board know they're not going to step on us."

Mrs. Shafer is talking about the one-day boycott of classes at Gouverneur Central School Wednesday by 90 out of 120 children in the town of Macomb.

Parents had kept the children out of class to protest the busing of 13 fifth and sixth grade students from Brasie Corners Elementary School to West Side Elementary School in Gouverneur.

Eight of the 13 children did not board the bus Wednesday. At the same time, about 33 out of 52 of the remaining Brasie Corners school children did not attend, and attendance at Gouverneur High School was lower than usual.

Gouverneur district administrators said school was "back to normal" Thursday. Acting Superintendent of Schools Bonnie Bettinger said no disciplinary action is planned as a result of the boycott.

"We are treating it (Wednesday) as a regular school day," she said.
Mrs. Shafer, one of the spokesmen for the parents' group, said the next step is to take action to secede from the Gouverneur school district, of which the Brasie Corners school is a part.

Meeting set
The group plans a town meeting this Wednesday and is considering what legal actions must be taken next to block the transfer of the fifth and sixth grade children to classes in Gouverneur.

To secede from the district requires special state legislative action, and Mrs. Shafer said the parents have contacted Assemblyman David Martin to see what can be done. Asked if he has gotten back to them, Mrs. Shafer said he had not yet done so. "We hope to hear from him today or soon," she said.

The Gouverneur school district decided to transport the fifth and sixth graders after their instructor, Marjorie McCullough, asked for and was given a transfer to West Side Elementary.

Remaining at the Brasie Corners School are children in kindergarten through fourth grade. Students in grades seven through 12 have already been traveling to Gouverneur for classes.

Main Issue
Mrs. Shafer said the main issue is not busing. "The main thing is that we want our children educated here where they belong," she said. "They can bus Gouverneur kids out here if they want."

She said the Brasie Corners school "is like a family out here. Everybody knows everybody else."
With a small school, she said, there is "plenty of individual help for each student, and the teachers are always available."

The students who are being bused to Gouverneur are being "split up" into two classes in a school district where there are 28 children to a class.
"Most of the children have been in Brasie since kindergarten," Mrs. Shafer added.

One of the parents' group's next goal is to find out why the Gouverneur district has decided to transfer the students.

The parents suspect the district may be planning to close the two outlying schools — the one at Brasie Corners and the other at Richville.

The transfer, said Mrs. Shafer, does not benefit either teachers or students, "and it cannot be economics." The district, she noted, could hire a substitute teacher for \$5,100.

Parents will also be looking for records of the Centralization Committee which many years ago brought about centralization. They are certain these records indicate a "contract" promising that the Brasie Corners school would continue to exist. There are news accounts, Mrs. Shafer said, and affidavits signed by people "who were there," but the group needs the actual records to support its case in court.

"If the school board has them," said Mrs. Shafer, "they won't give them to us."

Officers Installed

A tea for the Church Women United was held Jan. 26 at the home of Mrs. F.A. Ramsdell, Potsdam. The new officers were installed by Mrs. George Theobald.

Officers are: president, Mrs. Hugh Campbell; vice-president, Mrs. Leslie Cook; secretary, Mrs. Eugene Geiser; treasurer, Mrs. Paul Kelam.



EXTENSION OFFICERS — At a recent reorganizational meeting, the Cooperative Extension Service Association elected officers for the 1980 calendar year. Shown are, from left, seated: Clark Decker, Winthrop, vice-president; Mrs. Donald Beggs, Morristown, treasurer; Ken Theobald,

Canton, president; Mrs. Max Fisher, Madrid, secretary. Standing: Reginald Chester, Lisbon; Ms. Cathy O'Horo, Canton; Mrs. Donald Merkle, Ogdensburg; James Hammill, Massena; Fred Selleck, Canton; David McKnight, Potsdam; and Lincoln Chapman, past president, Winthrop.

M-W Renovation Bids Awarded

WADDINGTON — The final step before the \$1,450,000 million energy renovation conservation project can begin was cleared Tuesday night as the district's board of education awarded three separate bids for the program.

For general construction of the project, Empie Construction of Gouverneur was awarded the contract with a low bid of \$200,000.

The John W. Cowper Company of Buffalo was awarded the contract for window and sliding door work with an apparent low bid of \$455,200.

An alternate bid of \$13,200 for window work in the bus garage was awarded to the Cowper Company.

For electrical work, the board awarded the contract to Harron's Electric of Gouverneur with a low bid of \$103,700.

In addition, an alternate bid of \$1,850 was accepted for lighting under the canopy at the junior-senior high school from Harron's.

The board Tuesday night voted to delay awarding contracts for the mechanical and roof work for the project in order to review the bids.

For roof work, the Henderson-Johnson Inc. of Syracuse had submitted the apparent low bid of \$293,700 and the Aaron J. Lasher Plumbing and Heating Company of Heuvelton was the apparent low bidder for the mechanical work with a bid of \$52,916.

Contract Approved
In other action, the board of education voted to accept a contract agreement

with the district's Teachers Association for the 1979-1980 and the 1980-1981 school years.

The contract agreement calls for a 7 percent increase for 1979-1980 and a maximum increase of 9 percent for the second year.

The board granted Ann Evans, reading teacher, a leave of absence for the remainder of the year and appointed board member Alan Pierce to serve as the board's representative to the St. Lawrence County School Board's Association Task Force.

Talk On Development

St. Lawrence Early Education for Today (SLEET) will sponsor a talk entitled "Implications of Piagetian Theory for Early Childhood Education: Cognitive Development". It will be given by Richard Dahl from the School

of Professional Studies at the State University College at Potsdam on Feb. 7 at 7:30 p.m. in Satterlee Hall, Room 200 on the SUC, Potsdam campus. A film will be shown and "hands on" materials will be available.

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