

Questions on the bond proposal Letter to the Editor

Before anyone considers voting for the upcoming \$82 million Fruitport School millage request, take a drive out to the site of the proposed new high school. First, it's in the middle of nowhere. Second, with the current roads, there is no good way to get there. Third, there are no provisions for new athletic facilities at this remote site. We have just recently spent millions renovating our current athletic facilities, including new football stands, press boxes, field, track, baseball fields, and an improved gymnasium. Do we really think there is any way to economically transport kids back and forth for PE or any other outdoor athletic activities? What about team practices after school? The answer is simple.

If the school board gets its way, this request is just the "tip of the iceberg." In a very short time, there will be cries for ignoring the millions recently spent on our very adequate athletic facilities and the school board will be proposing another \$12- to \$15- million millage for athletic facilities at the site of the new high school. If the voters of Fruitport approve this millage, you might as well just add another zero and plan on repaying \$100,000,000 over the next 40 years. There is little doubt that their next request is already in the planning stages. When parents, coaches and teachers wrestle with the gross inefficiencies of having our athletic facilities miles away from our school, without even a decent road in between, they will have little choice but to go back to the taxpayers for millions more.

Jim Cooper
6715 Haney Road

Let's do the math (Evidently Fruitport Schools didn't) Letter to the Editor

Fruitport School's website, fruitportschools.net, under "Frequently Asked Questions — bond issue," the question asked is: "Given the down turn in our economy, wouldn't it make more sense to wait?" The school's response was, in part, "There will never be a better time to build." And "This is an opportunity for our residents to get an incredible bang for their buck." And it goes on to say, "A project of this magnitude will put an estimated 200-250 people to work. Many of these workers will be residents and neighbors of Fruitport. In addition, this will likely boost local businesses. When 250 people work in a community, they eat at local restaurants, buy gas at local gas stations, and shop in local shops. The opportunity this proposal presents is significant for the entire community." Sounds real good, doesn't it?

What a bunch of bull! First, if 250 workers are "residents and neighbors," they are already spending their money here in Fruitport. **No additional benefit there.** So if they are from outside the area, that means all those wages are going to another town. **Again, no additional benefit there.**

In another question, "What is the time line for projects?" The answer was, "approximately five years." In that case, and for the sake of argument, let's say they all do spend, say \$20 every day here in Fruitport, every day that they work. So let's do the math on this puppy: 250 workers x five days a week = 1,250 worker days x 52 weeks = 65,000 worker days a year. That, times five years = 325,000 worker days for the whole

project. Now, here's the good part. If every worker spends \$20 every day he works, they will spend $20 \times 325,000 = \$6,500,000$ over the five years of the project. Sounds good, doesn't it? Well, yes and no. As the late Paul Harvey always said, "and now for the rest of the story."

You also (Fruitport schools evidently didn't) have to take into account from whom they got their money and what impact that will have. There are approximately 7,200 (let's say 8,000) homesteads in the Fruitport school district that will be flipping this bill. Each home is to have a tax increase of, let's say what the school has been saying, about \$100 a year. Math time again: 8,000 homes x \$100 a year = \$800,000 a year they have to pay to these workers. The workers are here for only five years, but this bond is for **40 years!** So 40 years x \$800,000 = \$32,000,000. So, in the end, \$32,000,000 was **spent** to generate \$6,500,000 in business? That makes real good business sense to me! Is that the "incredible bang for their buck" the school was talking about? In reality, $\$32,000,000 - \$6,500,000 = \$25,500,000$ in **Lost** business in Fruitport because all that money comes from Fruitport "residents and neighbors" who now can't spend it here themselves because now they have to pay the tax increase, and that is the **Real End Cost!**

By the way, you might have noticed that the 8,000 homes taxed only generated **about \$32,000,000**, and from what the school has said would only be about a \$100 tax increase a year per home. But the bond is for **\$82,000,000**. Somebody's **way off** on his or her math. What is the tax you are going to pay really going to be? (Especially if all homes for seniors over 65 are exempt from the tax.) But that is another story. (Side note: Each worker would have to spend over **\$255** here *every day* just for us to *break even*.)

Pat Matthews
18827 130th

Fruitport School authorities are out of touch with reality Letter to the Editor

Muskegon Chronicle, Sunday, March 1, 2009. Front page. "A window to their world" stated that "34,475 Muskegon County adults are considered working poor — people who work in jobs that don't pay a living wage. One in four adults

in the county fall into that category, according to U.S. Census data."

Same paper, page 3A: "Economy hits schools' enrollment hard" quoting: "The latest student count number tells a disturbing story. Enrollment in most area school districts continues to fall, putting teacher jobs and school programs for next year in jeopardy."

The same article also states: "The drop in student numbers also speaks to personal hardships — of families leaving their homes, displaced because they no longer could afford their payments or because they needed to work elsewhere, school officials said."

According to the article, Fruitport School District alone is down 55 students just this year. The Muskegon County schools in total have lost over 416 students. Quoting again from the above article: "Our parents tell us they don't want to leave, but they have to go where the work is, or where they think the work is."

Do the Fruitport School "experts" really think that now is the time for an \$82 million bond to build a new high school and other "renovations?" What are they thinking? Where do they live? \$52 million for a high school! When even in the same paper with the above article is another article, "Kellogg's plans for \$22.5M building on hold." Kellogg can build a six-story office building for less than half of what Fruitport wants to build just a high school. And even they stated, "the economic downturn has put those plans on hold for at least a year."

The article also stated that each district receives \$7,300 in state aid per student. Fruitport has about 3,224 students, so $\$7,300 \times 3,224$ equals \$23,535,200.00 yearly budget just from state aid. And that isn't counting what they also receive from the taxpayers. How much I really don't know. Do you? With the school buildings already paid for by us taxpayers, it makes me wonder what that money is being spent for.

I'm sorry, Fruitport School District taxpayers, but since my wife was laid off in May; and I was informed a week ago that my company is shutting down and going to Mexico, and I will be out of a job, too, this August; I'm afraid you will have to flip their outrageous, fiscally irresponsible bill without my help; because I, too, will have to leave and "go where the work is."

Pat Matthews
18827 130th



Fathers and daughters enjoy a night out!

By Amy Upham

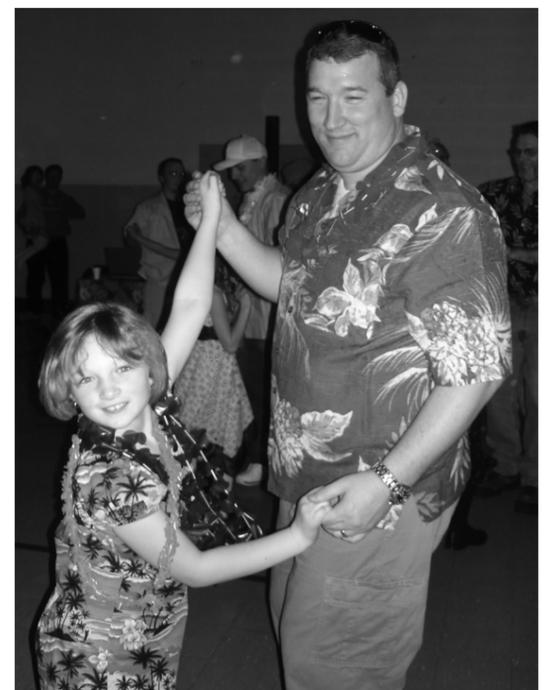
The second and third grade girls of Edgewood Elementary enjoyed a tropical-themed night out with their dads, grandpas and/or significant male in their life on Friday, February 20, 2009.

The girls in their tropical outfits enjoyed dancing to their favorite songs, and even got their partners on the dance floor to feel the beat of Hannah Montana and the Jonas Brothers. Mr. Grossenbacher served as the evening disc jockey, and played the girls' favorites. As part of the dance tradition, the evening ended with the songs, *Butterfly Kisses* and *Daddy's Little Girl*.



In addition to the fun dancing and tropical treats, each girl and their significant other were treated to a complimentary photo. Mr. John Johnson, Edgewood parent, volunteered his time and talents to provide a professional backdrop and photo.

The PTO would like to thank Tammy Backensto, JaeLynn Kostamo and Tavra Wahr for setting up the event. This is a fun night for the girls and one that Edgewood looks forward to.



FRUITPORT CLASS OF 2004

SAVE THE DATE!!!

Class Reunion scheduled for Friday, June 5, 2009

Invites will be mailed the first part of April.

Any questions, please send email to:

fruitport2004@gmail.com

HORSE FOR SALE "JAZZY"

Jazzy, around three years old, is a beautiful bay Appaloosa quarter horse. She is very "leggy," about 15.2 hands, and with work could be an awesome jumper. She has walked, trotted, and cantered with a rider. She has also been jumped about two feet (unknown actual height). She could possibly do barrels with a person who knows how to teach her. She could also be an awesome English pleasure horse. I have taken her on the trails, and she did well. She is willing to learn and just needs a friend. I hate to sell her with all the potential she has, but I do not have enough time for her. Asking \$1,500 or best offer. All offers considered.

For more information, call Taylor at (231) 780-3147 or (231) 571-7742.

Video at: <http://vids.myspace.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=vids.individual&videoid=4976318>.