

Northcutt Tells About \$1.3 Million Bond Issue Vote Today



Jim Northcutt Photo by George Lampton

Superintendent of Schools Jim Northcutt, (and a Rotarian,) told us last week about today's \$1.3 million bond issue for classroom technology, school buses, and band uniforms.

"Building bonds" are actually classroom "instructional technology," amounting to bonds of

\$850,000. This is for teachers in all classrooms from "Pre-K" to the 12th grade.

Some \$90,000 of the bonds will be for band uniforms.

General funds do not pay for band uniforms, which have not been purchased in 10 years. The 170 new uniforms will go to high school band members.

"Transportation bonds" will total \$450,000 and will be for purchasing five new school buses. The bonds will be spread over nine years. They will require a 60 percent approval to pass. And they will be voted on when "runoff primaries" are held in Pittsburg County, in the sheriff's race and the contest for District 3 county commissioner.

The bond issue is needed because of recent tax cuts the Legislature has passed. "We're at a standstill budget," he said.

"Today we need to keep up with technology and we're a little behind," Jim said.

Filskow Gives Talk on State Department, USIA, Other Service

On July 29 Carl Filskow gave club members a "classification talk" about his life from childhood in Depression-era Oklahoma; through World War II in the Pacific; and foreign service for the U.S. State Department and USIA.

He left the service in World War II where he had been a Heavy Machine Gun Sergeant with two battle stars, to go to factory work in Detroit; foreign service in Central America; for the State Department and USIA; faculty and teaching positions at two U.S. universities; State Health Department service; and volunteer jobs after final retirement.

Carl mentioned having witnessed several revolutions and revolts in different countries, including the over-throw of

Juan Peron in Argentina and that of the U.S.-"appointed" president of Guatemala.

He also discussed some effects of living at 13,000 feet of altitude in Bolivia; his first graduate degree from Wayne State University in Michigan. He also talked about his graduation from the Armed Forces Staff College in Norfolk, Va.; his marriage in Argentina and becoming a Rotarian there, 55 years ago. He also mentioned the publication of a small book of verse in Spanish; his four years in Athens, Greece, including temporary assignments abroad.

He ended his presentation by expressing his gratitude for 55 years of Rotary fellowship, his love of country, and by quoting his old Sunday School song, "Brighten the Corner Where You Are..."

Club Hears About Operation of McAlester 'Drug Court'

Half a dozen people told us about the first two years of the Drug Court in McAlester, and all had high praise for how the court operates.

Judge Bill Layden Jr. is the judge of the court. He said persons under jurisdiction of the court plead guilty and 'waive all rights.'

If they finish the programs set up for them, the charges are dismissed. If not, they go back to prison, to serve their sentence.

Layden said persons connected with the court here visited

other drug courts first, to see how they are operated.

"Andy" Marcum is coordinator for the Drug Court. Lisa Russell is assistant coordinator. They said the program lasts from 18 to 24 months. The alleged crime has to have been done in Pittsburg County. The person charged with the drug crime must apply for the Drug Court. Applicants are screened and interviewed. There can be no violence involved. They cannot leave the county and must make bi-weekly court appearances, plus submit to drug tests three times a week, and attend chemical support group four hours a week.

Fields Says He Runs State Agency 'Like A Business'



Lloyd L. Fields, Commissioner of Labor

Commissioner of Labor Lloyd Fields told us last week that he runs his department "like a business," because he doesn't know any other way to run it.

Employees were taking state cars home during the week and bringing them back on the weekend, and coming in 10 or 15 or 20 minutes late. But he said he put in a time clock and "put in a GPS System in all the cars."

Fields said a lot of the work of his office is licensing.

He said at the Tulsa State Fair, there were 15 incidents or errors involving machinery and rides. Four were caused by patrons; three were mechanical and eight were operator errors. A bill has been passed to regulate the equipment, but

the governor has not signed the "emergency rules"

The rules should be in placed by June 1, prior to the Oklahoma City State Fair, he said.

Sixteen other states also have rules on cranes and crane operators, Fields said. Oklahoma needs such regulations, "but we want to be sure we're not putting anybody out of business," he stated.

Fields apologized for the amount of travel he has made, saying he did not know initially what meetings he needed to attend.

Idaho is a state which has a new workers compensation system, he said. They have a disinterested party find out how an accident happened. Then they let everyone know what their rights are.

This system seems to get people back to work sooner, initially for "light duty." Then a judge has all the information before him, gathered by a third party, before he hears a case. The cost is less in Idaho. When a claim form is filed an employer has 15 days to respond.

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They must work fulltime or be fulltime students.

Matt Lenardo said at the age of 16 his family moved to Tulsa. At 17 he was arrested and charged with possession of marijuana. He said he went to prison and was put in an 8 by 10 -foot cell.

Matt said he has seen "people hang themselves" and others "get stabbed."

Then he entered the jurisdiction of the Drug Court. He said he is proud of McAlester for having the Drug Court. He called it a "great program," and said it there had been a Drug Court when he got into trouble, he "probably never would have gone to prison."

Gabe Joslin said that drugs "slowly consumed my life." He went to jail for two months, "then got caught again" after getting out. He said he was "looking at five to 10," when he signed up for the Drug Court. It "really helps," he said. Joslin said he "ended up coming home....I've got my kids back...I've got a new car.:

Joslin said he has "got things back I thought would never be in my grasp."

"There is a way out," he said.

They do community service for Shared Blessings and for the Pride in McAlester cleanups. There are just seven in the present class, but 77 persons have taken the program.

Funding comes through the Mental Health Department.

Attendance, Guests and Handshakers *And the Big, Big (?) Pot*

There were 50 at last week's meeting. Sally Davis was a guest of Ann Owens. John Conley was a guest of John Freeman. Harvey Mooney and Amy Johns were guests of Steve Smith. Katie Peters was a guest of Iva Due.

There were 37 at the Aug. 12 meeting. Bill Maxwell was a guest of Bret Smith. James Beaty from the newspaper, was at the first part of the meeting. On Aug. 5 there were 48 present. Mike Kerns was a guest of Bob Thornton. Kelley Martin was a guest of Yvette. Glen Kramer was a guest of Iva Due.

The attendance sheet is missing from July 29 and there are

no records of attendance or guests.

HANDSHAKERS-Steve Brock had the buck Aug. 12. He gave it to Betty Talley. On Aug. 5, Lynn Edwards gave the dollar to Betty Talley. And last week, Jim Thompson gave it to Iva Due. (Why do the women have all the money?)

Ronnie May drew the unlucky card for the Big Pot last week. And if you can't remember who drew a card before that, it may have all been on that missing attendance sheet. There's nothing strange about that? Is there? And where is the money between meetings, where it's safe?