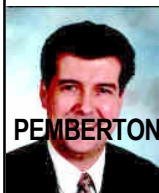


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CORRECTION

The Ford Explorer Sport in Friday's Crown Ford ad was incorrectly listed as a 2002. The vehicle is a 2000 model.

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Rossville-Alvin board seeks, receives input from residents

ROSSVILLE—The future of Rossville-Alvin students will be decided by the school board but the board wants public input in making the decision.

To get that input, the board held at town meeting Friday to discuss with residents directions the district may go in the future.

Board president Dennis Price began the meeting with an overview of the situation facing the district, including possible cuts in state aid, the unlikelihood of future grants and the reassessment of the ConAgra plant which forced the district to repay \$95,000 this year and will annually cut \$47,000 from school coffers.

Other factors influencing the district include census figures which show the balance of power in the state is now north of Interstate 80 and a bill in the Illinois House that would mandate school districts with a minimum of 250 high school students.

Price then talked about options facing Rossville-Alvin schools, including:

keeping the doors open. "We can keep our schools but it's not going to be cheap," Price said. In order to have schools in Rossville, residents will have to pass a tax referendum, the district can sell bonds or, to cut costs, Rossville-Alvin can have cooperative efforts with neighboring districts. "This board has spent a lot of time talking to other districts in the area," Price said.

reorganizing with another district, either



Rossville-Alvin Superintendent Carl Sartwell discusses a survey to be sent to district residents as board members Ray Rice, Craig Potter and Bruce Matthews listen. The discussion was part of a town meeting on R-A's future.

through consolidation, annexation or dissolution.

Superintendent Carl Sartwell explained that in consolidation, Rossville-Alvin would share control of its situation with another district, while in annexation, the district would be absorbed by another district. In dissolution, the board would close the school and the Regional Board of School Trustees would determine which district or districts would get Rossville-Alvin students.

With preliminary information done, Sartwell reviewed a survey to be sent to property owners and parents in the

district. The survey, expected to be sent out this month,

See R-A on other side

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R-A continued from other side

asks each respondent's opinion on a referendum to raise taxes; whether the respondent favors a \$1 increase; a 50 cent increase that would be reduced when the grade school roof is paid for; and which of three districts - Hoopeston Area, Bismarck-Henning or Armstrong-Potomac, the respondent would like to merge with in case of reorganization; and the respondent's opinion on dissolving the district.

According to information gathered by the board, consolidation with Hoopeston Area would provide the least impact taxes.

Another option - creating a northern Vermilion County district - has been discussed but has little interest from neighboring districts, Price said.

Cutting costs is another option but the district is already at a bare-bones level, Price said. Nine teachers, or 15 percent of the staff, will be notified at Monday's board meeting that their positions will be elimi-

Police News



Ronald E. Pruitt, 33, of 311½ E. Lincoln, was arrested at 7:48 a.m. Friday in the 400 block of West Washington.

He was charged with battery on a complaint from a 35-year-old woman who alleged Pruitt kicked her in the stomach.

Pruitt was released on a notice to appear.

A **silver Mongoose** bicycle reported stolen March 12 was found Friday in the 200 block of East Penn.

A **17-year-old** girl reported Sunday that the

Obituaries

SCOTT - Thomas G. Scott, 84, of Hoopeston, died at 5:55 p.m. Thursday, March 13, 2003 at Hoopeston Community Memorial Hospital. Funeral services will be at 11 a.m. Wednesday at First Presbyterian Church, Hoopeston. Burial with military rites will be in Floral Hill Cemetery. Visitation will be 5-7 p.m. Thursday at Brown-Alkire Funeral Home. Memorials are suggested to First Presbyterian Church, 915 E. Orange, or Hoopeston Public Library, 110 N. Fourth St., Hoopeston, IL 60942.

nated unless more funding is found.

After the administrative presentation, residents questioned the board on the available options and some that were not mentioned. Dave Ealy asked the board if it had considered privatization, a voucher system or a charter school.

"I don't think the board has the legal authority to do that," Sartwell answered.

Another resident questioned how talks with other districts were progressing.

Rossville-Alvin moved quickly to begin talks, which may have taken other districts off guard, Price said, adding as districts review possible state funding cuts, they are becoming more cooperative.

Cooperation will play a role in where R-A, with its \$30 million equalized assessed valuation and student base, go, Price said. That may well start with the district's current mission to find a district with which it can co-op all of its sports program. "The direction of the sports co-op may very well be the direction we go in," he said.

William Ealy, a Rossville-Alvin student, talked about his experiences at a large school and asked the board to think carefully before acting. "I implore you

Briefly

Multi Agency van schedule

This week's schedule for the Hoopeston Multi Agency transportation project is: Monday, Hoopeston shuttle; Tuesday, Staerke Planetarium; Wednesday, Danville; Thursday, Hoopeston shuttle; Friday, Danville. For more information or to arrange a ride, call the Multi Agency at (217) 283-5544.

Community center activities include: Monday, ladies bridge, noon; Tuesday, ladies euchre, noon; Thursday, men's coffee 9:30 a.m., men's euchre, noon; Friday, ladies cards, noon.

Weather



Partly sunny today. High 68. Tonight, partly cloudy. Low 50. Tomorrow, chance of thunderstorms. High 65, low 48.

For current weather conditions, call the **Hoopeston Weather Line** at (217) 283-6221.

not to conglomerate," he said.

"I think everybody on this board agrees with you," said board member Ray Rice. "But it all comes down to a matter of money."

Rice also added that even if voters approve a tax referendum or bonds are sold, the district will stay open but not improve. "It would keep things as they are," he said. "It won't be for improvements like adding classes."

The board is expected to discuss the situa-

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