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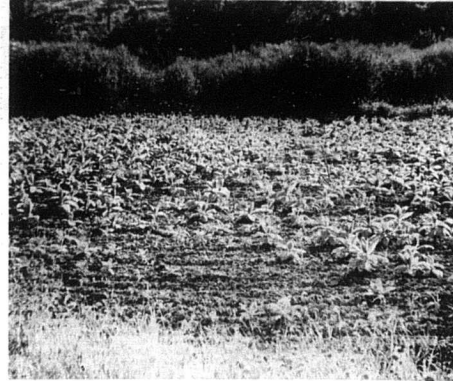
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Local board moves to submit Nicholas as disaster area



With tobacco harvest just around the corner, stands hardly knee-high.—Mercury photo.

\$66,927 budget cut to local school board absorbed this year

Despite a \$66,927 reduction in budget as result of the state's recent cutbacks in education, the effects of those cuts should not cause too many problems this year for the local school system, according to Superintendent Donald G. Elder.

"We've been lucky," Elder said in an interview last Thursday. "We haven't had to cut any programs."

However, Elder warned that further cutbacks in state education expenditures could spell doom for some of the county's programs. And, Elder said, "It is my understanding that 1982 will cut for more cuts in education."

Elder repeated an earlier statement by state Superintendent for Public Instruction Raymond Barber, when he said, "It will take all the expertise that administrators can muster just to keep the books in the black."

The relatively fortunate situation of the local school system is a result of a cutback in overstaffing, according to Elder. The local Superintendent said that "through natural attrition, we've been able to cut overstaffing." Elder said this has been accomplished by not filling positions when teachers retire or resign, except when that position is absolutely necessary.

Elder said further, that even more reductions in positions may be required if the cuts he expects in education are put into effect.

In particular, Elder pointed out "extended time" personnel as being likely targets for fiscal scalpel. Those are teachers with additional duties—such as coaches, Home Economics teachers, Agriculture teachers, etc.—who are salaried longer than the regular 9½ month school year.

In fact, the cuts in this area may be

Appeals heard as tax rolls close

Nicholas County's tax rolls were closed from their period of public inspection Saturday, and the local Board of Assessment Appeals was scheduled to hear petitions from county taxpayers Saturday with their 1981 assessment through Wednesday.

Nicholas County Clerk Rose Scott said Monday that some 40 persons have filed appeals for the Board to consider.

After the Board of Assessment Appeals has discharged its duties, the local PVA's office has five days in which to make all corrections and submit the final assessment to Frank-

*See Tax rolls, page 18

Projecting a loss of 50 percent of this year's tobacco crop, the local Emergency Disaster Board met at the ASCS office Monday to finalize plans to have Nicholas County declared a disaster area.

If their proposal makes its way successfully through state channels, local farmers will be eligible to receive economic assistance through government—most notably the form of low interest Farmer's Home Administration emergency loans which carry five percent interest rates.

Calculated on this year's support price alone, Nicholas County's 1981 burley crop could easily fall short as much as \$3 million.

In addition, the Emergency Disaster Board determined Monday that revenue received from corn could fall as much as \$145,720, and the hay crop could drop \$214,441 this year.

ASCS County Executive Director and member of the Emergency Disaster Board Anna Conner said Monday that when those are added together, they amount to around one-quarter of the county's total agricultural gross.

The meeting Monday morning was for the purpose of getting the paperwork together and the damage assessment completed for submission to

Frankfort. County Extension Agent Mike Phillips said Judge/Executive Reese Smoot had been told by Senator Ed Ford that if the local Board would get the paperwork in order, he would see that the matter got the prompt attention from officials in Frankfort.

Soil Conservationist Wilmer Halcomb said that the emergency loans would be necessary for many farmers to be able to carry on their farming operations next year. And he added that he hoped it wasn't already too late for some farmers.

Extension agent Mike Phillips said last week that the most disheartening aspect of this year's situation is that it falls on the back of three previous bad crop years, and that it is through no fault of the farmers. Phillips blamed the rains during setting time that threw the crop behind schedule, the relative drought after it was set, and then the flooding that occurred in many areas in the county.

Phillips said that the Morning Glory and Bartterville sections of the county are particularly hard hit. Halcomb said that Hinkton and Beaver Creeks have both flooded this year, along with the Licking River.

Halcomb added that with the cool nights coming on, the county's small

tobacco will have little chance of growing much larger.

FHA representative Dean Tandy said that if the county were declared a disaster area, the emergency funds would become available in relatively unlimited amounts. He did say that farmers would have to be able to prove their losses to qualify for such emergency loans.

Tandy also cautioned that "the government will help out all it can, but the farmers are going to have to help themselves." He warned that a great deal of the security in the county was already used up, and that FHA "can only go so far."

Tandy said that many farmers use the emergency loans to pay off notes that are delinquent at commercial banks. Calling the process "robbing Peter to pay Paul," he said that it doesn't take long to use up most of one's assets that way.

Mike Phillips also wondered how much longer some creditors could carry farmers who have had bad crop years back to back for four years, and he hoped that the emergency loans will be able to help, and not just get local farmers in deeper and deeper trouble.

County schools set to open next week

Summer vacation will come to an end this weekend for approximately 1300 Nicholas County youngsters, as the county's 180 elementary school years will begin September, Monday, Aug. 24.

Superintendent Donald G. Elder said last week that no major changes faced the estimated 835 elementary students and the 100 accredited high school students.

Elder did say that the school system now has a full-time speech therapist and five other special education teachers. Students and parents should also note the 10-cent across-the-board increase in meal prices as detailed in last week's Mercury.

Monday's opening day will be only half a school day, with the children reporting at the regular 8:20 and leaving at 11:00. There will be no meals served on Monday.

Tuesday will begin the regular school-day schedule, with the children reporting at 8:20 and being dismissed at 1:25. Both breakfast and lunch will be served on Tuesday.

All county teachers will report to the elementary school at 8:00 on Friday, Aug. 21 for a professional day. After a

brief meeting with Superintendent Elder, the teachers will meet with their individual principals to discuss the new school year.

Home room assignments for grade one through 12 may be found inside this week's edition of The Mercury.

Bluejacket football opens Friday night

Coach Ben Pumphrey's Bluejacket football squad will begin their regular season with tomorrow night's big opener against Fleming County.

The contest will be an away game, beginning at 8:00 at the Fleming County High School football field.

Clay wildlife management area

Whether hunting, camping, or boating, it offers something for everyone

(Editor's note: Most of you know that the Clay Farm near Cassidy Creek was purchased by the state a few years ago, but besides the annual fox hunts, what exactly takes place on the Clay Farm Wildlife Management Area?)

The following article, written by local resident Wilbert Winkler, describes the function of the area, as well as the variety of activities available to local persons at the facility.)

The Clay Farm Wildlife Management Area is a public hunting area under the management of the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources. It is located in Nicholas County, about three miles off KY 21 on Cassidy Creek Road near the Nicholas-Fleming County line. The Clay Farm Wildlife Management Area consists of approximately 4,800 acres, of which 2,700 acres are in forest and 1,100 acres are cleared.

The area is bordered on the north by the Licking River and on the south by Cassidy Creek Road. About 13 miles of interior roads makes travel into the

area more convenient. There are also six or seven miles of fire lanes which may be used for hiking and horseback riding.

The land was purchased by the state of Kentucky through the Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources in April, 1977. The area is managed by Charlie Wilkins, a biologist, and his assistant, Buford Clark, both of whom live on the area.

The wildlife area is financed by both state and federal moneys, most of which comes from the Pittman-Robertson Game Fund (money raised from a hidden federal tax placed on hunting licenses, guns, bullets and other hunting paraphernalia). The federal government provides approximately 75 percent, and the state 25 percent of the money used to operate the area. Money is generated by the area from the farming of its cleared lands by tenant farmers.

These profits produced from tobacco and other crops must be turned over to



*See Clay Farm, page 13