

RATC News

In early spring, six students traveled to Coburn ATC to take the Ford AAA Student Auto Skills written test. Four of the students were Rodney Payne, Matt Miller, Donald Thompson and Jackie Weaver, who were seniors. Two juniors, Dustin Lear and John Kerns also participated. All of these students attend Rockcastle County Area Technology Centers Advanced Automotive Program.

Only two students from the top 10 highest scoring schools would win the right to compete in the hands-on competition at Kentucky Speedway at Sparta. Rodney Payne and Dustin Lear had the two highest written test scores and would be the team to compete against ten other A.T.C.'s from the state.

The vehicle the teams would be working on was a 2003 Mercury Mountaineer, which had identical repair problems.

Ken Fannin, automotive instructor at RATC, approached Fred Sizemore, service manager of Commonwealth Ford Lincoln Mercury in Richmond, to sponsor the team from Rockcastle. Ken Ruhl, owner of Commonwealth Ford and Mr. Sizemore were more than willing to help sponsor RATA. Rodney and Dustin spent three days at Commonwealth Ford, training for the Ford AAA Student Auto Skills Contest, under the guidance of Mark Baker, Master ASE and Ford Certified Automotive Technician. The competition began in mid-April and the teams were given a repair order that had ten electrical and mechanical problems to correct within an hour and a half. The vehicle had to have the hood closed before time ran out or they would be disqualified and the repaired vehicles had to be driven to final judging.

All of the teams worked at a furious pace and the competition was tough. When the competitions were over, the teams were judged on the number of items repaired, quality of workmanship and time.

Rodney Payne and Dustin Lear drove their Mercury to final judging and placed seventh in the state Ford AAA Student Auto Skills Contest.

Mr. Fannin said, "These fine

young men were really disappointed that they didn't win but I told them I was very proud of them for showing the effort and guts it took to win seventh place in the state."

Mark Baker said, "I knew they were going to throw the whole refrigerator at them but they did the best they could and learned a lot of what the real world of work is like. I am very proud of you."

Mr. Fannin and the Rockcastle ATC would like to personally thank all of the fine people at Commonwealth Ford who took time from their very busy schedules to help support further student training and technical education.

"Budget"

Cont. from Front

been received. Capital Outlay money from the state (\$100 per child per average daily attendance) is estimated at \$268,590.

The board expects to receive \$1,223,342 from the state under the Facilities Support Program of Kentucky (FSPK). This amount includes a \$493,434, beginning balance. FSPK is restricted for new construction and is the fund which will be used for construction of the new visitor bleachers at the football field. The board is awaiting approval from the state for this project.

Revenue from the food service is expected to be \$1,035,500, Bray said, with expenditures estimated at \$1,090,500, primarily for salaries of \$507,726 and \$465,000 food costs, etc.

"The food service fund is a self-supporting proprietary fund," Bray told the board when presenting the working budget, "but it's becoming a thin line." Increased food costs and salary increases for workers were two reasons cited by Bray for the food service fund being in jeopardy of being in the red. "We get reimbursed \$2.16 each for free lunches and reduced price lunches bring in \$1.98 total," Bray said, "but we only get reimbursed \$1.53 for regular lunches

(\$1.25 from the student and 28¢ reimbursement) and the national food people have always recommended that schools charge paying students the same as the reimbursement rate for a free lunch (\$2.16)."

Bray said that increasing the price students pay for lunch is one possibility. Presently 61% of student sin the county receive a free lunch as opposed to Jackson County Schools where the percentage reached a high enough level that the entire district was put on a free lunch program.

The state's budget woes trickled down to the local level, of course, and Bray told the board that one area he saved money in this year was by allocating for the purchase of only one new bus instead of the four or five normally purchased for a savings of \$200,000. "We have been very aggressive in maintaining a high standards for our bus fleet so there is no concern about only purchasing one bus in 2003-04," Bray told the board.

Also, Bray said, if a problem arises that requires the purchase of an additional bus, it can be purchased from the contingency fund. And, Bray said, a savings for the general fund occurred when the state legislature allowed, for one year only, the payment of about \$70,000 in property insurance from the Capital Outlay fund which is normally a restricted fund.

Bray also pointed out to the board

that the number of children being qualified for the special education program has caused the need for 3 1/2 additional teaching positions for next year and the majority of this money will have to come from the general fund. "Right now our student/teacher ratio is 20-1," Bray said, "but as special education needs increase, this ratio may have to be increased to 21 or 22 to 1." Bray also pointed out that salary needs have increased because employee benefits have increased so much and there are more teachers with a Rank 1 degree (Masters or equivalent plus 30 semester hours). There are more Rank 1 teachers than we have had since I went into the finance office in January, 1989," Bray said.

Salary Schedule

Bray also presented the board with the 2003-03 salary schedule which showed salaries for certified staff ranking from \$29,296 for a Rank 3 teacher (0 years experience, bachelors degree, teaching certificate) to \$47,334 for a teacher with 26 plus years experience, masters or equivalent, plus 30 semester hours and teaching certificate (Rank 1). Bray told the board that the largest percentage of teachers fall into the Rank 2 category (masters degree and teaching certificate) which ranges from \$32,994 for a new teacher to \$43,553 for 26+ years.

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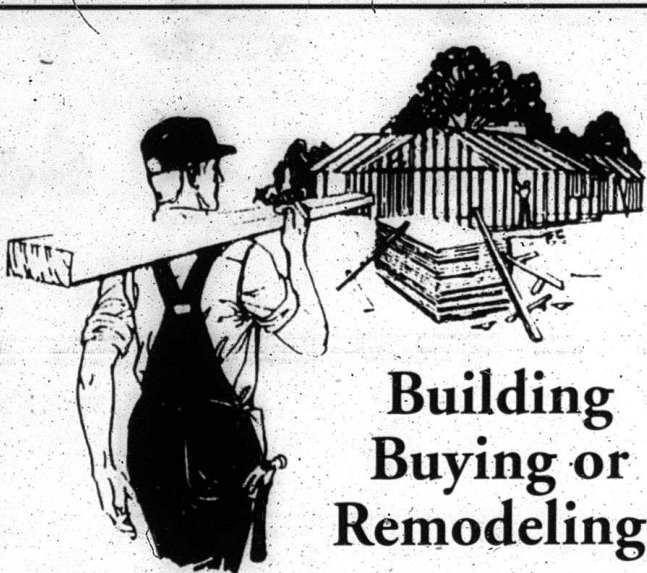


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- Light supper provided for the children and hospitality room available for adult workers.
- May 31st the church will be open to set up work areas.
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Above from left: Fred Sizemore, Rodney Payne, Ken Fannin, Dustin Lear and Mark Baker.

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