

GROSSE POINTE CIVIC NEWS

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF CITIZENS ASSOCIATION
OF GROSSE POINTE TOWNSHIP

Vol. 8

JUNE, 1931

No. 10

SCHOOL ELECTION JUNE 8th

Monday, June 8th, is the date set for the annual election of the Grosse Pointe school district at which one trustee will be elected. There are no bond issues up for approval. The polls will be opened in the five precincts at 12:00 noon to 8:00 P. M. Immediately after the closing of the polls and counting of the ballots, the annual meeting of electors will be held in the high school auditorium.

Precinct 1: Consisting of Grosse Pointe Village, will vote in the Cadieux School at 389 St. Clair.

Precinct 2: Grosse Pointe Park. Voting at Municipal Hall.

Precinct 3: Grosse Pointe Farms. Voting at Kerby School.

Precinct 4: Grosse Pointe Shores. Voting at Municipal Hall.

Precinct 5: Village of Lochmoor. Voting at Mason School.

Precinct 6: Grosse Pointe Park. Voting at Defer School.

The candidates are Fred Sutter, incumbent and president of the board, running to succeed himself, and Walter Conely, in past years a member of the Highland Park School Board.

The two candidates for school trustee are both personally ably qualified but appear to have a distinctly different political background.

Mr. Sutter announces that he is running independently, with no group putting him under obligation to carry out their will and as such holds himself in a position to represent equally all of Grosse Pointe Township. To quote from his campaign letter:

"I shall do everything within my power to run our school system in a proper manner without the aid or advice of any group which has an axe to grind or a grudge to gratify."

Mr. Conely has been endorsed in a public letter bearing the name of five residents opposed to the Junior High site at Audubon last September, signing the letter as a commit-

tee for the Grosse Pointe Taxpayers' Association. This letter of endorsement advocated the eventual construction of both a Junior High and an elementary school on a seven-acre site now held at Kercheval and Cadieux Road.

The plan of the Taxpayers' Association as stated would result in three schools in Grosse Pointe Village, an area of about one square mile, and only the two present elementary schools for Grosse Pointe Park, an area over twice as large, with twice the population. Notice that this overschooling of one precinct and underschooling of another calls for the construction of two new schools the probable cost of which would run \$600,000.

Now let us compare this \$600,000 plan with the present plan of the school board. The board plans at the proper time the sale of the business frontage, which four hundred feet it is claimed will bring from \$200,000 to \$250,000. This would be applied on the elementary school and the taxpayers' end of such a transaction would run from \$50,000 to \$100,000. In the elementary school left vacant by the construction of this new building, the board would place the first intermediate school. This would mean an outlay of \$30,000 to \$40,000 for shops and remodeling. Now notice that the plan of the school board would obtain both an elementary and intermediate school for the expenditure of \$85,000 to \$140,000 subject to the sale price of Kercheval frontage. Over and against this the Grosse Pointe Taxpayers' Association plan would cost \$600,000 for the two new schools, a difference of between \$450,000 to \$500,000. Rather an extravagant plan for a taxpayer association to be promoting.

In the school board plan you would be constructing one school and selling some land. In the Tax-

payers' Associations plan you would be constructing two schools. Of course in the latter plan it would be possible to offer for sale the old Cadieux School site but because of its location it is doubtful if this would bring over \$50,000.

Summing it all up the Association's plan would cost the people of Grosse Pointe anywhere from \$400,000 to \$500,000 over the plan of the school board and at the same time get one of the schools in a poor location. Even if the school board did not sell the Kercheval business frontage their plan would still show a large saving over the other.

We trust that Mr. Conely has not allowed himself to be tied up too definitely with such an extravagant plan.

CITIZENS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING

On June 15th, at 8:30 P. M., the Citizens Association will hold its ninth annual meeting in the Grosse Pointe High School.

Reports of the officers will be rendered and two members of the Board of Directors will be elected.

The Citizens Association was organized May 3, 1923, and published the first issue of *Civic News* July, 1923. The paper has grown in circulation and the Association has had a large growth in membership. About four hundred thousand copies of *Civic News* have been distributed to the residents of Grosse Pointe, copies being mailed free to each known resident. The cost of the work has been met by contributions from the members. No advertising has ever been printed.

NINETY-SIX GRADUATES

Exercises marking the graduation of ninety-six seniors will be held June 18th, at 8:30 P. M., in the High School auditorium.

Grosse Pointe Civic News

Grosse Pointe, Mich.

P. O. Address, 486 Larned Street, W., Detroit

Printed once a month as the official publication of the Citizens Association of Grosse Pointe Township, under the authority of the following board of directors:

Lincoln Maire, President.

Charles H. L'Hommedieu, Vice-President.

James E. Morrison, Secretary.

George Porter McMahon, Treasurer.

Henry S. Slyfield. Charles S. Cole.

Benjamin G. Vernor. Frank H. Dewey.

Circulation of Civic News is 4,500

A LETTER

The Board of Education has been made aware of untrue criticism aimed at them on the basis of scholastic standing of our college students, particularly those in Ann Arbor. A letter inquiring as to the origin of these stories brought the following letter from the registrar of the University of Michigan:

Thank you very much for sending me your letter of May 15, raising specific questions. I am very glad to give you the following statement of facts. Early in March, Mr. and Mrs.

_____ called at this office with a letter of introduction from a member of the Board of Regents of the University of Michigan, requesting some information concerning the college records of high school graduates in the State of Michigan. Our first suggestion to Mr. and Mrs. _____ was for them to secure the information from Mr. Geo. E. Carrothers, Director of the Division of High School Inspection. An appointment was made with Dr. Carrothers, and Mr. and Mrs. _____ called on him for such a conference on the day they first called here for the information. After the conference with Mr. Carrothers, they then came back to this office with the further request for some information concerning the records of high school graduates in the state. We did not give them the names of any high school graduates, but did give out some information concerning the number of hours a A, B, C, D and E of graduates in the University from several high schools in Michigan—for the first semester only, not for their entire period in the University. Such information, however, was not at all complete and comprehensive for the entire state, and did not carry any name of any individual student. This privilege was granted with the definite and distinct understanding that it was

to be used merely as general information and no conclusions to be drawn relative to the ranking of any high school in the state. In fact, we do not compile data showing the rankings of high schools in the state, and would not give out such information if we did compile such data. We have never given out such information from this office and never will give out such information to be used on a comparative basis, using the records of the graduates of one high school against the graduates of another high school.

In reply to your specific questions, I am very glad to give you the following definite reports:

1. It is not true that, according to the records of the University of Michigan Registrar's Office, Grosse Pointe is ranked next to the lowest in the state as to the records of its graduates in the University of Michigan.

2. It is not true that none of the graduates of Grosse Pointe have been able to complete their first year at the University of Michigan.

3. It is not true that the University of Michigan will not accept graduates of Grosse Pointe High School for enrollment in the University.

I am happy to say that the Grosse Pointe High School is recognized by the University as a fully accredited school, and a certificate of graduation from the high school, covering our subject and qualitative requirements, as announced in the leaflet enclosed herewith, will entitle the holder to admission to the University on certificate and without examination.

I am sending you herewith complete transcripts of the records of all of your high school graduates who have been admitted to the University in recent years in accordance with the list contained in your letter. These transcripts will give you the information desired and, I believe, will give a true picture of the records of your high school graduates who have been admitted to the University.

If these transcripts do not give you the information desired, or if you should desire further information concerning the matter, please do not hesitate to write me again.

Yours very truly,

IRA M. SMITH,

Registrar.

Note: The result of the transcripts mentioned above are shown in the grades given in the chart on page 3. The name of the Grosse Pointe citizens mentioned in the above letter has been withheld as a matter of courtesy.

WHEN SHOULD WE BUILD?

During the last year the school board has received a petition of 475 electors asking for an elementary school at Kercheval and Cadieux Road, and another of one hundred electors asking for the construction of an intermediate school adjacent to the Defer School. The petitions represent 35% of the active school electors in Grosse Pointe (on a basis of recent school elections).

In spite of this pressure, the Board of Education, in consideration of the financial depression, have not called upon the people with a bond issue. All of which brings up the question of how long can we go without a new building.

There are seven elementary schools in our district, with a class room seating capacity of 2,850, figured on a basis of 30 students to a class room (this is the maximum size of average class room recommended by Highland Park as well as many others) 60 pupils to a gymnasium and 60 pupils to a kindergarten. There are 1,991 pupils enrolled in all seven schools at the present time. This gives a surplus seating of 859. Our annual increase in membership from an average for the last three years has been 421 pupils. This would mean that this coming year's enrollment would reduce our surplus seating to 438, and the new enrollment one year from next September would find all seating space taken.

Figuring on nine months to a year for the construction of a school, and assuming that our rate of increase continues, the board can postpone building an intermediate or elementary school, as the case may be, until September, 1932.

Aside from the seven elementary schools, we have our high school building, which is practically filled with its present senior and junior high enrollment of 1,358, and for the purpose of a discussion on surplus seats can be left out of the data.

WAGE REDUCTION

A ten per cent blanket reduction of all salaries and wages in Grosse Pointe Village municipal employees marks an effort to reduce and possibly eliminate a recent deficit incurred in welfare work. It is not likely that this payroll saving will effect a tax reduction this year.

SCHOLASTIC ANALYSIS

In the March issue of the *Civic News* it was pointed out that our school cost compared to our local government cost was below the average. Figures and charts demonstrated how our schools cost us 33% of our local tax, while the average district in Michigan spends 50% of its local tax money on education. Large cities like Detroit, where the city maintains expensive hospitals and libraries and does extensive welfare work, the cost of government is sometimes as large as schools.

In the April issue the study of our school cost was continued with a comparison with nine other neighboring districts. In this comparison Grosse Pointe ranked fourth in per student cost, fifth in cost per area, sixth in cost per capita, and last in cost per assessed valuation; an alignment that would indicate that Grosse Pointe has neither a high nor a low school cost.

Having studied the cost of our school system, let us turn to an analysis of scholastic standings. The test of this would lie in the work of our school graduates.

Of the four hundred and twenty-four pupils who have graduated from our high school since its first class in 1924, we find one hundred and ninety-one went on to college. Since some of the earliest graduates have had time to complete their courses, we find our field of study is limited to seventy-six students now in college, fifty-eight in Michigan colleges and eighteen in out-of-state colleges. Of this number, data has been collected on fifty-one students, and compilation of this information on both freshmen and upper classmen shows the following:

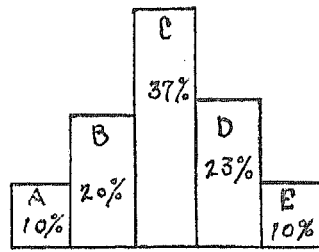
In Michigan institutions 10% of the grades were A, 30% B, 32% C, 20% D, and 8% failure or E.

In non-Michigan institutions 17% of the grades were A, 32% B, 35% C, 11% D, and 5% E.

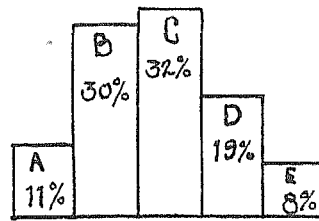
Giving an average of 11% A, 30% B, 32% C, 19% D, and 8% E.

To an educator these figures would be significant in themselves, but to the average observer they must be placed in a comparison with other figures before their value is apparent.

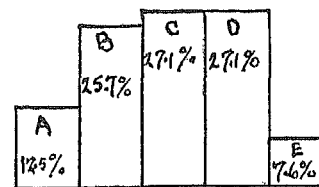
Let us compare in a graphic form the scholastic standing of our average present high school grades to those of our high school graduates in college, and then with the average grades our students are making in a specific institution such as the University of Michigan.



Average grade of present Grosse Pointe High School pupils.



Average grade of Grosse Pointe High School graduates now in college including University of Michigan.



Average grade of Grosse Pointe High School graduates now in University of Michigan.

Notice the similarity of grades in one institution to another. Notice that the average Grosse Pointe High School graduate is receiving better marks in the University of Michigan than the average of our present high school grades. Aside from this slight variation in favor of the Grosse Pointe High School graduates, the above charts show an example of the law of averages. In a word, the law of averages means that the human reaction to a given set of experiences shows a right wing and a left wing of opposite extremes, with the center a composite, and that these groups appear in a definite ratio, and that the two wings of extreme are equal and opposite and the center is equal to the two wings. The law of averages points to the biological balance of social endeavor. Notice how the charts conform to this rule, indicating that the grades of our students are normal.

Civic News is glad of the opportunity to make public these figures on the scholastic standings of our college students. Not only for the morale support rendered them, which is very timely, as can be seen by the methods of criticism being employed and outlined in the accompanying letter from the University of Michigan, but also for the reassurance given to the parents of the students and to the taxpayers interested in the general goodwill and welfare of the community.

COUNTY MEETING

On June first, a representative group of Grosse Pointe Village and Township office holders called together by invitation of Mr. Fred Sutter met to discuss the possibility of making Grosse Pointe a county. The meeting was held in the municipal hall of Grosse Pointe Park, and was well attended by taxpayers and Detroit newspaper men.

Mr. Sutter explained that the meeting was called to organize a properly authorized fact-finding committee to look into the advisability of Grosse Pointe becoming a county. He said he thought the plan would prove advantageous and might eventually lead to the union of the five villages into a city of Grosse Pointe, making the ideal combination of a co-terminus city-county form of Government.

The assembly appointed Fred Sutter chairman of a committee to investigate the plan. Walter Sweikart was appointed secretary. A legal committee was approved, consisting of the five village attorneys, assisted by the township attorney. A finance committee was arranged for consisting of the five village presidents and five other citizens to be appointed by the chairman.

SHORES ELECTION

On May 19th the annual village election for Grosse Pointe Shores resulted in a matter of form balloting on the following unopposed candidates:

- President—Clarence N. White
- Clerk—Wm. C. Roney
- Two-year trustees—Ford Ballantyne, Chas. F. Becker and Oscar Webber.
- For Trustees to fill vacancy—Fred Behr and Herbert J. Woodall.

RE-REGISTRATION

Re-registration is required in township elections every four years. The registration qualifies the voter for state, county or national balloting.

The next re-registration starts June 1st, 1932 and must be completed within twenty days of the next state wide primary. Re-registration to be made with the township clerk.

Any village of over five thousand population is required by the same state act to call for a re-registration in the summer of 1932. Grosse Pointe Village and Grosse Pointe Park are both affected.

Re-registration is not required of school elections. A voter with proper qualifications (taxpayer, and in case of balloting on candidate, parent of children of school age) may register with the Supt. of Schools or the secretary of the Board of Education any time up until and including the day before election.

In the March issue of the *Civic News* it was stated that registration with the village qualified one to vote in township elections. By way of

correction it should be noticed that village and township registrations are separate.

PER STUDENT COST

The electors of Grosse Pointe have heard a great deal this past year about the per student cost of schools, both as to cost of maintenance and as to the cost of our buildings.

The per student cost of any school system is a very fickle number at best. The City of Detroit has one way of figuring out per student cost and Grosse Pointe another, the next community still another. The method used by *Civic News* in our last issue on comparison of costs in ten local districts was that used by the Department of Commerce. Some school districts will use maximum capacity for cost of buildings, while others will use working capacity. What one school calls working capacity would differ from the idea of working capacity of another. The term standard capacity is misleading—it is an arbitrary figure and represents what someone in some school district thinks a school should hold. In figuring out the cost of instruction, some districts include debt service, others do not include debt

service and even subtract fixed charges. This was one of the reasons why *Civic News* asked the Detroit Bureau of Governmental Research to check up the chart shown in our last issue and make certain that each district was talking about the same thing for the same period of time.

The per student cost of operating the Grosse Pointe schools can be placed at anywhere from \$143 to \$270, according to the method employed.

The gist of the whole thing, and the important part to bear in mind, is that the per student cost, whether of building or instructional, is dependent upon the number of students in the class room. A school system that packs sixty pupils in a 22 x 30 class room (and this is an accepted thing in some of the metropolitan area) will show a per student cost practically one-half of that school system having thirty pupils to the room the same size. The cost of a teacher, regardless of the community in question, is practically a fixed amount, and the variable factor is the size of the attendance.

The question of per student cost becomes essentially one of the number of pupils per room, or a matter of per teacher load.

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