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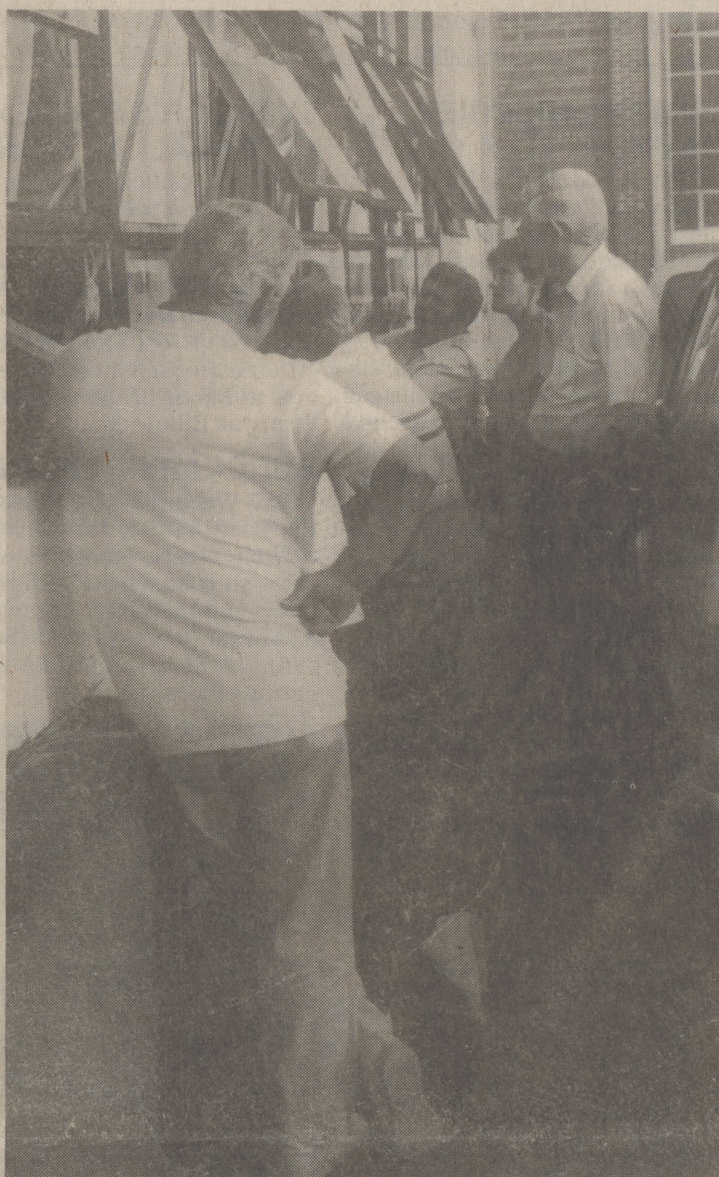
Dallas tax hike meeting brings out both sides



INCREASE MILLS BY 22 - Anne Russin, a parent of Dallas school students, said she had a list of 22 senior citizens who said they would support a 22-mill increase, stating one of them was her mother. She did not name the citizens. (Post Photo/Rich Johnson)



REDUCE MILLAGE - Charlotte Arbogast of Overbrook Road, Dallas, presented a petition she said was signed by more than 281 property owners opposing the millage increase. (Post Photo/Rich Johnson)



NO ROOM INSIDE - The board room at the Dallas School District meeting filled rapidly Monday night, so many of the people had to stand outside and look through windows. (Post Photo/Rich Johnson)

Use coupon below to give your opinion

By CHARLOT M. DENMON
Staff Writer

The board room in the Dallas Administration Building was filled to overflowing June 10, and dozens of people stood outside looking through the windows and doors as residents with varying opinions about the district's tax rates turned what would have been a routine Committee of the Whole meeting into a budget hearing. Unlike the June 3 meeting, this time the opponents of a millage increase appeared to outnumber teachers and their friends and families.

Following several short reports by Superintendent Gerald Wycallis, Board President John Litz asked for comments from the visitors.

Charlotte Arbogast of Overbrook Road stated that she had brought with her petitions opposing a 22 mills tax increase, as had been requested at the June 3 meeting.

"Some of these petitions were signed by taxpayers who want nothing higher than 10 mills and some signed by taxpayers who want no increase in millage," Arbogast said. "I have more than 200 names and I will have more. There are also others here with signed petitions."

"I have petitions here with 118 names who want no increase in

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LANDON VISITS KUWAIT HOTEL - Tom Landon of Kunkle, left, a member of the 402nd Military Police Reserve Unit, and Major Jim Higgs are pictured outside of the Kuwait International Hotel which they had an opportunity to visit while Landon was in the Persian Gulf. (Photo Courtesy of Thomas Landon)

Landon was one of few to visit Kuwait City

By CHARLOT M. DENMON
Staff Writer

"It's great to see green and greater to enjoy a glass of ice water," said Dallas School Board member Tom Landon on returning home from Saudi Arabia where he served with the 402nd Military Police Unit.

"All we saw from the time we landed January 31 were miles and miles of sand. We were caught in sand storms at least twice a week. Sand was everywhere. When we were there at first it was cold—down to about 40 degrees. We slept

on cots inside winterized sleeping bags," Landon said.

When the unit went over they first landed at Ruyadi and stayed in the large apartments that had been built for the Bedouins but the nomads wouldn't live in them because they couldn't take their pets inside.

Landon's unit was to house and guard enemy prisoners of war.

"After three days we traveled 55 miles to the camp which we had to set up," Landon explained. "We set up the camp with 43 miles of con-

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Teachers' union head disavows scare tactics

By CHARLOT M. DENMON
Staff Writer

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William Wagner, president of the Dallas Education Association (the teachers' union), says his organization has not endorsed the scare tactics that reportedly have been used by some teachers pushing for a 22 mill property tax increase.

"Prior to the beginning of the budget meetings, a general meeting of the teachers was held and I recommended that they attend the board meetings to let parents know they were interested in what the budget would be for their students' sake. I didn't recommend that they attend in large groups nor did I suggest that they call in friends or some of the parents," Wagner said.

"I think they should question what cuts would be made if any, but I don't think they had to stand up and be a 'Pied Piper,'" he continued.

Wagner denied that the teachers' concern with raising tax rates was linked to upcoming negotiations for a new union contract. He did acknowledge that the teachers haven't yet made their demands known.

"Like the 166 districts in local areas, all are waiting to hear what the governor is going to do. There is no sense in asking for anything until you know what the state decides," Wagner said.

A source close to the teachers told The Post that the teachers are intentionally playing it cool. "They are not saying much except asking for increased health benefits. They are not talking as they usually do," said the source, who asked to remain anonymous.

Wagner admitted he saw teachers at the June 3 and prior meetings who had recruited friends to come with them.

"I don't approve of that. As professionals we should be able to speak for ourselves. I also believe that the budget process

should have been started earlier in the year and the meetings announced to the public—the entire public—not just certain sectors."

Wagner said the Dallas District being classified by the state as an affluent district is the fault of the board's failure to raise taxes more in recent years.

"Over the past five years, the district's millage was increased by only 12.5 mills, which is slightly over two mills a year. When the governor and the legislators look at the low increase in millage as compared to districts who went with higher rates, Dallas is declared affluent," Wagner claimed.

"The fact that the district was using its fund reserve doesn't show up to the legislators. They merely compare it with other districts who had higher millage increases," he explained.

"An increase in the millage is only a band aid," Wagner said. "This will happen next year and every year until the state government does something about it. Taxpayers should be calling their legislators and even the governor. Fifteen mills, 18 mills, 22 mills—who knows what millage will be sufficient? At this point no one knows what the board will eventually come up with. The 15-mill budget is a tentative budget."

Wagner said he called a general meeting of the teachers' union at the end of last week when he heard the reports of scare tactics. "No one professed to know anything about them," he said.

Told that one teacher was said to have stood before his students and admitted what he was doing was wrong but told them anyway that they better tell their parents they would be short teachers next year, Wagner responded, "I would like to know who it was."

Residents asked their choice on school budget

In order to gather more information on residents' preferences, the Dallas School District asked The Post to publish the coupon below. The school district's final budget will be voted on at a meeting at 7:00 p.m. Saturday, June 29 in the administration building on Church Street in Dallas. Coupons should be mailed or delivered by June 21.

DALLAS SCHOOL DISTRICT BUDGET SURVEY

The Dallas School District is interested in the community's input concerning the 1991-92 budget. The tentative budget calls for a 15 mill tax increase to 156 mills, which would require some cutbacks in personnel and programs. There has been some support for an additional 7 mills tax which would allow the district to keep all existing educational and co-curricular programs.

The Dallas School District is requesting that taxpayers complete the survey so that school board members and the administration better know the feeling of the wider community.

1. Do you favor raising the tax millage in the Dallas School District by 22 mills (17%) to keep all existing educational and co-curricular programs?
 YES NO

2. Do you favor raising the tax millage in the Dallas School District by 15 mills (11%) as was proposed in the tentative budget?
 YES NO

3. Other suggestions _____

Name _____

Address _____

Signature _____

Return by June 21 to:
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