

The Susquehanna Bulletin will not be published Wednesday, July 9. It will come out Wednesday, July 2, skip a week, then resume regular weekly publication Wednesday, July 16.

Ralph M. Snyder
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Mount Joy, Pa.

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Ten Cents

Lower Rapho Township wants to join the Donegal School District



Drawing by Ramona Sell

one side of the area to be affiliated with the Hempfield District, the other side with the Donegal District.

Standing in his backyard, Musser pointed to the Farndale Elementary School of the Hempfield District, a short distance away across the Big Chicques Creek.

He feels the committee did not consider the wishes of a large number of residents.

He also feels that the problem of lower Rapho is not unique, but exists all over the state. There are many areas where children attend schools further away than nearby schools in other districts. He urges State Representative Kenneth Brandt to investigate the problem of distance to schools on a state-wide basis, and encourage long-range planning, instead of hasty, local, and impulsive action.

Musser concludes, "If this move goes through we might have a bigger monster on our hands than we have now..."

Problems in Proposed Move

Both David E. McKalips, superintendent of the Manheim Central District, and Ragnar F. Hallgren, Jr., superintendent of the Donegal District, see logic in the arguments of the committee which circulated the petition.

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M.J.H.S. class of '50 gets together

Story and more photos on page 14

Some junior and senior high school students in lower Rapho Township live within sight of Donegal High School; yet, they have to travel 13 miles to Manheim Central High School in Manheim, because all of Rapho Township is part of the Manheim Central School District.

Some of these students spend two hours every school day riding on school buses. Because there are no activities buses in the Manheim Central Districts, many of these students are unable to participate in band, dramatics, and sports. Theirs and their families' social life is centered in places other than Manheim. They feel left out in school. When they graduate there is a blank space under their pictures, where extracurricular activities are normally listed.

Petition Circulated

To remedy this situation for their children a committee headed by Mrs. Carol Miller, Newtown or ("Drytown"), has petitioned the courts to make lower Rapho Township an independent school district, which would then transfer students from Manheim Central to Donegal schools. (Previously, Mrs. Miller had headed a movement which was successful in getting bussing for kindergarten children.)

The committee secured 266 signatures on their petition, more than a majority of the 481 taxable residents of lower Rapho Township, the area bounded

by the Big and Little Chicques Creeks on the east, west, and south, and by the main line of the Penn Central Railroad on the north.

County Judge William G. Johnstone, Jr., has signed a rule to serve a preliminary order on State Secretary of Education, John C. Pittenger. If Pittenger approves of the move, there will be a public hearing soon on the proposed changes held by both the Donegal and Manheim Central School Boards.

Some Oppose Move

Although a majority of the taxable residents of the lower Rapho area have signed the petition asking for the move to Donegal, some residents are unhappy about the proposed move.



Robert T. Musser

Some opponents of the move who own property in the area are afraid that property taxes will have to be greatly increased to finance the move. They believe they will be asked not only to help pay for ongoing expenses in the Donegal District, but also to pay their share of past costs of Donegal school buildings.

These opponents say that a large number of the people signing the petition do not own property and consequently will not be bearing the increased tax burden.

They also state that a large number of the signers did not know what they were signing and that some of them have regretted signing.

Some critics of the proposed move said that the Manheim Central District would not mind giving up lower Rapho to the Donegal District, because a lot of people with children have moved into the area who do not pay property taxes; tax income from lower Rapho no longer exceeds the cost of educating children from the area, as it used to.

Musser Outspoken Critic

Most outspoken critic of changing school districts a year and a half ago was Robert T. Musser, who moved his family to lower Rapho because he wanted his son Jeff to attend schools in the Manheim Central District.

Musser maintains that although he does not want a change in schools, he would prefer a move of children to the Hempfield District, which is just as close as the Donegal District. He says that he spoke to members of the committee circulating the petition and asked them to call a meeting of lower Rapho residents before submitting the petition. A major topic he wanted to discuss at that meeting was the possibility of drawing a line through lower Rapho,



Photo by James Beck

Mr. and Mrs. W. I. Beahm at Beahm Jr. High