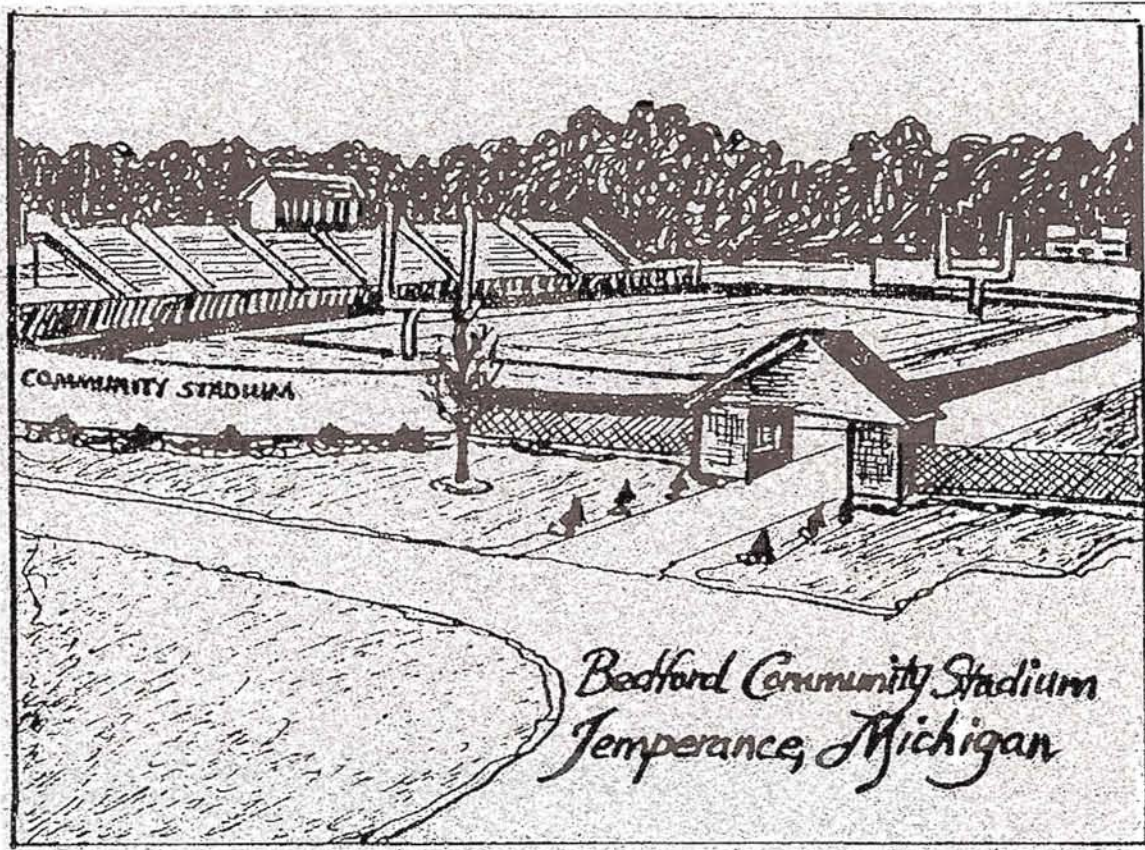
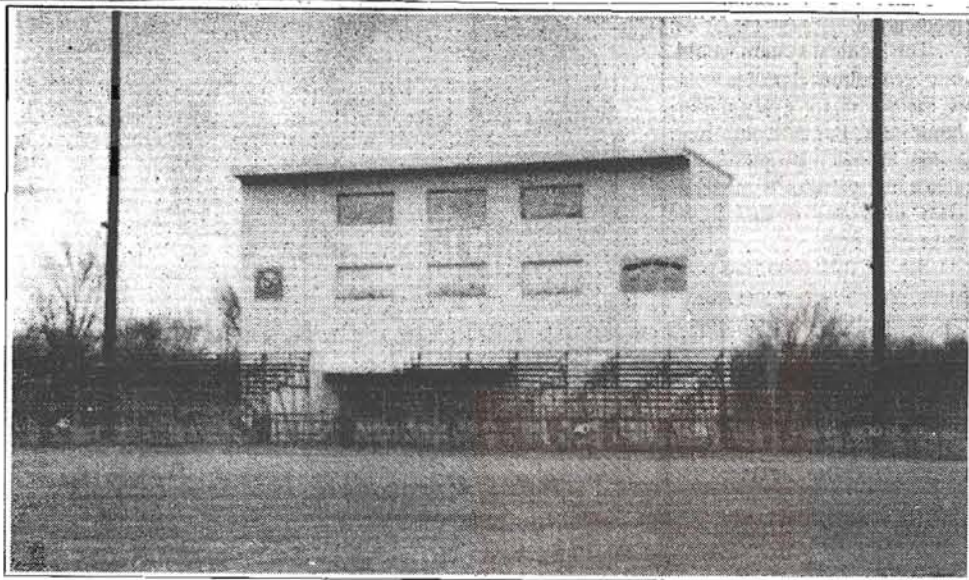


Bedford Community Stadium

Newspaper Articles





The recently formed Bedford Community Stadium Committee will raise the funds necessary to construct a new stadium to replace the worn-out, outdated stadium pictured above.

Old bleachers present new problems

Fund raising underway to build new Bedford community stadium

The Bedford High School Alumni Association has started a drive to privately fund a new community stadium. The Alumni Association recently formed the Bedford Community Stadium Committee whose goal is to raise the funds necessary to construct a new stadium as part of the sports complex that houses the track, behind the junior high and high school buildings at Dean and Jackman roads.

According to Gene Stock and Phil Swy, committee co-chairmen, the present location of the field presents several problems.

The old bleachers are in need of repair and do not meet Federal ADA specifications. In addition the seating capacity is well below the average attendance, creating additional safety and crowd-control concerns. The old outdated lighting system currently has several lights already out of service and maintenance costs continue to soar to keep the system patched together. There are no locker room or restroom facilities available and the lack of paved parking space, makes parking very difficult in bad weather.

All of these problems would be addressed with a new community stadium. Total cost for the project has not yet been finalized, but committee members are asking for volunteer workers and in-kind donations that will enable them to raise the funds necessary for a quality stadium.

The Bedford Community Stadium Committee welcomes your participation, questions and assistance. For more information contact Gene Stock, 847-6358. Phil Swy, 847-3964, or stop by the BHS Alumni Association booth at the Bedford Trade Fair, March 16-17.

February 12, 1996

GET INVOLVED!

Bedford High School Alumni Association looking for members

Did you ever catch yourself reminiscing about those high school days, friends, and classmates? The newly formed Bedford High School Alumni Association welcomes all Bedford High School graduates and friends to join.

Steve Lennex, president of the association stated "the purpose of the association is to continue the camaraderie of the graduates of Bedford High School and those interested in the future and well-being of the school; to provide support for causes deemed worthy by the members of the association; and to keep members informed of the status, accomplishments, and significant events of the association membership."

The association's primary focus at this time is establishing membership. Charter memberships are now available to graduates and friends of Bedford High School for \$10 per year. The association has decided it's first priority for financial assistance will be assisting in the move of the new Bedford Community

Stadium and a committee has been formed for this purpose. (See story on front page.)

Future consideration will be given to student relations through recognition/awards for academic, athletic, and/or vocational excellence, outstanding citizenship as well as mentoring and scholarships. Alumni relations will include programs and activities such as newsletters, reunion assistance, homecoming get together and more.

The officers of the association are Steve Lennex, president; Mike Regnier, vice president elect; Denise Swy, secretary; and Debbie Brescol, treasurer. Members at large are Bill Regnier and Gene Stock.

Those interested should contact: the Bedford High School Alumni Association, 1623 W. Sterns Rd., Temperance, MI 48182 or call Lisa Piasecki, 847-6736, ext. 420. Stop by their booth at the Bedford Trade Fair, March 16-17, for your membership registration and to find out more details about the association.

Fielding a dream

BLADE PHOTO BY CHRIS WALKER

Bedford panel eyes stadium

BY MIKE JONES
BLADE STAFF WRITER

A new football stadium with facilities for track and field events will cost about \$1.46 million, a group trying to get that project completed heard at a recent meeting.

Keith Riley, of SSOE Inc., architects, who brought a model of the concept for the stadium, told the group at Bedford High School that it was possible to complete construction for the next football season, but economic factors might make that unlikely.

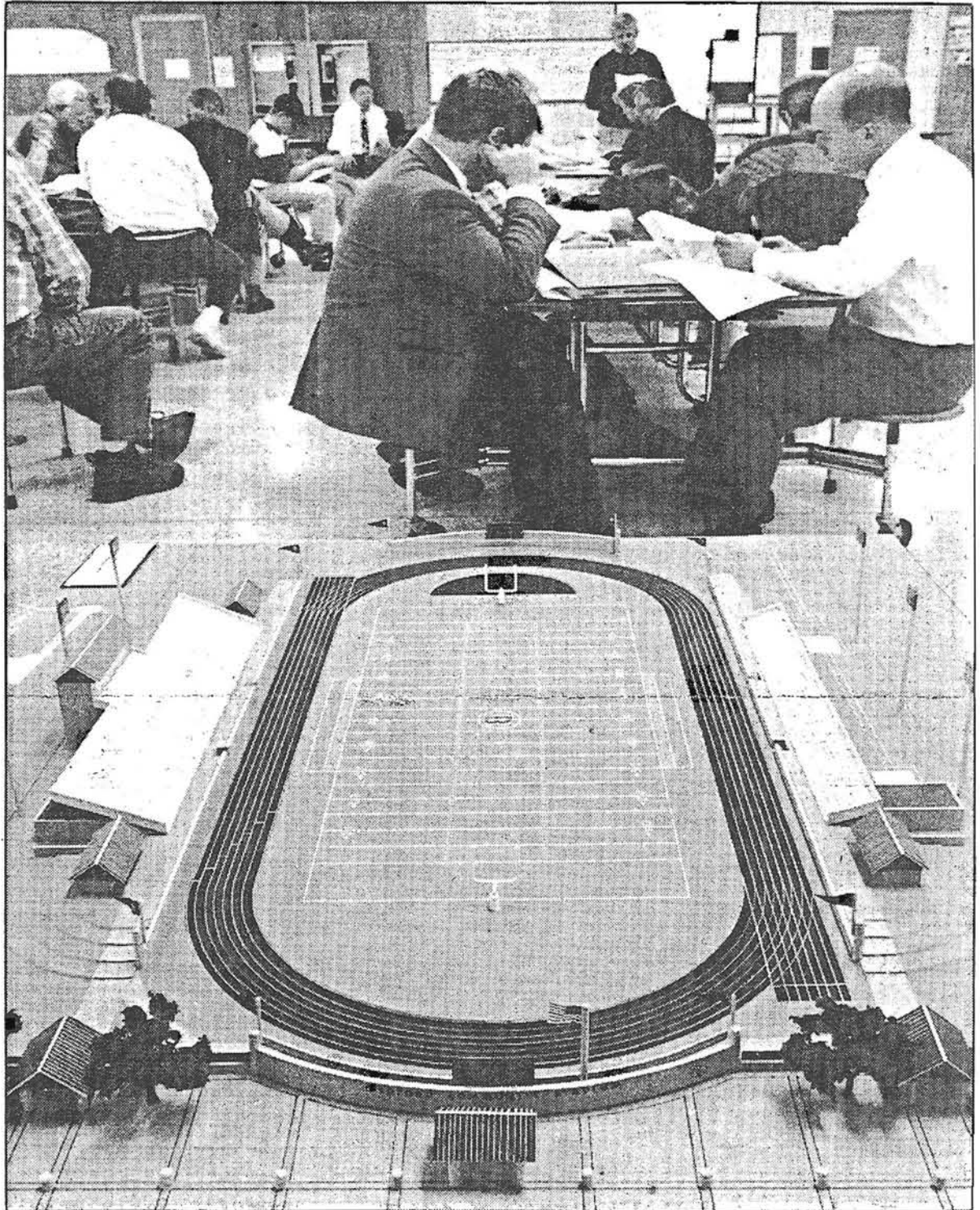
Phil Swy, a co-chairman of the Bedford Community Stadium Committee, stressed that the model and drawings "are just a concept and not yet a plan."

He said the committee proposes to build the stadium with private donations.

He urged those already involved in the committee to discuss it with their acquaintances and get ideas from them as well. He pointed out that due to the total cost, community members should be asked to prioritize stages if the project can't be completed as a single package.

Mr. Swy said members of the group intended to man a booth at last weekend's Bedford Trade Fair and to go to other gatherings to get community input on the project.

Gene Stock, the other co-chairman, urged members of the committee, an arm of the



The initial model proposes seating for 3,500 on the home team's side, 1,500 on the visitors'.

See BEDFORD, Page 2 ►

Bedford

► Continued from Page 1

newly formed Bedford Alumni Association, to take the model to groups of "even just a few friends at your homes. The worst thing that can happen to this model is for it to be in somebody's closet."

As currently envisioned, the stadium will have seating for 3,500 on the home team's side and 1,500 on the visitors' side. Construction of the visitor seating will allow for it to be expanded by 2,000 seats if the need exists. The seating will be aluminum and will be between the 15-yard lines.

The model also shows three concession stands, a single-story, two-level press box, scoreboards at each end, and a community plaza at the east end of the stadium.

The proposed structure will be east to west, parallel to Dean Road behind the senior and junior high schools, which face Jackman Road.

Mr. Riley said the design was determined after committee members voted on various potential aspects of the stadium.

Members of the committee said the current stadium is in disrepair with growing maintenance costs and inadequate seating. The board of education has endorsed the committee's efforts.

Mr. Stock said that some had questioned the project due to the community having twice in the last two years rejected the board's efforts at passing a bond issue. Those bonds would have allowed for constructing a new school building and renovating and expanding existing structures.

"We're very sensitive to that point," Mr. Stock said, "but we think this can be helpful and add to community pride."

He said the first meeting of the group was Jan. 11, "and we already have what we consider to be about \$80,000 in contributions." Most of it, he added, is in-kind services.

Coca-Cola has offered to donate a scoreboard; Consumers Power Co. has offered a complete lighting package for the stadium, and Ray Seitz will donate cabinets and counters, he said.

Mr. Stock added that Stevenson Nursery has offered landscaping, Kay Printing will donate brochures, and MTS will provide seating in the press box, ticket booth, and concession stands.

Although a good deal more money and services will be required, Mr. Stock said he considers the project off to a good start after having only begun in earnest about two months ago.

The group hopes to sell bricks for \$100 and \$200 each that will be inscribed and placed at the stadium's "pathway of pride," they also hope to have dinners, raffles, and dedicated seats.

They also hope to establish team, coaches, and stadium clubs for donations and Mr. Stock said that if it can be arranged they are considering a steak cookout at the undeveloped site, although illuminated with the stadium lighting from Consumers Power.

The committee may also sell advertising on the projected stadium's fences and walls.

Bedford alumni plan to build \$1.5 million stadium

Ramps, not stairs

In addition to the increased seating, brick community plaza and the "wall of fame," other features of the proposed stadium include these:

- A single-story press box.
- Separate home and visitor entrances.
- Three concession stands.
- Landscaping around the plaza.
- Traffic turn-arounds at the north and south ends of the plaza.
- Ticket sales building separated from the entrances.
- All aluminum seating and enclosed stands.
- Stands located on both sides of the field, from one 15 yard line to the other 15 yard line.
- Three restrooms located beneath the stands.
- Scoreboards at both ends of the field.
- A U.S. flag and flags from all of the members of the Great Lakes League.
- Graded access to all stands so that no stairs are required.
- Lighting located behind stadium seating.
- A multipurpose building (150 by 150 feet) at the northeast corner of the stadium. The building could be used for practices during inclement weather.
- Storage areas located under the stands.

■ The project would nearly double the seating, build a community plaza between the stadium and the schools and establish a wall of fame to laud distinguished graduates.

By DON AYRES
Evening News staff writer

BEDFORD TOWNSHIP — For years, people have been talking about a new stadium for Bedford Public Schools. Now, a group of alumni is stepping forward to try to build it.

There are many reasons for building a new stadium, say Gene Stock and Phil Swy, co-chairmen of the Bedford Community Stadium Committee.

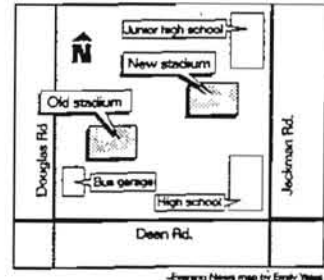
The current stadium was built in the 1950s.

Its bleachers are old and need repair, and don't meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The seating capacity is well below average attendance at football games, which causes crowd



PHIL SWY



control problems.

The lighting system is outdated, making repairs and upkeep expensive.

There's no paved parking, and no locker rooms or restrooms for players, forcing teams to trek to the district's bus garage nearby.

And the stadium is located away from the high school and junior high school campus.

"When you look at other schools and compare them to our facilities, it's kind of an embarrassment. Our players don't even have a place to change clothes," Mr. Swy said. "Now they stand in the area where they change the oil and lube the buses."

"We want to build pride and respect in our students, and to bring everything into one campus area."

Planning for the new stadium got started in November, with school officials and interested residents discussing ways to improve the current stadium.

In December, a meeting with more township residents was held,

and it was decided to look into building a new stadium. Also at that meeting, the idea of forming an alumni association was brought up.

When the group met in January, the Bedford Alumni Association was formed, with Bedford Community Stadium as its first project. The Bedford Community Stadium Committee, with Mr. Stock and Mr. Swy as co-chairmen, was formed at the same meeting.

Both men are graduates of Bedford High School — Mr. Stock in 1964, Mr. Swy in 1971.

Both men said they want the community to be involved in the new stadium project.

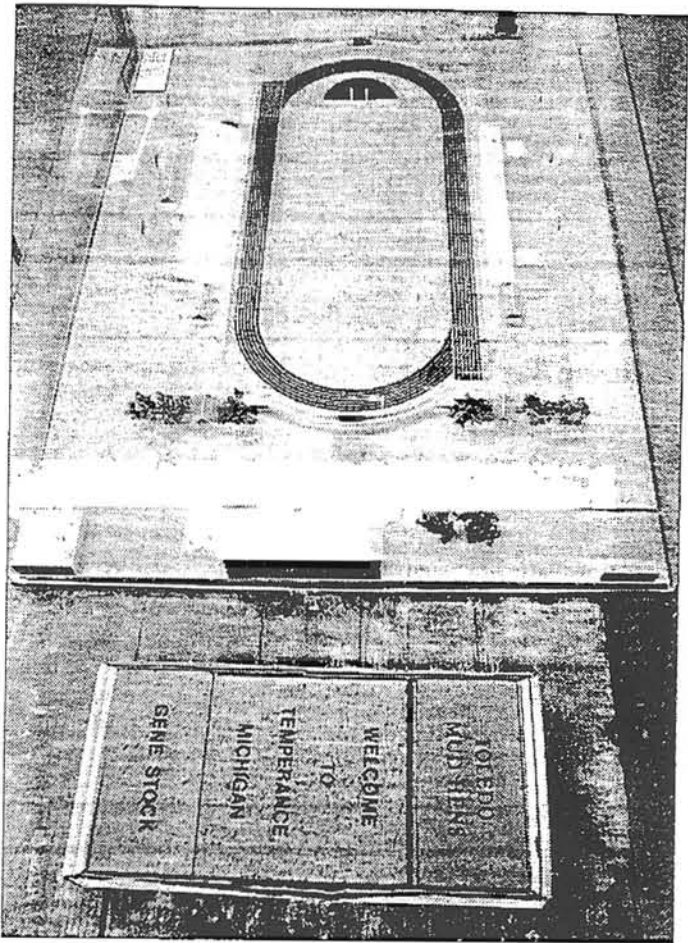
"We feel it's very important that this committee be an inclusive process rather than an exclusive process. Everyone deserves the opportunity to play a role," Mr. Swy said.

To come up with a plan for the new stadium, which will be built around the track behind the high school and junior high school, committee members listed all of the features they'd like to see in the new stadium.

From that list, members voted on the features they'd like to see the most, which were then incorporated into designs for the stadium.

Among the key features of the planned stadium are more seating, a community plaza between the stadium and the schools, and a

See STADIUM, Page 7B



— Evening News photo by Lynden Steele

A model shows the proposed Bedford Community Stadium; near it are fund-raising bricks. The community plaza would be located between the stadium and the schools.

Stadium (cont.)

wall of fame, which could be used to display plaques celebrating outstanding graduates of Bedford High School.

At the current stadium, there's seating for 1,800 fans on the home side of the field, and for 800 fans on the visitors' side. That's not nearly enough to seat the number of fans that routinely turn out for Bedford's games.

The new stadium includes plans for 3,500 seats on the home side, and 1,500 seats for the visitors.

On the south side of the stadium, between it and the two schools, the committee hopes to build what Mr. Stock and Mr. Swy call a brick community plaza.

During school days, it would be left open so that buses and cars could travel through the area. On nights when games or events are scheduled, the area would be closed to motorists.

The plaza could be used for a variety of events, the two men said, including art fairs, craft shows, concerts or other community events.

The estimated cost for the new stadium is about \$1.5 million, but that's just a preliminary estimate.

Because of the price tag, the stadium probably would be completed in stages as money is raised, Mr. Stock said. Being discussed are ways to keep down costs, but retain the features planned for the stadium.

"We're trying to investigate what's reasonable to accomplish to make it a first-rate facility ... but we're looking at alternatives like the possibility of bringing the bleachers from the current stadium to the new stadium and refurbishing them," Mr. Swy said. "I think it's important that we look at all the options."

One thing is certain; the school district will help plan the stadium, but won't help pay for it.

"We're asking for their support and participation ... but we'll go out and raise the money," Mr. Stock said. "The school district will not pay a dime on this."

To raise money for the project, the committee is considering dinners, raffles, telethons and cook-outs.

One method the group is pursuing is the sale of engraved bricks, which will be used in several areas of the stadium.

Donors can purchase a brick, and have names or slogans engraved on them.

For a small brick (4 by 8 inches) the cost is \$100, and for a larger brick (8 by 8 inches) the cost is \$200.

The group also is soliciting donations from local businesses, many of which already have offered to donate material or services for the construction of the stadium.

In just a few months, the group already has gotten offers for about \$80,000 worth of goods and services ranging from cabinets to silverware for the concession stands.

"We couldn't be more pleased with this kind of local support by our alumni and citizens in the community," said Bedford Public Schools Supt. Herbert S. Moyer.

He described plans for the stadium as "fantastic," and said something like the proposed stadium wouldn't have been possible for many years without the help of the alumni association and township residents.

"It's exciting to see something of that type and possibility coming into our community," he said. "It's going to be a tremendous resource, not only for the kids, but for the community at large."

When the new stadium is completed, the alumni association would donate it to the school district. The current stadium still could be useful, Dr. Moyer said, for soccer teams or other sporting events.

Because the project is still in its infancy, there's no telling how long it could be before the district has its new stadium.

The next step in the process is to get formal architectural drawings made, a move approved by the school board earlier this month.

In the meantime, plans are under way to begin raising funds this summer.

"One of our biggest concerns is losing momentum on this thing," Mr. Swy said. "We've got to maintain the momentum."

COMMENT

The Monroe Evening News

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EDITORIALS

Bedford stadium: fine idea

For years, a new stadium has been a dream of many in the Bedford Public Schools district. Now an alumni group has mounted a campaign to make the dream a reality.

Spearheading the effort is the Bedford Community Stadium Committee, a group headed by Gene Stock and Phil Swy, two Bedford graduates. They say a new stadium is needed because the present one was built in the 1950s, its bleachers and lighting systems are outdated, its parking areas are unpaved, and it lacks locker rooms and restrooms for players.

But perhaps the most glaring problem is that it's located at some distance from the junior and senior high schools.

"When you look at other schools and compare them to our facilities, it's kind of an embarrassment," Mr. Swy said.

"We want to build pride and respect in our students, and to bring everything into one campus area," he said.

Current planning for the new stadium calls for a 5,000-seat facility to be built around the track behind the high school and junior high school. It would include a brick

plaza between the stadium and the schools which could be used for a variety of community events, and a wall of fame, which could be used to display plaques of outstanding graduates.

A preliminary cost estimate for the new stadium is \$1.5 million. The group plans to build it in stages — without any school district money. Instead, supporters will raise the funds through dinners, raffles, telethons, cookouts and the sale of bricks engraved with the names or slogans of supporters, which will be used in several areas of the stadium.

Architectural drawings are in the works, and backers acknowledge they may have a long road to travel before a stadium is completed. But the effort is a testament to the community spirit and can-do attitude that exists in Bedford, particularly in light of recent failures of ballot bond proposals meant to expand and improve the schools.

It also shows an understanding that, although athletics are an important part of the educational process for many, they still are optional activities and should not become a drain on the district's budgets when there are more pressing school needs.

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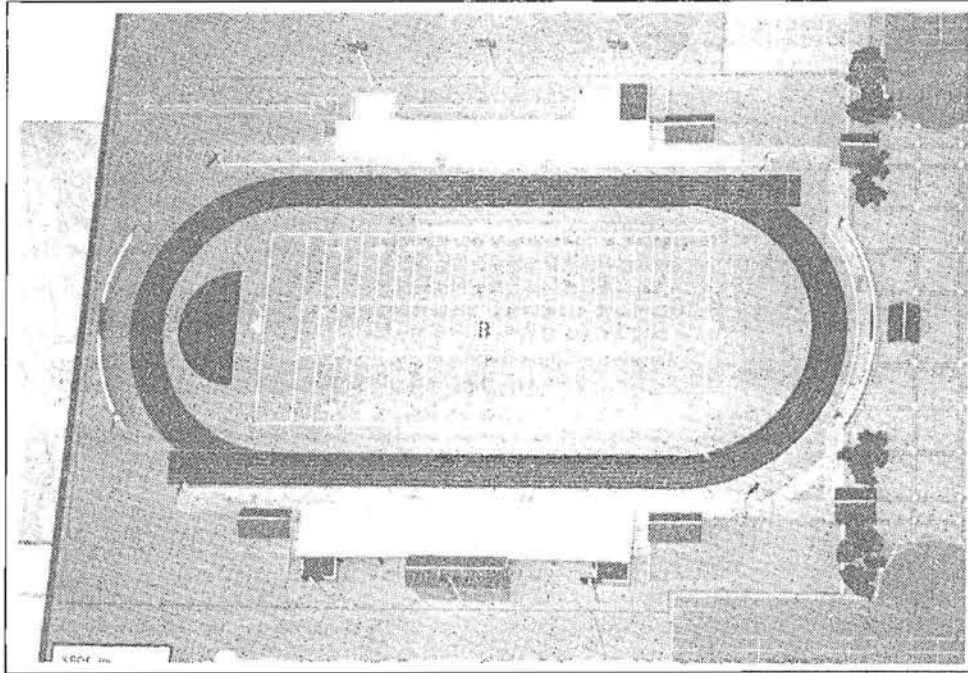
April 8, 1996

Sometimes dreams do come true!

Bedford Stadium one step closer to reality

The dream of a new Bedford Community Stadium is another step closer to reality thanks to the newly formed Bedford Alumni Association. Planning for the new stadium got started in January when the alumni association named it their first special project. The stadium will be constructed totally by private funds through donations and various fund-raisers sponsored by the Bedford Alumni Association stadium committee. The new stadium will be constructed as part of the sports complex that houses the current track which is located behind the Bedford Junior High and High School buildings at Dean and Jackman roads.

Details concerning the preliminary plans and costs for the new stadium were given by Bedford Community Stadium Co-Chairman Gene Stock and Phil Swy at a stadium committee meeting on March 13. The process of coming up with a plan for the new stadium began when committee members met with architects from the architectural firm of SSOE to list all the features they would like to see in the new stadium. From that list, members voted on the features they would like to see the most, which were then incorporated into designs for the stadium. A conceptual model of the new community stadium was completed and was on



A conceptual model of the new community stadium shows three concession stands, a multi-story pressbox, scoreboard, ticket booths, brick walls and three rest room facilities. It will be on display at the Bedford branch of the Monroe County Library this week.

display at the March 13 meeting. The model has been on display at the Bedford Trade Fair and at Bedford High School during the past four weeks. Committee members hope to go to various gatherings with the model to answer questions and seek ideas from various community members. The model will be on display at the Bedford branch of the Monroe

County Library during the week of April 7.

Among the key features of the planned stadium are aluminum seating, a community plaza between the stadium and the schools, and a wall of fame, which could be used to display plaques celebrating outstanding graduates, teachers, coaches and others from Bedford High School. The new stadium

includes plans for 3,500 seats on the home side, and 1,500 seats for the visitors. On the south side of the stadium, between it and the two schools, the committee hopes to build a brick community plaza. During school days, it would be left open so that buses and cars could travel through the area. On nights when games or events are scheduled, the area would be closed to

motorists. The plaza could be used for a variety of events, including art fairs, craft shows, concerts or other community events.

The model also shows three concessions stands, a multi-story pressbox, scoreboard, ticket booths, brick walls and three rest room facilities.

A preliminary cost estimate for the new stadium is \$1.5 million. The community stadium committee has set a goal to try to raise the funds or secure the financing to complete as much of the stadium as they can for the 1996 football season. A number of fund-raisers are being planned now including a golf outing, spaghetti dinner, steak roast, 3 on 3 tournament, car wash, telethon and placing donation canisters at local businesses. One method the group is pursuing is the sale of engraved bricks, which will be used in several areas of the stadium including a "pathway of pride." Donors can purchase a brick, and have names or slogans engraved on them. For a small brick, (4 by 8 inches) the cost is \$100, and for a larger brick (8 by 8 inches) the cost is \$200. Several persons have already purchased these for graduation gifts and as memorials. Brick forms are available at Bedford High School or the Bedford branch of the Monroe County Library. For larger

donations the stadium committee has made provisions to establish various "clubs" (team - \$1,000; coaches - \$5,000, and stadium - \$10,000) with donors' names to be displayed in an appropriate manner on the stadium.

The group also is soliciting donations from local businesses and individuals, many of which already have offered to donate materials or services for the construction of the stadium. In just a few months, the committee already has gotten offers for about \$90,000 worth of goods and services ranging from scoreboards to cabinets for concession stands.

The "Vision Statement" for the stadium project is "To build a quality community stadium based on a well-thought-out master plan which will be a source of real, long-lasting community pride." The committee welcomes Bedford community participation in assisting them in achieving this vision.

If anyone has any questions, concerns, donations or would like to help out on the community stadium project they may contact committee co-chairman Gene Stock, 847-6358, or Phil Swy, 847-3964. If residents would like to schedule a presentation for their group or organization or would like to display the stadium model they also can contact the co-chairmen.

District to lend up to \$100,000 for stadium

BEDFORD TOWNSHIP — The Bedford Public Schools Board of Education has extended a \$100,000 line of credit to the Bedford Stadium Committee. The money will be used as a backup plan if the committee should need more money than has been raised for a certain project.

Although the board has decided to administer the loan, the project still will be entirely funded by the stadium committee. The principle and interest on the line of credit will be paid back if any is used, said Denzil Bell, assistant superintendent.

Local businesses have volunteered to donate goods and services for the stadium project. According to stadium committee co-chairman Gene Stock, the group has raised about \$150,000 so far. The price tag includes an irrigation system, scoreboard and a lighting package.

"Our goal is to do as much as we can this year," Mr. Stock said. "But our target date is '97 — although playing football this fall is a realistic goal."

Mr. Stock added that if the turf were ready, the football games would either

be junior varsity or freshmen.

The preliminary estimate for the cost of the new stadium is about \$1.5 million, with the work to be completed in stages as the money is raised.

"We want to get it going so people can see we are doing this," Mr. Stock said. "We need to continue to do fund raising and get endorsements."

The group already has been endorsed by the Toledo Area Chamber of Commerce, and endorsements are expected soon from the Monroe and Bedford chambers.

Planning for the new stadium began in November when residents and school officials discussed ways to improve the current stadium. A month later, the Bedford Alumni Association was formed and it supported the Bedford Community Stadium as its first project.

The new stadium will be built around the track behind both the high and junior high schools. The stadium will feature increased seating capacity, a community plaza and a wall of fame recognizing outstanding graduates of Bedford High School.

The next open meeting for the stadium committee is 7 p.m. June 3 in the Bedford High School cafeteria, Jackman and Dean Rds. Anyone is welcome to attend.

The committee will begin looking at the exact stadium dimensions at that time and fine-tune the current model with the architect. That includes stands, concessions, restrooms, parking lots and so on.

There are about 300 members enrolled in the alumni association and there has been anywhere from 25 to 100 persons at the stadium committee meetings.

"We're really pleased with the progress and we're excited," Mr. Stock said. "I know a lot of people in the community are excited as well."

In other news, the board:

- Amended the student eligibility requirements for a .5 degree grade point average increase over the next five years. The GPA requirement has been 1.5 since it was installed two years ago. Eligibility requirements will be raised by .1 each year until the year 2000 when it will be 2.0. The eligibility requirements are for students in performance-based organizations like sports, band and theater.

BIDS WANTED

The Bedford Public Schools is seeking bids for the renovation/construction of a football/athletic field at the location of the Bedford Senior High School. Renovation/construction to include: the re-crowning of the existing field, installation of field drainage, preparation and top dressing of the field surface, development of turf, and development of a turf maintenance program. Interested bidders may request a copy of the bid specification by inquiring in person in the Business Office of the Bedford Public Schools, 1623 W. Sterns Road, Temperance, MI, between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Final bid acceptance is 1:00 p.m. Friday, May 17, 1996. The Bedford Public Schools reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids.

May 11, 15, 1996

3A

Evening News
Monroe, MI

Fri., May 31, 1996

Bedford stadium moves forward

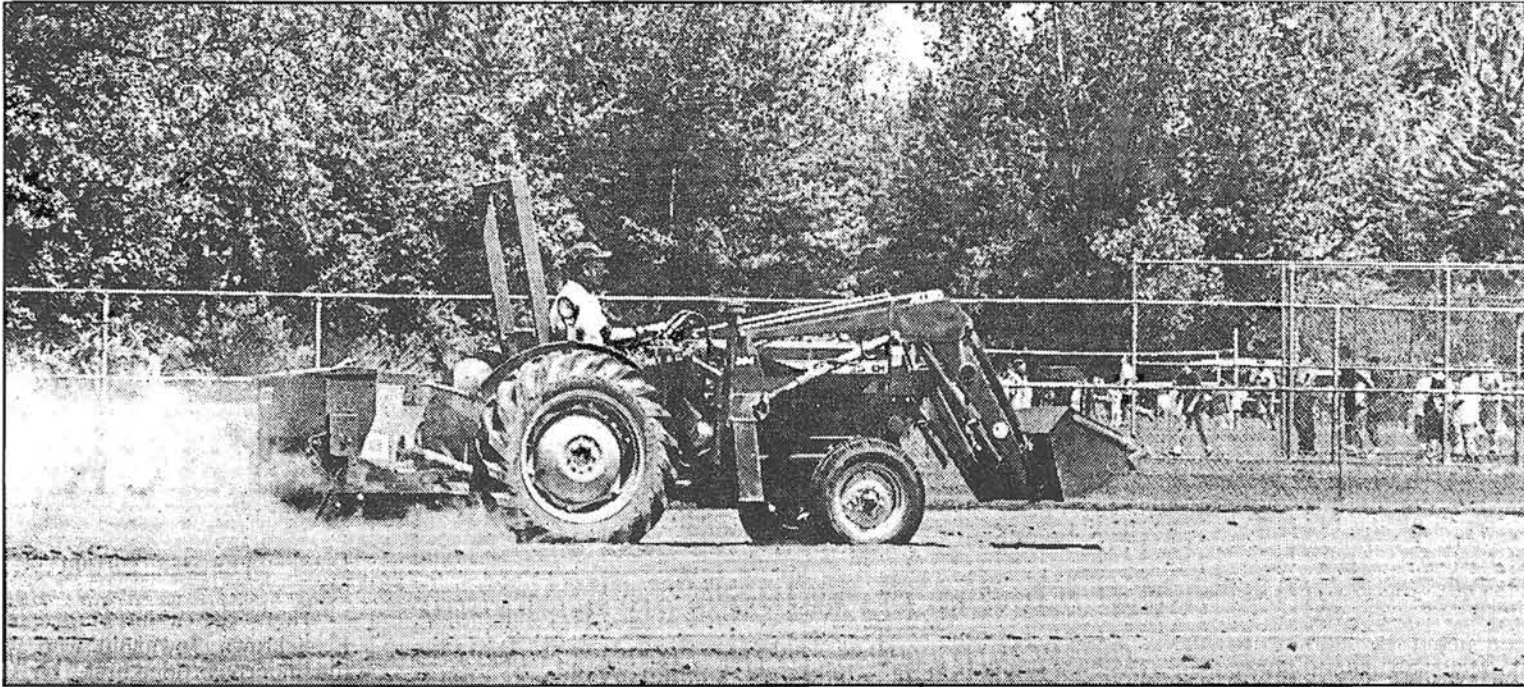
BEDFORD TOWNSHIP — Bedford Public Schools officials have awarded a contract for turf renovation at the site of the proposed school stadium to a Maumee, Ohio, firm.

The school board awarded the contract during a budget and curriculum workshop held Thursday night.

Athletic Field Services Inc., submitted the only bid for the project, and will be paid \$33,465. Work should start soon.

The district will pay for the work, and then be reimbursed by the Bedford Stadium Committee, the alumni group planning the stadium.

BLADE PHOTO BY HERRAL LONG



Digging in

Work began last week at Bedford High School's athletic field in a project to improve and enlarge the sports facility. Joe Zelinko of Athletic Field Service, Inc., of Maumee, the general contractor, drives onward to get the job under way.

Stadium project shapes up

BY DEBRA BAKER

BLADE STAFF WRITER

What started out as an elaborate and risky venture to build a stadium for the Bedford Township community and high school football team is becoming a reality.

Ground breaking began early this month for an estimated \$1.5 million stadium complex that is to be paid for exclusively through community contributions and in-kind donations.

"We don't necessarily want the biggest, but we want the best," said Gene Stock, co-chairman of the Bedford Community Stadium Committee.

Phase I of the project will include complete renovation of the football field. An underground sprinkler system, new turf, stadium lights, and a scoreboard are among the primary projects to be completed during this phase.

The field renovation and sprinkler system will cost an estimated \$50,000, but Mack Lawn Sprinkling has donated the entire sprinkler system — an estimated \$20,000 contribution.

Another donor, who wished to remain anonymous, is funding the cost of the entire lighting system — estimated at \$60,000.

Depending on finances, the stadium committee is ready to proceed with building bleachers for 3,500 home fans and 1,500 fans for the visiting team. Three concession stands, a press box, and ticket pavilion are among the other features, Mr. Stock said.

While the physical construction is taking place this summer, the committee is busy building up its treasury to fund the project. In addition to in-kind donations from area business, the committee anticipates another \$100,000 will be earned from various fund-raisers.

Already, more than \$10,000 has been raised by selling bricks that will be used in the stadium construction. The Bedford High School senior class donated \$800 for a flag pole.

If all goes as planned, the stadium will be ready for Bedford football games by the fall of 1997.

Construction begins on Bedford's new stadium

■ Drainage and sprinklers have been installed and the lights could be up this month. Organizers of the drive to build the stadium hope to be using it by fall, 1997.

By DON AYRES
Evening News staff writer

BEDFORD TOWNSHIP — Construction of the new Bedford Community Stadium is under way.

A new drainage and sprinkler system have been installed at the field behind the high school and junior high school on Jackman Rd. north of Dean Rd. and poles for the stadium lights have been delivered to the site.

With any luck, the lights will be up and in working condition by the end of July, said Gene Stock, co-chairman of the Bedford Alumni Association's Community Stadium Committee.

The association has pledged to build the stadium using only private donations of money and in-kind donations of materials and services.

Preliminary estimates are that the stadium will cost about \$1.5 million to construct, but Mr. Stock is quick to point out that those are estimates. The cost could be reduced dramatically if donations of materials and labor continue to pour in.

The major cost item in the new stadium will be the seating, with bleachers expected to cost about \$450,000.

One thing is certain: The school district will help plan the stadium, but won't help pay for it.

"We're asking for their support and par-

ticipation ... but we'll go out and raise the money," Mr. Stock has said. "The school district will not pay a dime on this."

When the new stadium is completed, the committee would donate it to the school district.

So far, the committee has received pledges for about \$350,000 in in-kind donations over the next five years from area corporations.

Among those items are the \$43,000 lighting system given by an anonymous donor and \$25,000 from Coca-Cola Co. for a new scoreboard.

The committee's brick sale, in which donors can buy bricks engraved with their names or slogans, has generated about \$15,000 so far, Mr. Stock said.

Other fund-raising efforts are expected to generate an additional \$100,000 to \$150,000 this year.

"Funding-wise we're hoping we can really knock a large chunk of this out in donations and in-kind donations in the next five to six months," Mr. Stock said.

The committee is hoping to have enough of the stadium completed that it could be used for Bedford's football program in the fall of 1997.

The current stadium is located off Douglas Rd. north of Dean Rd. behind the bus garage. When it was built, the high school stood in front of it. The building has been razed.

To make sure that all of their ducks are in a row with the project, the committee has asked local developer William Decker Jr. to come on board as the project manager.

"He's in the construction business, he understands how to work with contrac-

tors," Mr. Stock said. "Bill will make sure things get done when they should get done, and done the right way. He'll be kind of the glue that holds things together."

Mr. Stock added that the committee has been able to get pledges for in-kind donations from contractors and building companies that Mr. Decker works with.

So far, committee members are satisfied with their progress on the stadium program, Mr. Stock said.

"We have a really good feeling about how things are proceeding. For all practical purposes we didn't start this until February," he said.

Over the summer, committee members and school district officials will be meeting with architects to resolve any changes or modifications that need to be made to the plans for the stadium.

Committee members are planning to use a more modular approach to planning the stadium so that sections can be built when companies or individuals volunteer to do work.

The stadium committee was formed in January and identified a number of reasons why the school district needs a new stadium. The plan for the new stadium addressed all of those problem areas. Among the problems listed by the committee were:

- The bleachers at the current stadium, which was built in the 1950s, don't meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The seating capacity is well below average attendance at football games, which causes crowd control problems.

The new stadium includes plans for 3,500 seats on the home side, and 1,500

seats for the visitors.

- The lighting system being used is outdated, making repairs and upkeep expensive.

A study of candle power was done recently on the lighting system at the current stadium.

The lights for the new stadium will be almost 10 times as bright as those at current stadium, Mr. Stock said.

- There's no paved parking and no locker rooms or restrooms for players, forcing teams to trek to the district's bus garage nearby.

- And the stadium is located away from the high school and junior high school campus.

Although one of the main uses of the new stadium will be for the school district's athletic programs, that's not the sole purpose for which the alumni association and stadium committee are building it.

A wide variety of community events could be held in the new facility, Mr. Stock said.

That's starting to get out to township residents so support for the project is growing, he added.

"We don't hear 'football stadium' anymore. We're starting to hear the words 'community stadium,' which is what we want to hear," he said.

When the new stadium is completed, Mr. Stock said he thinks residents will be amazed at the differences between it and the current stadium.

"It's like when you buy a new car and look back at the old car, you wonder 'how in the world did I ever drive that?'" he said.



—Evening News photo by Don Ayres

A new press box and concession stand is being constructed at the Bedford High School.

Press box, concession stand being built

BEDFORD TOWNSHIP — A new press box and concession stand are going up at the Bedford High School baseball field behind the high school off Dean Rd.

The building's frame has been constructed and walls put up, but exterior brick work, electrical wiring, and some work on the grounds around the building still need to be completed.

William Decker Sr. of Decker Homes, the developer in charge of the project, said the new press box should be completed sometime in August if all goes well.

Materials and labor for construction

of the press box are being donated by local builders and developers, Mr. Decker said.

The two-story building will include an area for reporters, concession stand, restrooms and an equipment storage area.

To decorate the press box, a sculpture will be carved into the bricks of an exterior wall.

Bedford resident Dr. Robert S. Turley, an artist and professor of art history at the University of Toledo, will carve the sculpture of a baseball player, Mr. Decker said.

Dr. Turley carved a brick sculpture

in the wall at the entrance to the Deer Run subdivision on Secor Rd. last year.

To recognize the builders and developers who've donated their time and materials to the project, bricks engraved with their names will be installed in a brick pathway leading up to the concession stand.

Without the efforts of Mr. Decker and the other builders and developers it's unlikely the press box would be built, said Bedford Public Schools Supt. Herbert S. Moyer.

"It's doubtful we could get the money to fund something like this," he said.

— Don Ayres

Field of Dreams

Bedford stadium becomes reality

By MIKE SCHAFER
Sports Editor

"If you build it, they will come," Shoeless Joe Jackson in the motion picture *Field of Dreams*.

Many professional sports teams and their respective cities have used that saying to help create a wave of new athletic facilities across the nation. However, the trend to build bigger and better stadiums is not limited to professional sports teams.

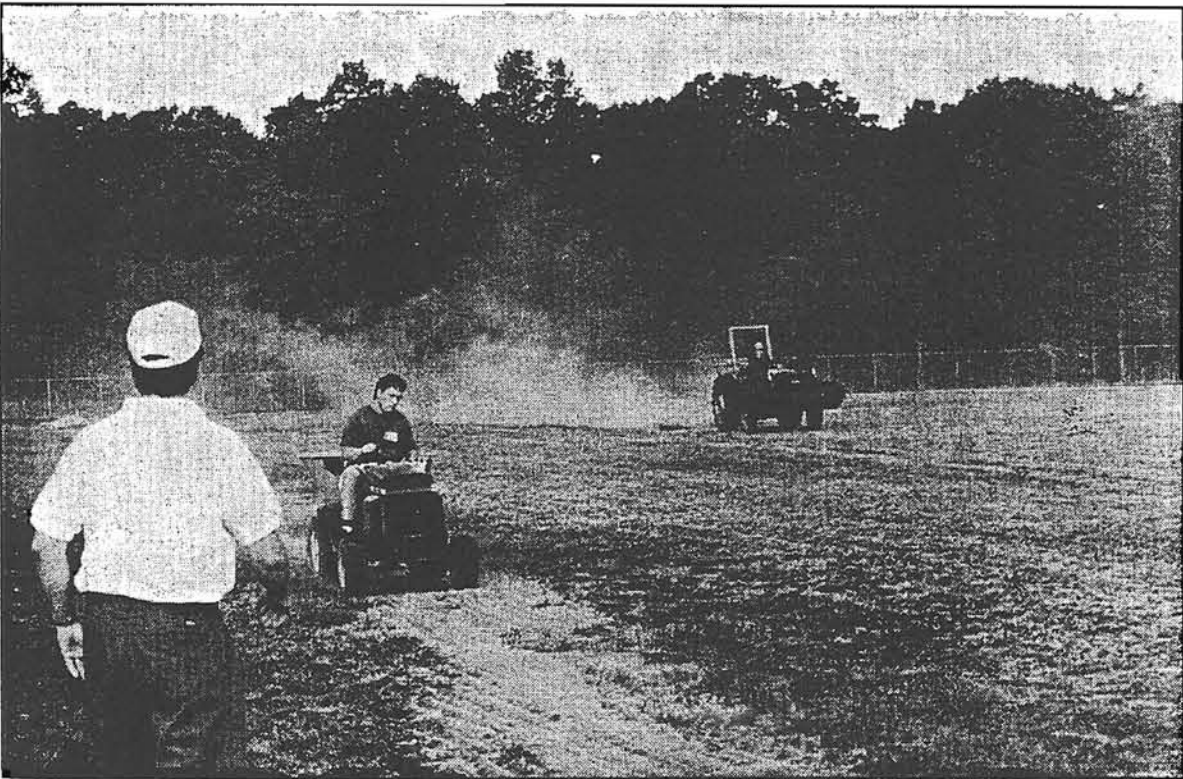
One of the most impressive sports facilities under construction is right in our back yard. The Bedford Community Stadium Committee is overseeing construction of a new football stadium for Bedford schools. The committee is the first major project of the newly-formed Bedford Alumni Association.

THE \$1.5 MILLION project, which is being financed totally by private funds, is underway behind the Bedford junior and senior high buildings at Dean and Jackson roads in Temperance. Construction began earlier this summer on the site and is expected to be completed in time for the 1997 football season.

From early reports on the construction site and from drawings and models by the project's architectural firm, SSOE of Toledo, it appears Bedford may indeed have a field of dreams of its own.

"I think it will one of the best high school stadiums not only in Southeast Michigan, but possibly the entire state," said Gene Stock, co-chairman of the Bedford Community Stadium Committee. "It is going to look a small-college stadium with all of the brick work and other features."

SOME OF those features in-



While the Mules prepare to open their season against St. Mary Catholic Central Friday, workers are preparing Bedford High School's new football stadium by planting the field's turf recently. The \$1.5 million project is expected to be completed in time for the 1997 football season.

clude all-aluminum seating for 5,000 fans, three concession stands and three restrooms. Other highlights of the project will include a landscaped plaza area at the stadium's entrance, a 'wall of fame' at the east end of the stadium, ticket booths at both home and visitor sides and flagpoles for all Great Lakes League schools and American and state flags.

One of the most impressive features will be a bi-level press box standing 55-feet high. The press box will also include an elevator for handicapped accessibility.

"Our press box is going to be very similar to the University of Toledo's press box, except on a smaller scale," Stock said. "It is

going to have two levels of seating for about 18 people on the top floor as well as covered areas for photographers and television cameras."

THE STADIUM lights will be located on four 100-ft. tall poles behind the grandstands and will cost \$60,000. North Towne Chevrolet - Geo has donated \$30,000 for a new scoreboard which will feature a message board on top and will be used for football, soccer and track.

Construction on the actual field itself has been progressing as well. The field has been graded and renovated by Athletic Field Services of Maumee, Oh. The \$35,000 field has been

completed re-seeded and should be a thick, plush, green carpet before winter.

Aiding the turf's growth is a new \$15,000 sprinkling system which was recently installed and donated by Mack Lawn Sprinkling of Temperance.

STOCK SAYS that nearly \$650,000 of the stadium's projected \$1.5 million price tag has already been raised, but the Bedford Community Stadium Committee has several fund raisers planned to generate additional finances.

The group is currently raffling off three weekend trips to Atlantic City for two people for \$25 per ticket. The drawing will

See FIELD, Page 3-B

FIELD

Continued from Page 1-B

be held October 4 during the Bedford homecoming.

Other fund raisers planned include a spaghetti dinner with a special guest speaker in November, brick sales, 50-50 raffles, donation canisters in local stores and a pledge drive.

The group has an information

line which updates weekly progress on the stadium and provides details of fund raisers. The info-line number is 854-3339, ext. 6358. Further information may be obtained by calling either Stock (847-6358) or co-chairman Phil Swy (847-3964).

A model of the planned stadium will be on display at the True Value hardware store in Monticello this weekend.



BLADE PHOTO BY DIANE HIRES

Joe Zelinko studies the model of the new facility before the meeting at Bedford High School. Many people have contributed money to the Bedford Community Stadium project.

Residents in Bedford continue their work on a new sports facility

BY DEBRA BAKER
BLADE STAFF WRITER

With the football season under way, so too is the Bedford Community Stadium committee's continued drive to build the township's first community stadium.

The stadium committee helped kick off the football season with a meeting last week to update area residents on the progress of the \$1.5 million project. About 50 people gathered Aug. 28 in Bedford High School to learn more about the progress of the project.

"We're in pretty good shape," said Gene Stock, co-chairman of the stadium committee.

Construction began this summer for the 5,000-seat facility, which will include a press box, three concession stands, a landscaped plaza, a "wall of fame,"

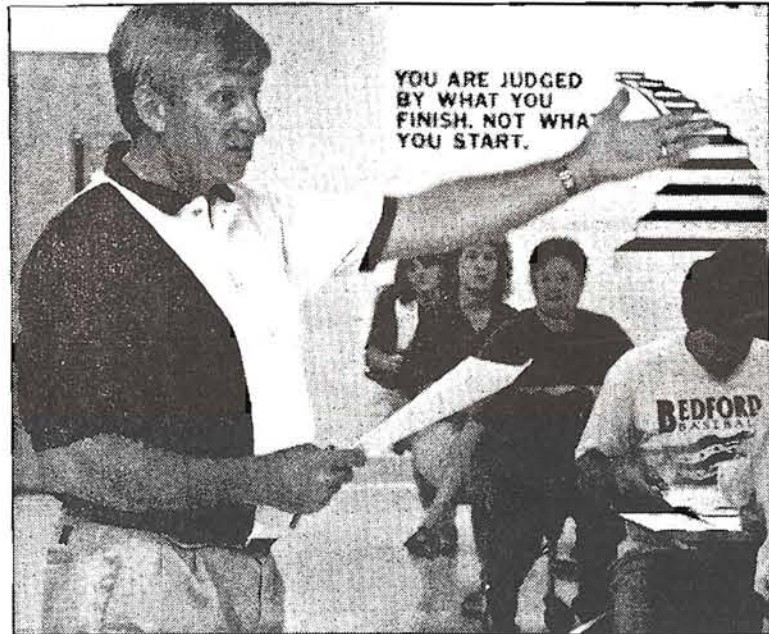
Another anonymous donor gave \$60,000 to cover the costs of the facility's lighting system.

ticket booths, rest rooms, field lights, and an electronic scoreboard and message board.

The stadium — funded entirely by private donations — is expected to be completed in time for next year's football season. Night track meets may be possible as early as this spring, Mr. Stock said.

As of August, fund-raisers have

See **BEDFORD**, Page 2 ►



BLADE PHOTO BY DIANE HIRES

Gene Stock gives an update on the project at the high school. Construction began this summer for a 5,000-seat facility.

Bedford

► Continued from Page 1

yielded \$100,000 in cash donations, \$350,000 pledged over five years, and \$200,000 in in-kind pledges of labor and materials.

As of last week, the new field had been renovated and seeded. The \$35,000 cost of the seeding was paid for by an anonymous donor. Mack Lawn Sprinkling paid for and

installed a \$15,000 sprinkling system.

Another anonymous donor gave \$60,000 to cover the costs of the lighting system, while Northtowne Chevrolet-Geo donated \$30,000 for a new scoreboard.

Mr. Stock said construction will continue as funds become available. Ongoing fund-raising efforts, including brick sales, and various raffles will continue through the fall.

Bedford Stadium begins to take shape

The first special project of the Bedford High School Alumni Association is beginning to take shape with the completion of some renovations and donations from local businesses.

According to a current update, the new field has been renovated by Athletic Field Services of Maumee, Ohio. They also seeded the field. The total cost of the renovation was \$35,000, which was paid for by an anonymous donor.

In addition, a new sprinkling system has been installed and is operational. The total system was installed and donated by Mack Lawn Sprinkling of Temperance, Michigan. The sprinkling system was valued at \$15,000.

Also scheduled to be installed this fall is a stadium lighting package and a new \$30,000 scoreboard. The scoreboard is equipped for football, soccer, and track and will also contain an electronic message board on top. It was donated by Northtowne Chevrolet-Geo. The \$60,000 total lighting package was donated by an anonymous donor and several local companies and private individuals have offered to donate labor to complete the project.



Pictured above, Chris McKnight prepares to seed the field. The total cost of the field renovation was \$35,000, which was paid for by an anonymous donor.

Other items highlighted for the design of the new stadium include stadium seating with 3500 home seats and 1500 for visitors. The seating will be all

aluminum treadsand risers.

Also included is a community plaza and entry area at the east side of the stadium, three concession stands, a "Wall-of-Fame," a bi-level press box, ticket booths, and three restroom facilities.

The total cost of the project has been estimated at \$1.5 million. It will be constructed totally by private funds, mostly donors and several fundraisers. Many of the current fundraisers include an Atlantic City Weekend Trip for Two raffle. The tickets are \$25 each and three winners will be drawn on October

4. In November, a Spaghetti Dinner and a Band Playathon are scheduled. Other donations have come from canisters in local stores, brick sales, a pledge drive, and cash donations. Current fund-raising has totaled \$650,000 from summer fundraisers such as a car wash, concessions, 50/50 raffles, a golf outing, and a Foodtown root beer float sale.

The Master Plan Committee has met six times with the architects from SSOE to finalize the plans for the stadium. SSOE will have the project completed through the construction docu-

mentation phase by the end of September. The projected completion date for the stadium is the fall of 1997.

Other plans for the stadium include, ongoing fund-raising, continue construction as funds

are raised, continue to pursue in-kind donations of labor and materials, and install all underground utilities at the stadium site this fall.

October 21, 1996

BEDFORD PRESS

Pledge your donation to Bedford Community Stadium

Persons making their annual pledges to the United Way of Monroe County and the United Way of Greater Toledo can designate a part or all of their pledge to The Bedford Community Stadium project. Anyone wishing to direct their United Way of Monroe County contribution to go to the stadium project can do so by marking the box on their pledge form titled, "Specific Care", then write **Bedford Community Foundation - Bedford Community Stadium** in the line titled "Non-United Way Agency (tax exempt) name."

Persons donating through the United Way of Greater Toledo may direct part or all of their pledge to the stadium project by indicating this on the donor designation form located on the last page of the pledge card.

To direct their contribution they should check the box labeled "I want all or part of my gift to go to another United Way" and write on the line that follows this box **United Way of Monroe County Michigan, Bedford Community Foundation - Bedford Community Stadium.**

Any questions concerning pledges should contact the Bedford Community Stadium Committee Co-chairman Gene Stock at 847-6358.

The stadium committee encourages persons to continue to make their pledges to the United Way programs as they have in the past and to consider a contribution to the Bedford Community Stadium project which is a

privately funded project of the Bedford High School Alumni Association.

BEDFORD PRESS

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Karen Daggett, Publisher/Editor

UW, Bedford stadium group reach donation agreement

By CYNTHIA ASMANN
Evening News staff writer

Publicized attempts to get United Way donors to designate their contribution to a Bedford stadium project ignited a conflict in recent days that appears to have been resolved.

United Way of Monroe County officials, upset that stadium backers had included notices about the donations along with payroll checks and announced the project at a football game, had threatened to return all stadium-directed contributions.

DeWayne Duskin, executive director of United Way of Monroe County, believed that the Bedford Community Stadium committee had breached its agreement

with United Way by advertising the donor designation policy.

That policy allows contributors to allocate their donations towards any not-for-profit agency or project, even if it is not a participant with United Way of Monroe County.

"We don't want agencies to take out paid advertisements for this," said Mr. Duskin.

"This is not the United Way against the Bedford Stadium," he said. "(Designating) takes money from agencies like the Boy Scouts (and) the family counseling shelter."

Mr. Duskin and Gene Stock, co-chairman of the stadium committee, were able to hammer out an agreement Wednesday

See **STADIUM**, Page 16A

in which Mr. Stock agreed not to advertise and Mr. Duskin rescinded any threats.

The \$1.5 million stadium project already is under way between the high school and junior high. In addition to a stadium with almost twice as many seats, the plans include a community plaza which could host art fairs, craft shows and the like.

Mr. Duskin said he is "fearful" that if donors learn they can designate funds, it will shrink the amount of money that goes directly into the United Way coffers.

Any loss of revenue will affect the number of projects the group can support.

Mr. Stock said it is wrong to think that his group is trying to take something from the United Way.

"We are not encouraging people to give up what was given (to United Way) in the past," said Mr. Stock.

"I know for a fact that there are

some people who pledged specifically because the stadium was listed," he said. "But I understand where (Mr. Duskin) is coming from."

Last year, 5,000 people in Bedford Township benefited from services provided by United Way agencies, Mr. Duskin said.

The controversy began when Bedford Public Schools included a note with its last payroll informing employees of the United Way designation option.

"What Bedford Public Schools did in communication to their employees is not controlled by United Way," Mr. Duskin said. "It's unfortunate that the communication went."

Advertising the designation option violates United Way's policy on honoring donor designations, Mr. Duskin said. At 95 percent of revenue, payroll deductions are the basis of United Way's cash flow.

"We are fearful that some people and previous contributors, if

they wanted to support the stadium project, would shift their dollars and 53 other agencies would be hurt," said Mr. Duskin.

"It really goes against the grain of our policy," he said of the advertising.

Mr. Duskin said he received calls from perturbed contributors who could not understand why the United Way is helping to finance a football stadium.

The calls began after Mr. Stock mentioned the option at last weekend's Bedford High School football game during a half-time radio interview.

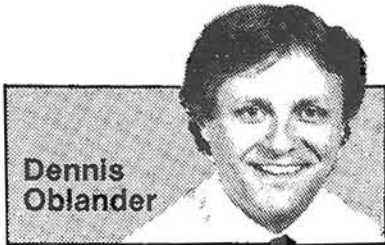
The problem is perception, Mr. Stock said. People should not look at the Bedford Community Stadium as a football field but rather as a community center.

Earlier this month, stadium committee officials said they had raised more than \$650,000 in donations toward the project which is expected to be completed by fall of next year.

Let there be light!

Milan leads All-Oblander Light Poll

It's probably the least anticipated ranking in all of sport, this hybrid of the All-Madden Team and Gross Electric catalog.



Dennis Oblander

Extra Point

Still, it is with an abiding love of lumens that I present the first ever All-Oblander Light Pole Poll — the authoritative ranking of high school football stadium lighting.

HOW IMPORTANT is light? Wasn't "Let there be light" Priority One as the shapeless, cosmic vapors of the universe were called to order?

How important is light? Take it away and consider the alternative. Try turning down the brightness level on your television set until the goal line stand looks like so many wriggling carp fighting for bread crumbs in the murky shallows.

Brighter is better.

AFTER YEARS of sideline banter with other photographers over which stadium had the best, and worst, lighting, I resolved this football season to make some objective readings.

I took incidental light

measurements at five points along the home sideline: at midfield, the goal lines and 25-yard lines. Incidental readings measure light falling on, rather than reflected by, a subject.

My guess is that the sideline readings probably do not differ substantially from on-field light levels. The action, after all, takes place all over the field.

THE RATINGS are presented in exposure value (EV) numbers which identify camera control settings and are useful in making practical comparisons of light levels.

A difference of one EV equals twice the amount of light. Thus, an EV 10 rating at the 50-yard line compared to an EV 9 at the goal means there is twice as much light at midfield, half as much at the goal line.

Average overcast daylight rates an EV 14.5. That is more than eight times brighter than the 50-yard line at Milan Middle School (home of the Big Reds) — the hot spot of all Monroe County football fields. Similarly, the average luminance at Milan's field is about eight times as bright as Summerfield High School's.

MARC CISCO Alumni Field at Jefferson High School, the county's second-brightest stadium, averages an EV 10. In practical terms, that's a level of brightness equal to that found 20 inches from a bare, 60-watt light bulb.

Bunkelman Field at Monroe High School and Navarre

Field, home of the St. Mary Catholic Central Falcons, have the most uneven lighting. The north 25-yard line at Bunkelman is nearly four

times the midfield rating, while the same holds true between the west goal at Navarre and both 25-yard

See LIGHTS, Page 3-D

1996 ALL-OBLANDER LIGHT POLL

RANK	SCHOOL	Aug. EV rating of stadium lighting
1	Milan	10.52
2	Jefferson	10.02
3	Ida	9.94
4	Monroe	9.62
5	Airport	9.46
6	Dundee	9.32
7	Erie-Mason	8.78
8	SMCC	8.50
9	Bedford	8.36
10	Whiteford	7.96
11	Summerfield	7.54

Continued from Page 1-D

lines there.

The most evenly-lit field is Erie Mason's where the light from one goal to the other varies by no more than a half EV.

FOR THE \$60,000 lighting system at the new Bedford Community Stadium to realize that project's potential as one of the state's finest high school venues, they need to improve considerably on the lighting of their current site which languishes on the lower rungs of the light pole poll.

All is not lost in Bedford, however. At Tuesday's home

game with Grosse He, the girl's basketball team took the unofficial lead of the All-Oblander Pre-Game Warmup Music Volume Poll.

So what does it all mean?

AM I SELFISH and shortsighted enough to suggest that already cash-strapped school boards should forsake

other critical expenditures and rush out and purchase a whole bunch of new, retina-scorching stadium lights?

Heck, yeah!

Hey, if football was meant to be played in a coal cellar the cheerleaders would all be yelling "Glow Team," not "Go Team." Right?

I rest my case.

Sunday, October 27, 1996/The Monroe Guardian/Heritage Sunday

Stadium gets lift from United Way

BY DEBRA BAKER
BLADE STAFF WRITER

The Bedford Community Stadium Committee has tapped into the resources of the United Way in its efforts to raise money for the township's first community stadium.

Gene Stock, chairman of the committee, said people can designate all or part of their annual pledge to United Way to go to the stadium project. To do so, they need only to designate on their card that they want the funds to go to the "United Way of Monroe County, Mich., Bedford Community

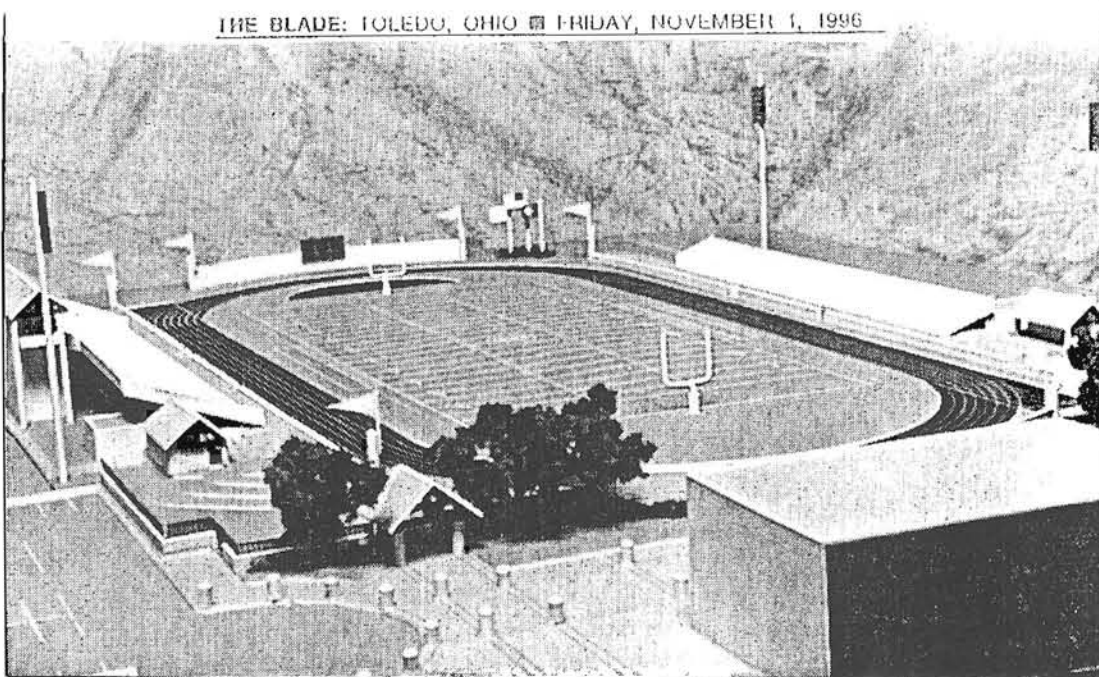
Foundation — Bedford Community Stadium."

The money will go toward completing the 5,000-seat stadium complete with running track, press box, concession stands, plaza, and "Wall of Fame." Organizers want the stadium to be something for the entire community.

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Bedford High's projected, privately funded stadium is to be for community use, as well as football.

Community gets involved in Bedford's new stadium

BY BLADE SPORTS WRITER

TEMPERANCE — Bill Regnier said he has dreamed of Bedford High School building a new stadium for a long time.

In his first year as athletic director and one year removed from the football field as head coach, that dream is starting to take shape, with a lot of community involvement.

School officials hope that tonight's game against Napoleon will be the last at the old stadium on Douglas Road. The new facility is being built around the current high school track between Bedford High School and Bedford Junior High School on Jackman Road.

The unique thing about the project is that the \$1.5 million stadium is being privately funded, the first project of the newly created Bedford Alumni Association.

Regnier said the goal is for the Mules to play their first football game at the stadium next season. The old stadium might be used as a soccer complex, Regnier said.

"We've really emphasized quality with the new stadium," Regnier said. "This isn't going to be the low bid. We're going to look at quality, then look at the low bid and see if they can do the job."

The 5,000-seat stadium will include a press box with an elevator for disabled accessibility, a plaza at the east side of the stadium and a "wall of fame" inside the stadium.

The group has raised \$108,000 in cash, \$385,000 in pledges over the next five years and another \$200,000 in in-kind contributions which include the stadium's light package and a sprinkler system.

"We've really emphasized quality with the new stadium. This isn't going to be the low bid. We're going to look at quality, then look at the low bid and see if they can do the job."

Bill Regnier
Bedford High athletic director

Another sponsor kicked in \$30,000 for a scoreboard with a message center, which will be able to post football, soccer and track and field results.

The driving forces behind the new stadium have been Gene Stock and Phil Swy. Stock and Swy chair the association's stadium committee.

"We created the Bedford Alumni Association and this stadium as its first project," Stock said. "I talked with a lot of the Catholic schools in the area about what they do and they gave me some pretty good ideas."

"The reality is that public schools will have to raise money for pro-

jects like this, much like the Catholic schools do."

In only a year of operating and planning to build the stadium, the Bedford Alumni Association has about 500 members, Stock said.

Bedford has also taken advantage of its mostly bedroom, but affluent, community to get things done. Stock said about 20 families that live in the area work for SSOE, Inc., a Toledo engineering and architectural firm that signed on for the stadium project.

Former Detroit Piston Bill Laimbeer, whose in-laws live in the area, agreed to be the keynote speaker at a fundraising dinner for the stadium on Thursday, free of charge.

"We're hoping to raise \$10,000 at that dinner," Stock said. "The place we're having the dinner, Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Church, donated the space. The community has been very involved. When we made a final decision on the model, we had 40 to 50 people at the meeting."

Stock said he hopes to start on many of the buildings at the field this winter and find out the latest date to order grandstands so they can be erected in time for next season.

Regnier and Stock stressed the stadium will be for the community, not just the schools.

"We want to bring all kinds of events to the stadium," Regnier said. "Whatever people want to do, we want to help them do it. We have community days here and we can make them bigger and better."

— CLYDE HUGHES

Bill Laimbeer to speak at Bedford fund-raiser

Bill Laimbeer had a reputation as a tyrant when he was a member of the Detroit Pistons, but he has volunteered to be the guest speaker Thursday at a fund-raising dinner for the Bedford Community Stadium Committee.

He will speak following a spaghetti dinner at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church in Temperance. Tickets are \$25 and must be purchased in advance. For more information, contact **Ken Weaver**, 856-4353, or **Ed Mazur**, 854-1713.

Bedford is hoping Friday night's game against Tecumseh will be the last football contest played at its field on Douglas Rd. The new stadium being constructed behind the high school is expected to be ready by next fall.

□ □ □

SPORTS NAMES

24



Bedford High School

Nicole Buchert
Eric Mills



Construction for a new community football stadium is now underway. With the construction comes several fund-raising activities for the Bedford Stadium Committee.

The Bedford Alumni Association will be sponsoring their first annual spaghetti dinner at Our Lady Mt. Carmel Church in Temperance on Thursday, Nov. 7 at 6 p.m. Tickets may be purchased in advance for a \$25 donation. Bill Laimbeer, former Detroit Piston NBA All-Star will be the guest speaker.

A pledge drive, a band play-athon, and brick and calendar sales are also planned for the near future. Since the stadium is a privately funded project, the Committee plans to continue other fund-raising efforts as well.

As part of Red Ribbon Week, junior and seniors attended a mock accident at the football stadium on Oct. 25.

The scenario was a crash that would have killed two people as a result of a drunk teen driver. Students watched quietly and listened to Diane

Riedmaier, the mother of Brandon, a student who was killed last December as a result of drunk driving. Brandon would have been a senior this year. "The alcohol killed Brandon," said Riedmaier.

Some students cried as they remembered one of their classmates. "I only hope we can let this be a lesson," said senior Amanda Layman. "I hope it affected all of us enough that we will think twice and remember what the accident scene looked like today."

"It was really scary...it grabbed everybody's attention. It made us realize that life is precious," said junior Belinda Meese.

The high school put the car used in the demonstration in front of the sign on Jackman Road as a reminder of the effects of drunk driving. The assembly was sponsored by St. V's Life Flight and Monroe County Emergency Officials. Organizers hope this will be the first of an annual event for the high school.

IN BRIEF

BEDFORD TWP.

Event to aid band, stadium

■ The music department at Bedford High School will hold a Play-a-thon and carnival tomorrow in the gymnasium to raise money for the band boosters and community stadium project.

Ron Koch, band director, said several musical groups will play from 1 to 11 p.m. for pledges the individual members obtain.

The groups will include the orchestra, band, marching band, jazz band, and student rock groups.

The carnival, which will have games for young and old, will run from 5-11 p.m.

Mr. Koch said the profits will be split between the boosters and stadium project.

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Bedford Band director Ron Koch conducts Bedford students during the Play-a-thon, a 10-hour marathon of constant music, at Bedford High School Friday. The participants expected to raise \$2,500 before the marathon's end.

10 hours of nonstop music

Bedford bands, carnival raise money for projects, groups

By DOUG DONNELLY
Evening News staff writer

TEMPERANCE — Ryan Smith had been waiting for Friday night for months.

Ryan and two other Bedford High School juniors took the stage Friday, playing in the alternative rock band Fringe. It was the first public performance for the band, which formed about six months ago.

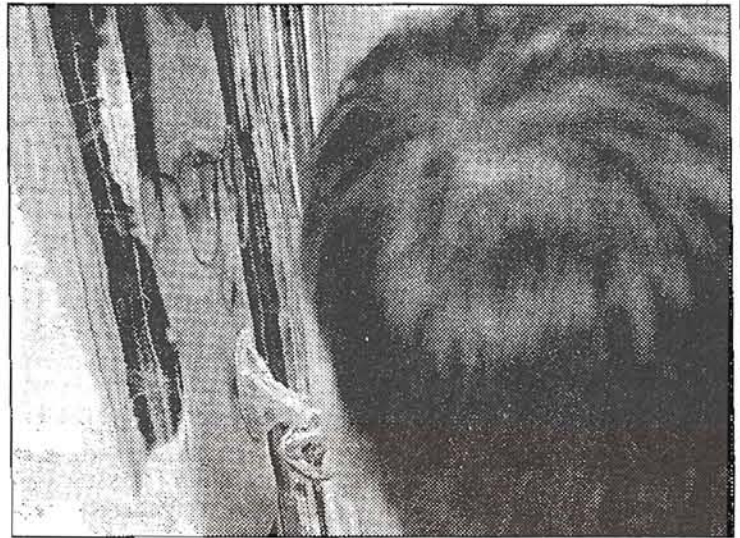
"I'm so excited you couldn't believe it," Ryan said several hours before he began playing at the first Bedford band Play-a-thon. "We've played in front of our families before, but not a big crowd. I've told everyone to come."

The 10-hour play-a-thon was organized by Bedford High School Band Director Ron Koch and the Bedford Band and Orchestra Boosters. Besides continuous music from 1 to 11 p.m. Friday, a carnival, complete with games for kids and adults, was put on by 220 members of the band.

"This is a major effort on everybody's part," Mr. Koch said. "It is a great bunch of kids to work with. About 90 percent of the band are here and enthusiastic to play."

Members of the school's three concert bands, the orchestra, jazz band and marching band joined different ensembles and student bands in the high school gymnasium for the free event. Crowds watched the students play continuous music.

By accepting pledges and donations, band members expected to raise about \$2,500, to be split equally between the boosters and the Bedford Community Stadium. Mr. Koch said he had been working on the idea for the Play-a-thon/carnival



A member of the Bedford Marching and Jazz bands, Jérémy Frye, 17, of Lambertville, plays one of the more than 50 songs that were performed Friday.

for several years, hoping to combine the band's talent with a fund-raising project.

He chose the first fund-raiser for the community stadium project, in which the Bedford Alumni Association is hoping to

See **NONSTOP MUSIC**, Page 10A

raise \$1.5 million to build a new combination football stadium/community plaza. Nearly half of the estimated cost has been raised and construction actually began this summer.

"The community stadium project is something a lot of people are behind," Mr. Koch said. "And, it still needs a lot of money. I thought it was a good place to start and would build support for this type of event."

Organizers hope to open the stadium in the fall of 1997, ending years of the Bedford football team playing home games away from the school's backyard.

The band's cut of the money will be used to pay for awards, medals, transportation and other projects normally paid for out of the band

boosters budget.

Fringe was selected to participate after playing a demo tape for Mr. Koch.

"I've been playing for nine years, but this is the first time other than a school-organized (show) I've played," said Ryan. "It's definitely exciting. My friends have heard me play before, but not with the band. I brought my tape in and they said they wanted to listen."

Ryan said he was glad to help out the community stadium project, because the school was helping his band out by giving them a stage.

"He (Mr. Koch) did us the favor by letting us play and, in turn, we can help raise some of the money," the Smith youth said.

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Bedford Community Stadium update

Spaghetti Dinner a huge success!

The Bedford High School Alumni Association held the 1st Annual Spaghetti Dinner on Thursday, November 7 at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Catholic Church in Temperance. The guest speaker for the dinner was former Detroit Piston NBA All-Star Bill Laimbeer.

Bill spoke of his life experiences as a young high school basketball player from California, a student-athlete at the University of Notre Dame and as a member of the NBA championship teams with the Detroit Pistons. He answered questions from the audience ranging from what it is like to be 6'11" to his opinions of current players in the NBA. Bill received a well-deserved standing ovation when he finished.

Over 450 persons attended the dinner which raised approximately \$9,000 for the Bedford Community Stadium project.

Stadium video available to the general public

The Bedford Community Stadium Committee has produced an informational video on the Bedford Community Stadium project. The purpose of the video is to give a general overview of the stadium project and answer the most frequently asked questions concerning the project. Copies are available for overnight viewing by the general public at the following locations: Bedford High School Library, Bedford Jr. High Library and the Temperance Branch of the Monroe County Library. The following video stores will also have copies at no charge for overnight viewing: Premier Video (Temperance and Lambertville), Lambertville Foodtown Plus and the Video Connection location at Lewis and Sterns. Copies may also be obtained by calling Co-Chairman Gene Stock at 847-6358 or Phil Swy at 847-3964.

Pledge drive begins

The Bedford Community Stadium Committee announced recently that it is beginning a pledge drive to complete the stadium project. Pledges may be made over a period from one to

five years. The committee has already received a number of corporate and private pledges. Some of the pledges received so far are MTS Seating, \$100,000; Northtowne Chevrolet, \$30,000; Bedford Athletic Boosters, \$15,000; Bedford Lions Club, \$5,000; Lambertville Fire Department, \$5,000. A number of anonymous pledges have also been received.

Corporations, businesses, civic groups and private donors may participate in the pledge drive by participating in one of the many partnership opportunities that will be available. The stadium committee has broken the stadium down into various components ranging from the football field, grand stands, concession stands to flagpoles, walls and landscaping. Persons wishing to pledge the value that has been placed on each of these items will receive recognition on the item (company name, group name or individual name). Donors will also receive appropriate recognition on the inside of the east wall which will be used to honor persons who have donated to the stadium project, whether it be an in-kind or cash donation.

If you would like information on how you can make a pledge or participate in one of the partnership opportunities, contact the Co-Chairman Gene Stock at 847-6358 or Phil Swy at 847-3964. The stadium committee members are also available to make business, private individuals or group presentations concerning the project.

Final construction documents completed

Final construction documents for the Bedford Community Stadium project have been completed by the architectural firm of SSOE. The stadium committee plans to bid out the work for the project as funds are raised. Copies of the construction documents are available for review by anyone who is interested in bidding on the project or would like to make an in-kind donation.

To review the construction documents or to receive bid information, contact Gene Stock at 847-6358 or Bill Decker, Jr.,

project construction coordinator at 854-2455 or 856-4175.

Calendar sale underway

The Bedford High School National Honor Society is selling calendars as a fundraiser for the Bedford Community Stadium. The calendars, which were donated by the Bedford Lions Club, feature a color photo of the Bedford Community Stadium model and list various Bedford athletic events along with dates of various school, community and township meetings. A minimum donation of \$3 is being requested. For more information contact Bedford High School at 847-6736 or Gene Stock at 847-6358.



BEDFORD PRESS

2457 Tremainsville
Toledo, Ohio 43613
(419) 474-2248



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Planners approves stadium site plan

BEDFORD — The Bedford Township Planning Commission Thursday approved a site plan for the Bedford Community Stadium, bringing the project one step closer to ground-breaking.

Approval was granted even though no one from the stadium committee attended the meeting to support the commission's approval. According to stadium committee co-chair Gene Stock, no one on his end was even aware the hearing was taking place.

The planning commission approved the plan pending letters of approval from the Monroe County Road and Drain commissions. Once those are received the request for site plan approval will move to the Monroe County Board of Commissioners.

Mr. Stock heads the committee, formed by the Bedford High School Alumni Association, which plans to use private donations to build a \$1.5 million, 5,000-seat stadium behind the junior and senior high schools on Dean and Jackman roads.

The success of the Nov. 7 spaghetti dinner brings the stadium committee \$12,500 closer to their financial goal. Five hundred people paid \$25 a ticket to eat pasta, support the stadium, and hear former Detroit Piston Bill Laimbeer talk about the good old days. Space for the event, which was organized by Ken Weaver and Ed Mazur, was provided free of charge by Our Lady of Mr. Carmel Catholic Church in Temperance.

Video available for Bedford stadium

BEDFORD TOWNSHIP — Everything there is to know about the planned Bedford Community Stadium is featured in a 15-minute video produced by Lambertville's Triple L Productions.

The Bedford Community Stadium Committee is distributing the film to potential donors and community residents as a way to increase awareness, and hopefully donations, to the \$1.5 million project.

The video explains why Bedford needs a new stadium and shows what it will look like when completed.

Triple L Productions gave the committee a discounted rate of \$3,500 to produce the video, said committee

Co-Chairman Gene Stock. Other bids received were in the \$10,000 to \$12,000 range.

Copies of the tape are available for overnight viewing at the Bedford High School Library, the Bedford Junior High Library, and the Temperance branch of the Monroe County Library.

The following private businesses have also agreed to loan out the video free of charge: Premier Video in Temperance and Lambertville, Lambertville Food Town Plus, The Razor's Edge, The Suburbanite Barber Shop, H&S Sports, Temperance Video and the Video Connection at Lewis Ave. and Sterns Rd.

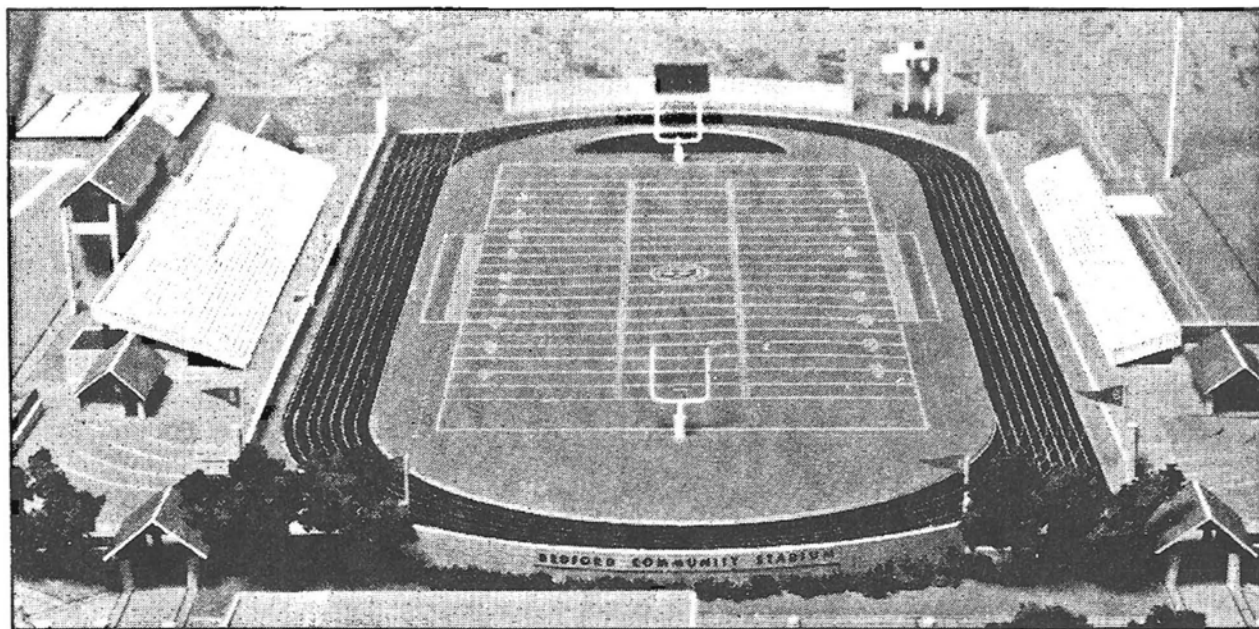
Committee members hope the video will persuade businesses and individuals to enter into the stadium pledge drive.

Pledging allows donors to space out their contribution over a period of one to five years. The committee has so far received an anonymous \$20,000 donation that will pay for the construction of the visitor's side entry pavilion, Mr. Stock said.

For a \$300,000 donation, a business, civic group, or private individual can sponsor the stadium itself. Also up for grabs are the grand stands, concession stands, flagpoles, walls and landscaping.

Monroe Evening News, Sat., Dec. 21, 1996

Bedford alumni group builds good reputation with stadium project



This model of the proposed stadium helps the Bedford High School Alumni Association raise funds.

BY DEBRA BAKER
BLADE STAFF WRITER

Looking for tips on marketing strategies? Don't waste your time with a high-powered consultant. Just look to the Bedford High School Alumni Association.

The association's stadium committee, chaired by Gene Stock and Phil Swy, has taken advantage of nearly every fund-raising opportunity available — from brick sales to spaghetti dinners to public meetings with three-dimensional architectural models — to raise money for its \$1.5 million stadium project.

The stadium construction is the first special project of the alumni association. The stadium is being built entirely with private funds.

The goal is to have the stadium open and ready to go by next fall's football season.

"In January, we'll look at the pledges and the financing and see what we feel are the components necessary to open in the fall. Then will look at the financing and see where we are," Mr. Stock said.

The committee's latest marketing campaign includes a videotape presentation aimed at attracting the big dollars of area companies.

The latest pledge drive allows donors to buy different components of the stadium. For example, the football field can be purchased for \$300,000; the press box for \$200,000; and the concession stands for \$50,000 or \$60,000.

Northtowne Chevrolet, for example, purchased the scoreboard for \$30,000, and the Lambertville Fire Department donated \$5,000 for a goal post.

By purchasing the various components, the donors receive recog-

nition on the item. They will also receive appropriate recognition on the inside east wall of the stadium, which is to be used to honor persons who donate to the project.

The video is available to give a general overview of the project and to answer the most frequently asked questions about it.

"We thought about a video for quite awhile. We wanted to make presentations without toting around the model," Mr. Stock said. "It doesn't answer all the questions, but it's informative enough to give a general overview."

Although the committee was initially hesitant about spending \$7,000 on the making of the videos, they eventually agreed it was worth the expense.

The video even been made available in local video stores and libraries.

Pledge drive begins for new stadium

The Bedford Community Stadium Committee has begun its pledge drive to assist in funding for a new football stadium at Bedford High School.

Pledges may be over a period from one to five years. The committee has already received a number of corporate and private pledges, including MTS Seating (\$100,000); Northtown Chevrolet (\$30,000); The Bedford Athletic Boosters (\$15,000); The Bedford Lions Club (\$5,000); and The Lambertville Fire Department (\$5,000). A number of anonymous pledges have also been received.

Corporations, businesses, civic groups and private donors may contribute to the pledge drive by participating in one of the many partnership opportunities that will be available. The stadium committee has broken the stadium down into various components ranging from the football field, grand stands, concession stands, flag poles, walls and landscaping. Persons wishing to pledge the value that has been placed on each of these items will receive recognition on the item. Donors, whether it be an in-kind or cash donation, will also receive appropriate recognition on the inside of the east wall.

The Bedford Community Stadium Committee has also produced an informational video on the project which is available for overnight viewing at no charge from the following locations; Bedford High School Library, Bedford Junior High Library, Temperance Branch of the Monroe County Library, Premier Video (Temperance and Lambertville), Lambertville Foodtown Plus, Temperance Video and the Video Connection at Lewis and Sterns Rds.

For more information on making a pledge, participating in one of the partnership opportunities or obtaining a copy of the instructional video, contact the stadium projects co-chairmen Gene Stock (847-6358) or Phil Swy (847-3964).

Stadium backers to sell candy to raise funds

BEDFORD TOWNSHIP — The Bedford Community Stadium Committee will use chocolate to help build its arena.

Next month the committee will start selling Bedford Community Stadium chocolate bars for \$1 each.

The committee has signed a deal with Morley Candy Makers of Clinton Township, who will create the signature candy, which will be sold at sporting events, local stores, and by anyone who volunteers.

Profits of \$32,000 are expected from selling the 50,000 candy bars the committee is committed to buying. Morley is donating the first 15,000 bars.

The candy bar is yet another gimmick being used by the stadium committee to raise the money necessary to complete the project. Preliminary estimates peg the cost at \$1.5 million.

As of Dec. 31, the committee had raised \$188,000 in cash and in-kind donations, \$40,000 of which came through the brick sale campaign.

The committee also has secured \$241,000 in corporate pledges over the next year to five years.

Lambertville True Value Hardware has donated \$5,000 toward the goal post. Also joining the 5,000 club are the Bedford Business Association and Bedford residents Ed and Mary Zeiler.

— Cynthia Asmann

Bedford hopes candy sale sweetens funds for stadium

BY DEBRA BAKER
BLADE STAFF WRITER

TEMPERANCE — The Bedford Alumni Association will introduce the new "Bedford Community Stadium Candy Bar" this weekend during the 14th annual Bedford Trade Fair.

The candy bar sale is the latest fund-raising effort by the association, which is raising private funds to build a community stadium near the high school.

The stadium committee has signed a deal with Morley Candy Makers, which has designed a candy wrapper for the stadium bar.

As part of the agreement with Morley, the stadium committee has committed to selling bars over a two-year period. Profits of \$32,000 are expected.

"We are proud to enter into this partnership with the Bedford Community," said Thomas Morley, president of the company. "The

Bedford Alumni Association's commitment to supporting the needs of the youth in the community is excellent."

The \$1.5-million Bedford Community Stadium is the first special project of the alumni association. It is being built entirely from private funds.

The goal is to have the stadium open and ready for this fall for football season. /

Gene Stock, co-chairman of the stadium committee, said the arrangement with Morley stemmed from the committee's interest in working with fund-raisers who have worked with the Bedford schools in the past.

"We wanted to make sure we approached all the people who did business with the Bedford Public Schools," Mr. Stock said.

Morley has been involved with Bedford school fund-raising events for many years, Mr. Stock said.

The company is also a producer

of celebrity candy bars.

The candy bars, a blend of milk chocolate and crispy rice, will be available at local businesses and from private sellers.

The debut of the chocolate bars will be at this weekend's trade fair. The 14th annual event at the Bedford Senior High School will be held Saturday from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The event will include continuous entertainment, door and booth prizes, and special coupon offers from business. This year 192 vendors — compared to 185 last year — are expected to participate in the event.

Last year an estimated 14,000 people attended the event.

Organizers attributed the growth of the fair's popularity to the increase in the associations overall membership, now at 160 members.

Got a buck? Buy a bar

Bedford Community Stadium Committee to sell candy bars to raise money for building project

By CYNTHIA ASMANN
Evening News staff writer

BEDFORD TOWNSHIP — The Bedford Community Stadium Bar, described by its manufacturer as a "smooth blend of milk chocolate and crispy rice," will hit the market Saturday.

The official unveiling will take place at 9 a.m. at the Bedford Business Association's trade fair at Bedford High School. One buck will get a chocolate lover or stadium supporter a 2 oz. candy bar.

The stadium committee has contracted with Morley Candy Makers for 50,000 candy bars. Total sales will add \$32,000 to the stadium committee coffers.

Morley Candy Makers heralds itself as the nation's leading producer of celebrity candy bars.

"We are proud to enter into this partnership with the Bedford community," said Morley president Thomas Morley. "The Bedford Alumni Association's commitment to supporting the needs of the youth in the community is excellent."

The chocolate bar will sell for \$1 and will be available from numerous local businesses and at the stadium.

Several civic and sporting groups, such as the girls' softball team, also have approached the stadium committee asking

if they can help sell the bars, committee co-chairman Gene Stock said.

The Bedford Community Stadium Bar has been endorsed by the Bedford Business Association, the Monroe County Chamber of Commerce and the Toledo Area Chamber of Commerce.

For information on how to help with this fund-raising effort, contact Kevin Wexler at (419) 349-3663.

Other upcoming fund-raisers include a night with the Toledo Storm at Toledo Sports Arena. Tickets to the March 21

hockey game are \$8 a piece, or \$30 for a four pack.

Tickets for that event will be available at the Bedford Business Fair as well as from the

Bedford Community Education Office at 1623 W. Sterns Rd., H&S Sports Plus at 8952 Lewis Ave., and from Linda Stock at Bedford High School. Tickets also can be purchased by calling Carol and Ray Seitz at 856-7230. All proceeds will go to the stadium project.

And to make supporting the stadium project even simpler, patrons can charge their contributions. The stadium committee and the Bedford High School Alumni Association will now accept Visa and MasterCard from those wishing to pay their membership dues or donate money to the stadium.





BLADE PHOTO BY DON STRAYER

Kevin Wexler of Temperance sells a bar of candy to Karen Miller of Lambertville as a fund-raiser.

Alumni boosters of stadium sweeten Bedford Trade Fair

BY DEBRA BAKER
BLADE STAFF WRITER

TEMPERANCE — The 14th annual Bedford Trade Fair had a chocolate-covered kick-off Saturday morning.

The high school's alumni association used the trade fair forum to officially introduce to the public the Bedford Community Stadium candy bar, which is being sold to raise money for a new stadium.

The \$1.5-million Bedford Community Stadium is the first special project of the alumni association. It is being built entirely from private funds. The goal is to have the stadium open and ready for use by this fall's football season.

The association's stadium committee signed a deal with Morley Candy Makers, which custom-designed a candy wrapper for the stadium bar.

As part of the agreement with Morley, the stadium committee has committed to sell 50,000 bars over a two-year period. Profits of \$32,000 are expected.

The kick-off of the candy sale was just a small part of one the township's biggest events of the year.

More than 10,000 people were expected to walk the halls of the high school last weekend, where about 150 vendors and organizations — all from Bedford Township — displayed their goods and wares.

"It's an opportunity for all our business to be in one place so the citizens can see them," said LaMar Frederick, township supervisor.

Wayne Pavlika, president of the Bedford Business Association, the group responsible for planning and organizing the event, said the fair helps the community see what

Bedford has to offer.

"A lot of people want to keep their money in Bedford," Mr. Pavlika said. "It ties the businesses and the community to Bedford. It's a major success every year."

Last year, 14,000 people attended the two-day event.

In addition to business, many nonprofit organizations also take part in the trade fair.

"We call it a trade fair, but it's everything," Mr. Pavlika said.

The Boy Scouts Explorer troop that works with the Lambertville Volunteer Fire Department, for example, was selling reflective address signs that can be attached to mailboxes.

Brad Periat, an Explorer who is a senior at Bedford, said the money will help pay for uniforms, gear, and activities of the organization.

Bedford Community Stadium Bar is first Morley's school candy bar ever

Fall of '97 is new BHS Stadium's projected opening date

By Leah Dickey
Staff Writer

The Bedford Alumni Association signed a 2-year agreement with the Morley Candy Makers to produce a special Bedford Community Stadium Bar.

Proceeds from the candy bars, which are being sold for \$1.00 each, will assist in raising funds for the new stadium project.

The Bedford Community Stadium, to be constructed totally through private funding, is projected to open in the fall of 1997. The Bedford Community Stadium Bar is the first special project of the Bedford High School Alumni Association.

The Bedford Community Stadium bar was introduced at 9 a.m. on Saturday, March 8, at the 14th Annual BBA Trade Fair at Bedford High School. Nearly 1,400 of the candy bars were sold during the two-day trade fair.

Morley, a manufacturer of chocolate since 1919, has participated in fund-raising programs with schools throughout Michigan, Illinois and Wisconsin.

"We've manufactured sport celebrity bars," noted Howard, "but this is the very first time Morley has taken on with a school and put its name on it, so your school can be proud of it."

"The entire project of the Bedford Community Bar is backing your community," said Morley Candy representative Paul Howard. "We try to get involved in communities like this. It was such a pleasure just to be asked to be involved in this project."

"Bedford has had a long-standing tradition with Morley," said Steve Lennex, president of the Bedford Alumni Association. "Their products have supported a lot of fund-raisers in this

school. Now the Alumni Association wants to take a look at putting something back into the community. Hopefully this partnership continues throughout the next 50, 60 years." The stadium will be constructed as part of the sports complex that houses the current track, which is located behind the Bedford Junior and Senior High buildings at Dean and Jackman roads.

Major components of the new stadium include all aluminum bench seating, to hold over 3,500 people in the home section and over 1,500 visitors, a bi-level press box with elevator for handicapped accessibility, three concession stands, a community plaza/entry area, a large electronic scoreboard, and three restroom facilities under the stands. Also, a "Wall of Fame" is planned for the west end and a "Partnership Recognition Wall" for the east end.

The stadium construction was named as the first special project of the Bedford High School Alumni Association on February 8, 1996. Estimated construction cost is \$1.5 million.

The Bedford Community Stadium Bar, made with crispy rice in milk chocolate, was selected from several student focus groups.

"Under the agreement," said Gene Stock, co-director of the Bedford Community Stadium Committee. "Morley will manufacture the candy bars on a need basis for the two years, or until the full 50,000 candy bars are gone... we can even pursue more later, if we want."

The Bedford Community Stadium Bar is available for purchase throughout the community at local businesses and by private sellers. For more information regarding obtaining candy bars or participating in this fund-raising effort, contact Kevin Wexler at (419) 349-3663 or (313) 854-1854.

"We just ordered our

third shipment of fifty cases - that's 3,000 candy bars," said Wexler, who, according to Bedford Community Stadium co-director Gene Stock, is "the guy to call on, the guy in charge - the Candy Man!"

The Bedford Community Stadium Committee is in the midst of a pledge drive. \$250,000 has already been collected in cash pledges and \$300,000 in firm pledges, according to Gene Stock, Co-Chairman of the Bedford Community Stadium Committee. He also noted that there are several trustworthy people who have made verbal commitments.

Booklets are now available for corporate pledges, as well as the Bedford Community Stadium Video. Right now, the committee is focusing on getting new bleachers in time for the track season in April.

According to Gene Stock, the light poles and fixtures have been purchased, and taking care of underground utilities (i.e., sewer, water, electric) are the current issue. The message center, which has been ordered and should be delivered in mid-April, will be temporarily wired into the baseball pressbox.

Persons wishing to join the Bedford High School Alumni Association or to make donations to the Bedford Community Stadium project will have another option.

The Alumni Association announced that they have opened a merchant Master Charge/Visa account with Monroe Bank & Trust. This service will allow people to use their MasterCard or Visa Card to charge their membership dues, purchase items or fund-raising tickets sold by the association, and to make donations to the stadium project.

Any questions regarding this new service should be directed to Bedford Alumni Association President Steve Lennex at (313) 856-8032.

3/24/97 BEDFORD PRESS

New stadium at 1st and goal

Progress is seen in race for completion

BY DEBRA BAKER
BLADE STAFF WRITER

TEMPERANCE — It will be a race to the end zone, but officials involved with the Bedford Community Stadium project say plans are on track to hold the opening football game at the new facility.

With a state-of-the-art message and scoreboard installed, the sewer line finished, and the lighting wired and poles expected to be installed this week, visible progress is being made at the stadium.

"It's starting to look very good," said Denzil Bell, assistant superintendent of finance for the school district.

"It's going to come right down to the wire for the first football game, but if everything goes in place, we can do it," Mr. Bell said.

The Bedford Community Stadium is the first major project of the high school's alumni association. The project is being funded solely through private contributions and in-kind donations.

Despite concerns that the estimated cost of the project, originally slated at \$1.5 million, has increased to \$2.8 million, organizers said they are confident the project has the necessary financing.

To date, the committee has secured more than \$700,000 in income and pledges for the project.

With the help of the school district, the committee secured a \$1 million loan at an interest rate of 5.35 per cent.

The school district lent its credit rating, but is not involved in repayment of the loan.

The stadium committee is working with architects to redesign the stadium to reduce the cost of the project, Mr. Stock said.



BLADE PHOTO BY DON STRAYER

Gene Stock, co-chairman of the Bedford stadium committee, inspects the progress of the work as the scoreboard looms behind him.

The school district, which will benefit from the use of the facility, pays the bills on the project with money supplied by the stadium foundation.

Officials, who have spent more than a year planning, designing,

and raising money for the project, said they are confident — absent any unforeseen circumstances — they can meet their goal of having phase one of the project completed in time for the season football home opener.

"It'll be tight, but we hope to open here on Sept. 5," said Gene Stock, chairman of the stadium committee.

The project is broken down in phases based on what minimum components are needed to open the stadium by the fall, Mr. Stock said.

Phase one includes the installation of the scoreboard, bleachers, the entry pavilions and press box, a public address system, playing field with goal posts, lights, and the recognition wall and brick pavers.

Although permanent concession stands and a three-story press box will not be ready for the fall, the press box designed for the baseball field, located adjacent to the stadium, will be used for conces-

sions and operation of the scoreboard until the additional phases are completed.

Last week, builders finished installing the sanitary sewer and mounted the lights for night games on the poles.

The two goal posts — paid for by donations from True Value Hardware and the Lambertville Fire Department — are expected to be installed next week.

The school board last week approved masonry and concrete bids from Brecol Brothers, Inc., and the A.L. Musch Concrete, Inc., for the respective contracts.

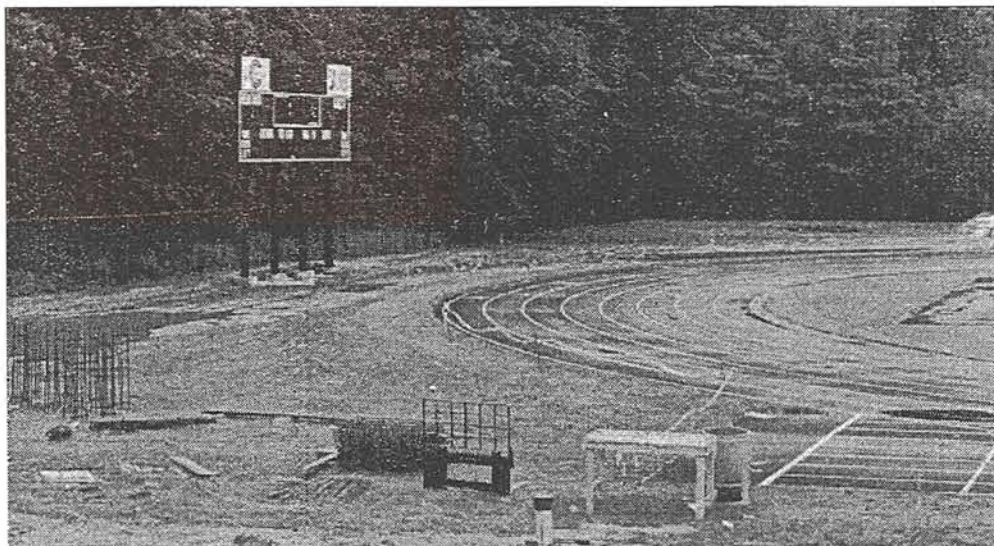
As with all bid awards, the district approves the contract but the full cost is reimbursed by the stadium committee.

It's starting to look very good.

It's going to come right down to the wire for the first football game, but if everything goes in place, we can do it.

Denzil Bell

assistant school superintendent of finance



The Bedford Community Stadium is slated for completion by Sept. 5, 1997, in time for Bedford's first home football game.

Bedford Community Stadium to be ready for use by fall

By Julia Jones
Staff Writer

The Bedford Stadium, the first special project of the Bedford Alumni Association will be ready for use this fall.

Gene Stock, co-chair of the Community Stadium committee said the committee meets with contractors each week to update the project.

Currently workers are placing block in a trench which will form the wall in front of the bleachers. Stock said the wall will be 4 ft. high and will have a ramp going up to the bleachers. There will be a 42 in. guardrail and seating for handicapped or anyone who needs a back to their seat.

Al Musch has the contract for pouring all of the concrete used in the stadium, which they are purchasing from Stevenson Concrete. The Brescol Brothers are responsible for the Masonry in the project. Toledo Caisson in conjunction with Consumers Energy will install the lights.

If everything goes well, Stock said, the target date for use of the stadium is Sept. 5, Bedford's first home football game.

Stock said the biggest challenge for the project is being able to coordinate all the contractors schedules to fit in the stadium schedule and get the job done on time. Goalposts were delivered last week. There is handrail and guardrail work to be done.

The public announcement system is currently being bidded.

The bricks being sold have brought \$50,000 to the project and will be placed along the side walks on the east and west ends of the stadium.

The east wall of the stadium will be a recognition wall for those who make large donations. Bronze plaques displayed on that wall are \$1,000. Heidtman Steel has pledged almost 300,000 to the project over the next five years. The Lambertville firefighters and True Value each paid for a goalpost.

Stock said the committee is still looking for monetary donations.

In the second phase of the project the stadium will have permanent bathrooms and concessions installed. For right now, Stock said, the bathrooms in the baseball press box will be used as women's bathrooms and portables will also be brought in,

similar to the situation at the current stadium.

Stock said, "A donor who would like to donate a concession or bathroom still can do that."

Stock said "the stadium is privately funded. There are no school monies involved." Donors can use their Mastercard or Visa for a donation.

George Wanke, surveyor has donated over \$10,000 in labor and material for the survey. Bill Decker Jr. is the construction manager.

The stadium will feature solid bleachers and a state of the art message center with a track timing system, that is one of the largest in the area. Stock said people who run the scoreboard will have to be trained because it is computerized. There will be two entry pavilions which have been paid for by Ort Tool and Die, and Temperance Animal Hospital.

Along with businesses and contributions which has made this project a reality and Phil Swy, co-chair, Stock would like to thank Ken Weaver and Rollie Abel, members of the stadium committee for the time they have put into the committee and the project.

Bedford's stadium gets close to kickoff

■ Officials say the high school football team can take to the field in September or, at the latest, October for homecoming.

By CYNTHIA ASMANN
Evening News staff writer

BEDFORD TOWNSHIP — If the weather will cooperate, Bedford High School's homecoming game will be played in its new \$1.2 million stadium this fall.

Nasty weather has delayed the Bedford Community Stadium project, but organizers promise the field will be ready for the Oct. 3 homecoming game, if not sooner.

Planners originally had hoped to have the new football field ready for the first game of the season but the recent barrage of rainstorms has Gene Stock, co-chair of the stadium committee, regrettably pushing back the calendar.

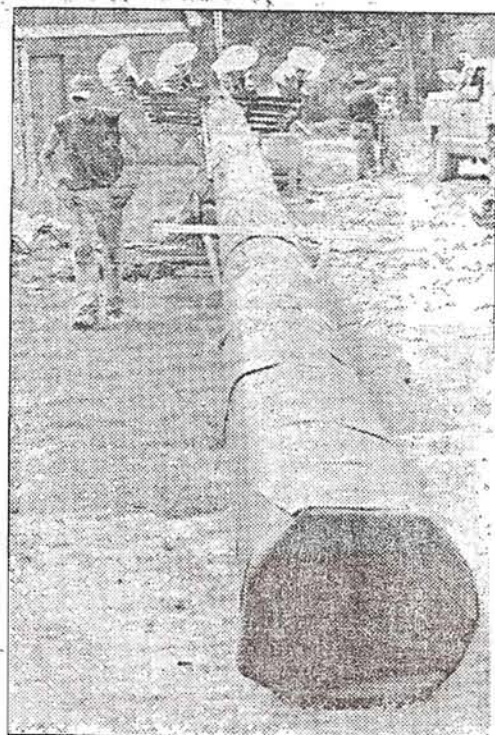
"The target date now is the second home game, which is Sept. 19," he said. "The next game is homecoming. If something happened where we didn't get in until (the end of) September, we would be there by Oct. 3."

Work on the stadium is moving along. Most of the masonry and concrete work has been done. The visitors' bleachers are being installed and the light poles are up. All the walls will be painted gray to match the press box. "It's a real beehive now because so many things are going on," said Mr. Stock.

All of the water and sewer lines have been laid, and the electrical lines are now being run for the lights and the scoreboard.

The project would not be so far along were it not for all the volunteers who have contributed their time and services, Mr. Stock said.

Jim's Quality Lawn and Landscape,



—Evening News photo by Cary Conover

A 115-foot light pole waits to be hoisted up into place last week at the Bedford Community Stadium. Each of the four light poles weighs 10 tons.

Stevenson's, and Housel's have voluntarily done all the landscaping work.

George Warnke of Warnke and Assoc. has done more than \$10,000 worth of surveying.

True Value Hardware of Bedford has donated \$3,000 worth of paint, which Bedford Auto Painting is using for the light poles. Russ Green Painting has already paint-

ed the press box at no cost.

"We've gotten a lot of neat donations lately," said Mr. Stock.

He's now looking for volunteer laborers. There's a lot of clean-up work that needs to be done at the site on the weekends, Mr. Stock said. And the bleacher company has agreed to reduce the price if volunteers come in to help with the installation.

"For people who can't donate money, this gives them another opportunity," Mr. Stock said. "We would like to make this a community effort."

Anyone interested should call Mr. Stock at 847-6358.

And as always, cash donations are always accepted. The committee has raised \$800,000 toward the \$1.2 million project.

Annual dinner: 'We have Bo'

BEDFORD TOWNSHIP — Bo Schembechler, former coach of the University of Michigan football team, will be at the next Bedford Community Stadium Committee spaghetti dinner.

"We thought we'd outdone ourselves with Bill Laimbeer," said stadium committee co-Chair Gene Stock of the special guest, a former Detroit Piston, at last year's dinner. "But this year we have Bo."



The dinner is set for Nov. 11 at a still-to-be-determined location. Admission to the event has not yet been set but tickets to last year's dinner sold for \$25 each.

Mr. Stock hinted that some Bedford High alumni may have helped lure Mr. Schembechler to the stadium event.

"Four of our boys from Bedford now play for the Michigan team," he said.

Anyone wanting more information about the dinner can call Ken Weaver at 856-4353.

COMMENT

The Monroe Evening News

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EDITORIALS

Bedford stadium: fine effort

It has been reminiscent of the can-do spirit of the old barn-raising bees of a bygone era: The community sees a need and marshals the know-how and the manpower to meet it.

That's the way the residents of the Bedford Schools district have approached the new high school stadium project. A need that once was a cause for hand-wringing gave rise to a dream, and that dream is now nearing reality.

This football season, the Bedford Mules will play their first games in the Bedford Community Stadium, a \$1.2 million expression of the community's pride, initiative and determination.

For years, many have talked about the need for a new stadium. The shortcomings of the old stadium were obvious. The place was built in the 1950s, its bleachers were old, it needed repairs, and it wasn't handicapped-accessible.

Seating capacity was well below the average attendance at football games. The lighting system was nearly obsolete, making repairs and operation expensive. It had no paved parking area and no locker rooms or restrooms for players, and it was too far from the high school and junior high school campus.

Finally, a group of alumni decided it was time to act. The planning, led by Gene Stock and Phil

Swy, started in November, 1995, with school officials and interested residents discussing ways to improve the stadium.

The next month, a meeting with more township residents was held, and participants decided to look into building a new stadium. It was then that the idea of forming an alumni association was brought up.

The Bedford Alumni Association was the result, with the stadium as its first project. Members voted on the features they most wanted to see, which were then incorporated into designs for the stadium.

Fund-raising projects began in earnest. Scads of businesses stepped forward to donate materials or services. A buy-a-brick campaign was started, and sales of a specially packaged candy bar generated more revenue.

So far, about \$800,000 has been raised toward the total cost of the stadium, and the fund-raising is continuing. That's a remarkable achievement. More remarkable still is that no school district money has been involved.

It means that, when the stadium is inaugurated, it will be far more than just a nice new stadium. It will be a monument to self-help — a testament that the old can-do community spirit of yesteryear still thrives in America today.

Football stadium sacked by delay

BY DEBRA BAKER
BLADE STAFF WRITER

TEMPERANCE — Construction delays caused by rainy August weather have sacked efforts to have the new Bedford Community Stadium ready for the high school football team's home opener.

Organizers of the nearly \$3 million project said last week that the stadium will not be finished as hoped by tomorrow night's game against St. Mary's Catholic Central High School.

The goal now is to have the stadium finished by the second home game Sept. 19. If not, organizers will shoot for the homecoming game two weeks later on Oct. 3.

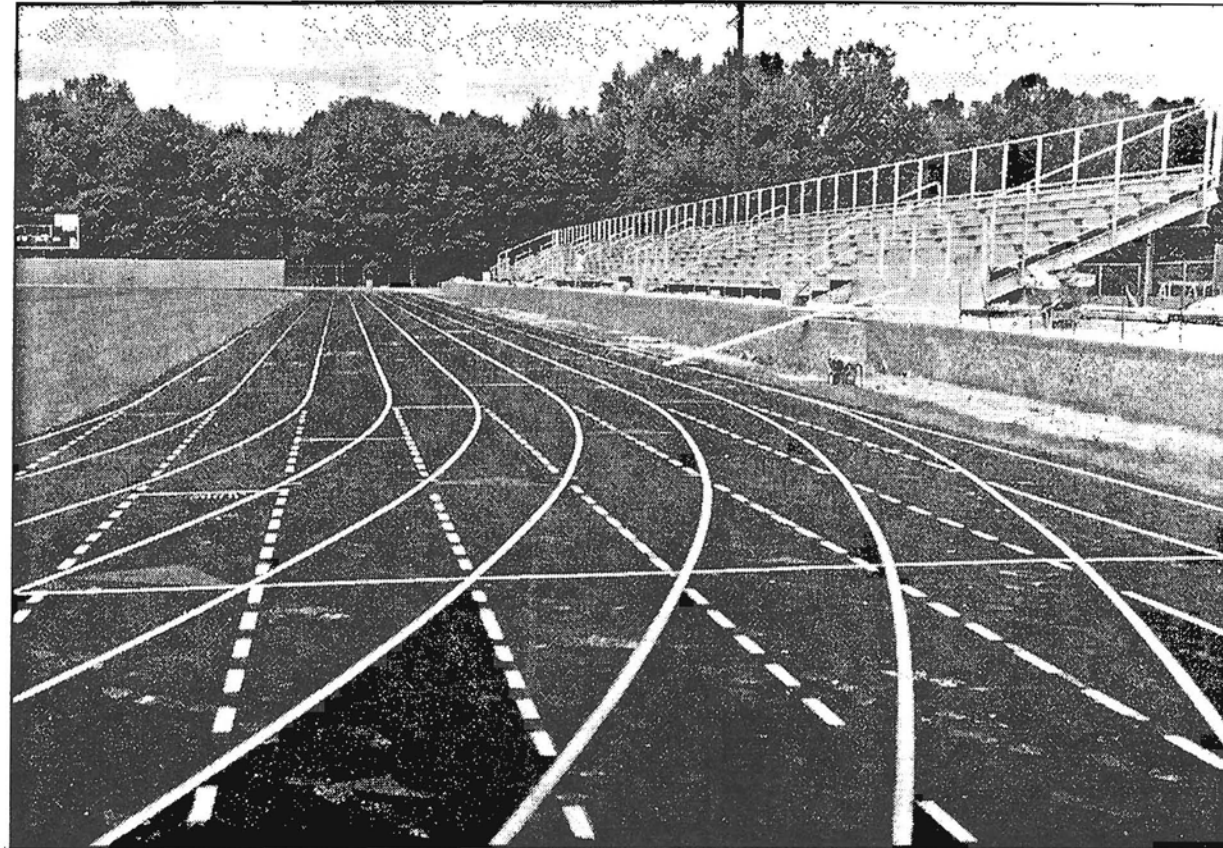
"They rain shoved us back," said Gene Stock, one of the chairmen of the Bedford Alumni Association's stadium committee.

"The bleacher company can't work when it's lightning out or even when it's wet. They shut down for five or six days."

Mr. Stock said last week that about three to four weeks worth of work remains to be done on the field.

If the weather cooperates, all the remaining work could be complete in time for the Fostoria game on Sept. 19.

The community stadium, which



BLADE PHOTO BY DON STRAYER

The goal now is to have the stadium finished by the second home game on Sept. 19.

includes a scoreboard, new track, and a dedication wall, is being built with private funds raised by the alumni association through several projects.

Once complete, it will include seating for 6,500, concession stands, and a press box.

The masonry work is nearly complete, and about two weeks worth of concrete work remained to be finished. The lights are up, and the entry pavilion is just about complete.

Work is set to put the final level on the three-story press box.

Once fully operational, the community stadium will culminate more than a year of organizing,

fund-raising, and construction efforts.

"When its done, it's probably going to be the nicest stadium outside the Glass Bowl in northwest Ohio and southeast Michigan," Mr. Stock said.

"The field looks beautiful. We don't want to rush and have things done improperly."

Mr. Stock also pointed out the benefit the football team will have in using both fields.

"This team will be the last to play on the old field, and the first to play on the new field," Mr. Stock said.

Still, it was disappointing not to

have the work completed in time for the first game of the year, Mr. Stock acknowledged.

"We knew in the back of our minds that something could happen, but we said 'Let's shoot for the fifth, and see what happens,'" Mr. Stock said.

"But every time it rains, they can't pour concrete. They can't do any grading with the bulldozers."

Mr. Stock said the stadium committee is seeking volunteers who would like to donate time and labor to the project by helping to pick up around the site and assist construction crews with any additional work that might need to be done.

Organizers hope for Sept. 19 stadium opening

Bob Stiegel
Associate Editor

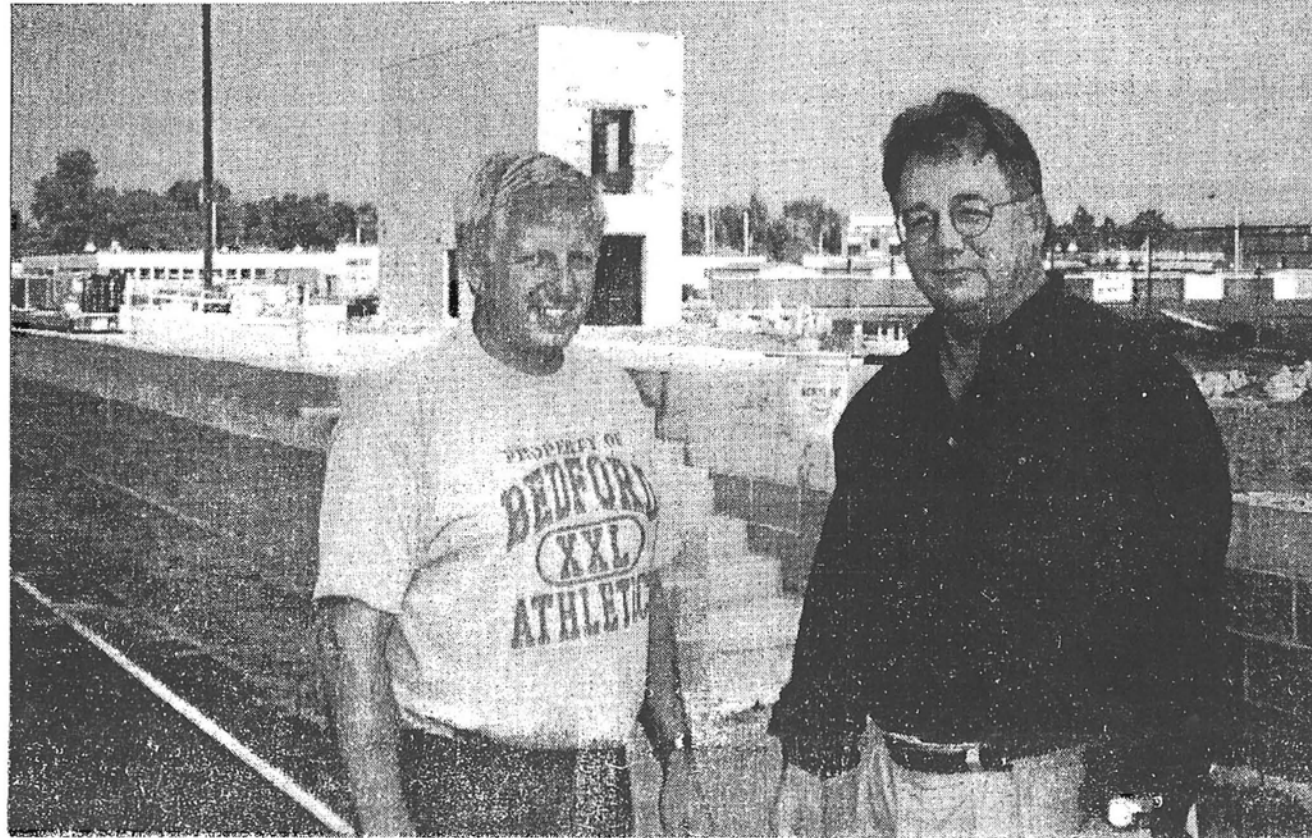
Maybe by playing this season's opener at its old home field, spectators and players will have a more vivid comparison of the football stadiums.

Inclement weather and contractors' schedules have delayed the unveiling of the \$1.2 million Bedford Community Stadium, the privately funded and built complex that will be turned over to Bedford Public Schools.

Plans now call for the 5,000-seat stadium to be ready for Bedford High School's September 19 game against Fostoria, the third game of the varsity football season. Bedford opened the season September 5 by hosting St. Mary Catholic Central at its old stadium on Douglas Road, and plays its second game on the road September 12 at Adrian.

Stadium committee co-chairmen Gene Stock and Phil Swy said they weren't overly disappointed with the delayed opening, not when dozens of people have come together with time, money and supplies to bring the stadium project this far this fast.

"Am I disappointed?" said Swy, of MTS Seating. "Let me put it this way: I am absolutely



Gene Stock (left) and Phil Swy, co-chairmen of the Bedford Community Stadium committee, stand amid their work in progress. Behind them is the stadium press box, which will be fronted by the home side bleachers.

delighted we're going to play football in the new stadium this season."

Bedford Community Sta-

dium — whose name will forever denote its construction by private initiative — will feature one of the best-lighted and largest seating

capacities in the region.

"We tried to plan for the future," said Stock, noting that the school's antiquated 1950s

stadium can seat only 2,800, an insufficient capacity for a growing community.

(Continued on page 6)

Organizers want track open to public

Bedford Community Stadium organizers say the facility's incorporated paved track, long used by area joggers and walkers, should be reopened to the public once the stadium is turned over to the public school system.

Bedford Public Schools, as owner, will have final say on who uses the track, although for several years it has welcomed non-students to exercise on the quarter-mile oval.

"The committee is going to recommend that they keep it open to the public," said stadium committee Co-chairman Gene Stock.

His co-chairman, Phil Swy, concurred.

"It's being built by the community," he said. "It should be used by the community."

The track, closed since July because of construction, has been especially important to some joggers and walkers because of a lack of other suitable exercise areas.

Organizers hope for Sept. 19 stadium opening

(Continued from front)

The new stadium, situated between the high school and junior high school on Jackman Road and incorporating an existing oval track, will do without some finishing touches during its inaugural season. Those include permanent restrooms and concession stands, Stock said.

"The first phase includes everything we need to play football," he said.

The stadium committee, which originated in the fall of 1995 when athletics supporters sensed voters might not support a publicly financed stadium, so far has received \$750,000 in donations and pledges from local businesses and individuals. That amount does not include the in-kind services that have gone into stadium construction.

"I think that shows the kind of community pride we have in Bedford," Stock said. "We needed to unite the community again, and I think this stadium is doing that."

Major pledges have been made by Heidtman Steel (\$283,460 over five years) and Swy's MTS Seating (\$100,000 over five years). Four others — Ort Tool & Die, Northtowne Chevrolet, Monroe Bank & Trust and Temperance Animal Hospital — have pledged amounts of \$20,000 to \$35,000.

Another \$50,000, organizers said, has been generated by the sale of inscribed bricks, which will line a pathway at the stadium east end.

"There's a lot of talk today about partnerships with schools," Swy said. "Well, we're not just talking about it, we're doing it."

Swy noted that the project, despite its large scale, has advanced without a general con-

tractor. "Every sub (contractor) has gone above and beyond."

Swy and Stock made special mention of nine business owners for outstanding contributions. They are Jerry Brescol on masonry, Bill Decker Jr. for advice and planning, Russ Green on painting, Cliff King for fencing, Russ McCormick for irrigation sprinklers, Al Musch for concrete, Dick Oswald for paint, George Warnke for surveying, and Jeff Zink for water and sewer line placement.

"They're Bedford grads," Swy said. "They want to give something back."

In the meantime, other residents who want to contribute to the construction project still can do so in a variety of ways. Cash donations and pledges are still accepted, as is volunteer labor. Sales of specially inscribed bricks will continue throughout the football season, with those replacing "blanks" in the bricked pathway, Stock said.

Also, some tickets might still be available for a Nov. 11 fund-raiser spaghetti dinner that will feature former University of Michigan football coach Bo Schembechler. About half of 480 seats were sold prior to formal announcement of the dinner's featured guest, organizers said.

Tickets for the dinner, to be held at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, cost \$100 each. All proceeds will go toward stadium expenses because Schembechler has agreed to appear for free, organizers said.

For ticket purchases, call stadium committee member Ken Weaver at 856-4353. To contribute to the construction effort in any way, call Stock at 847-6358 or Swy at 847-3964.

Ex-coach to be in Bedford

BY DEBRA BAKER
BLADE STAFF WRITER

TEMPERANCE — The Bedford High School alumni association is getting a little help from Bo Schembechler in its efforts to raise money for the community stadium.

The former head football coach at the University of Michigan will be the keynote speaker Nov. 11 at the association's second annual spaghetti dinner.

Proceeds from the \$100 and \$50 a ticket event will go to support the Bedford community stadium project estimated at \$2.8 million.

Mr. Schembechler waived his speaking fee, so the group hopes the event will net significant profits for the stadium.

Last year, Bill Laimbeer former player on the Detroit Pistons was the keynote speaker. About \$9,000 was raised selling tickets for \$25 each.

Ed Mazur, co-chairman of the event, said they expect to raise even more money this year. The group is selling 800 tickets for \$100 each, and 400 tickets at \$50. About a third of the tickets have been sold.

The stadium project is the first initiative of the young alumni association.

The community stadium, which includes a state-of-the art scoreboard and a dedication wall, is being built with private money raised by the alumni association through a myriad of projects.

Once complete, it will include seating for 6,500 people, concession stands, and a press box.

The event will be held at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church, 8330 Lewis Avenue.

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Stadium opening delayed

The unveiling of the Bedford Community Stadium, a \$1.2 million private initiative, has been delayed to next month at the earliest.

While weather hasn't been terrible, there have been enough rainy days to disrupt the schedules of workers, many of whom are donating time and materials to the stadium.

Phil Swy, co-chairman of the stadium committee, said he now hopes the stadium will be ready for use by Oct. 3, the date of Bedford High School's homecoming football game. However, he cautioned that additional delays could be encountered.

"As with all large construc-

tion projects, you can say absolutely until it's all done," Swy said. "But I'm sure we'll play football there this fall."

The 5,000-seat stadium, located behind the high school on Jackman Road, is being funded entirely by private donations.

Much of that money is being generated by the sale of inscribed bricks, which will line a pathway. Swy said the committee is "getting a flood of orders" for the commemorative bricks, and that it won't be possible to get all produced, inscribed and placed this football season.

All of the bricks will be in place in time for the next football season, he said.

Bedford stadium ready for homecoming kickoff

■ The \$1.2 million facility seats 5,000 and comes 19 months after proponents first envisioned replacing Bedford High School's 40-year-old structure.

By CYNTHIA ASMANN
Evening News staff writer

In Bedford Township this Friday, crowds won't only be celebrating the homecoming game; they'll be christening the new Bedford Community Stadium.

A mere 19 months after the Bedford Community Stadium Committee was formed, Bedford's field of dreams is now reality.

While the stadium lights gleam and crowds cheer from the 5,000-seat bleachers, the Bedford High School Kicking Mules will face off against Findlay (Ohio) High School.

The new stadium is located at Bedford High School at Jackman and Dean Rds. It replaces the old one off Douglas Rd.

Right now Bedford's team is more excited about the actual game itself than where it's going to be played, said Coach Ray Kwiatkowski.

"We (the stadium committee members) think of it as being a historic event. But the kids are like, so what," he said. "The kids don't think of it as history. But 25 years from now, when they come back for

Homecoming events - 6B

their reunion, they'll be talking about it."

But the coach said he expects that once his players get out under the lights and see those packed bleachers, the excitement of the night will hit them.

"Right now our focus is more on the football game, yet there is a tremendous amount of excitement (overall)," Coach Kwiatkowski said. "It's going to be an awesome night."

Having a new stadium will not only help morale, it will increase the credibility of the school's football program, the coach said. "It's not always the facility that's the most important thing, but by golly when you go into U of M it's not a dogpatch," the coach said. "When you look at (the Bedford stadium) you feel a great sense of pride, feel hey, somebody cares about us."

Coach Kwiatkowski applauded the work of the Bedford Community Stadium Committee and the generosity of the local community.

"Something like this can't be done in too many places around the U.S.," he said. "When you look at the short period of time it's been done — for some (schools) it could be a lifetime dream that never gets done."

"I get in and walk through there, and I

See BEDFORD, Page 2A



—Evening News photo by Cary Conover

Workers ready the new Bedford Community Stadium for its inaugural event, Bedford High School's homecoming game, Friday night. The team's first practice on the new field is Thursday.

Bedford (cont.)

get goosebumps," he said.

Though some finishing touches remain to be completed, the field will be ready for Friday's game, Gene Stock, stadium committee co-chairman, said. The field was lined today, and all the touch-ups will be complete before Friday, he said. The team will have its first practice on the field Thursday.

"It's pretty neat," said Mr. Stock of the stadium. "It's been a long time coming."

The Bedford Community Stadium Committee announced its plans in March, 1996.

The new stadium includes an electronic scoreboard, goalposts, grandstand seating, a press box and a new field complete with drainage

and sprinkler systems.

The stadium committee argued that the old facility, built more than 40 years ago behind the old high school, was insufficient to suit the community's needs. The lighting was antiquated and there were no locker rooms for the athletes.

Over the past 19 months, the group raised \$800,000 needed for the \$1.2 million project. Additional fund-raisers, such as the Bo Schembechler spaghetti dinner Nov. 11, are being held to pay the balance.

Also planned are permanent concession stands and restrooms, neither of which can be built until the funds, about \$700,000, are raised.

"We would like to do it as soon

as possible," Mr. Stock said. "If someone were to step forward and donate the money, we could have it done before year's end."

Friday's football game and homecoming celebration will be the stadium's inaugural run. But because of all the hoopla associated with those events, the stadium committee has decided to wait until the first game of next year to hold a recognition ceremony for all donors.

Tickets are still available for the Bo Schembechler dinner at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Catholic Church hall. The \$100 and \$50 tickets are being pre-sold and can be obtained by calling Ken Weaver at 856-6778.



BLADE PHOTO BY DIANE HIRSH

From left, Rollie Abel, committee member, and Gene Stock, co-chairman of the project, are eager to fill the stands.

Homecoming kicks off in new stadium

BY DEBRA BAKER
BLADE STAFF WRITER

TEMPERANCE — Members of the Bedford High School alumni association gave something back to their alma mater when they returned for homecoming festivities last week: a new stadium.

The Bedford Community Stadium officially opened for Friday night's homecoming game against Findlay. The stadium project was coordinated by the school alumni association using private money and in-kind donations.

Organizers of the project had hoped to play the first home game

of the year in the new stadium, but the opening was delayed when work on the new stadium was not completed in time.

Unfortunately the new stadium wasn't enough to give Bedford an edge in the game. The team lost 51-7.

The stadium project started 19 months ago, shortly after alumni members decided to create a formal association. The stadium project was its first endeavor.

The inaugural game in the new stadium marked the completion of the first phase of the project. The \$1.2-million phase included renovating the field, new goal posts,

stadium lighting, seating for 5,000, two entry pavilions, a three-story press box, recognition walls, fencing, and landscaping.

Some detail work, including the installation of lettering to identify the stadium, still needs to be done to complete the initial phase. Workers spent nights working under the lights in effort to complete the project in time for the game.

Later phases include installing permanent restrooms and permanent concession stands.

Although originally slated to cost about \$2.8 million, changes in architectural plans and details will

keep the cost to about \$1.8 million.

Money for the project came from a variety of fund-raising efforts, including candy bar sales, spaghetti dinners, and corporate sponsorship opportunities.

About \$800,000 of the cost of the first phase has been pledged to date. Gene Stock, co-chairman of the project, said he expects even more money to come in now that people can see the results.

One of the most successful fund-raising techniques was a brick sale.

More than \$40,000 was raised by

See STADIUM, Page 2 ►

selling bricks that were inscribed and used for a dedication path along the stadium.

The bricks are set along side a sidewalk leading to the stadium. Blank bricks have been installed so that people interested in making a purchase can do so, Mr. Stock said.

"When people see these brick pavers, they will really want to take part," Mr. Stock said.

"Bricks can still be purchased. There is no cutoff; it's an ongoing thing."

The next major fund-raiser will be a spaghetti dinner on Tuesday Nov. 11 at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Church. Bo Schembechler, former head football coach of the University of Michigan, will be the keynote speaker.

A recognition ceremony will take place next Friday during the last home game against Clay High School.

A formal dedication is planned during next year's home opener.

THE BLADE: TOLEDO, OHIO

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 9, 1997

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Thousands cheer kickoff

■ The new Bedford Community Stadium behind the high school has officially replaced the 40-year-old field off Douglas Rd.

By DOUG DONNELLY
Evening News staff writer

TEMPERANCE — For more than two decades, Emery Shimel would go to work on fall Friday mornings knowing the first thing on his agenda: Paint the Bedford football field.

**Bedford routed,
Page 3B**

"They used to give me a half a day. That was by myself," Mr. Shimel, now retired, recalls.

Wednesday, a crew of four men working for a Maumee, Ohio, firm spent five hours each, painstakingly painting each hash mark, goal line, yard marker, sideline and end zone at the new Bedford Community Stadium, which was christened Friday.

The community stadium, built with nearly a million dollars in donations, has now officially replaced the old stadium, just 19 months after construction began.

"They've been planning it a lot longer than that," Mr. Shimel said while wandering around the new field during Bedford's 51-7 Great Lakes League loss against Findlay Friday. "I worked for the school for 25 years and they've always wanted a new stadium. This is nice. A lot bigger than I thought it would be."

It still wasn't big enough Friday. Some fans left after arriving at the stadium, only

Night of firsts at new Bedford stadium

The first football game in the new Bedford Community Stadium saw the Bedford Kicking Mules fall to the Findlay Trojans.

Some of the firsts:

First kickoff: Kevin Stock (B).

First run: Jeremy Rinehammer (F), 4-yard gain.

First punt: Nick Lotz (F).

First Bedford offensive play: Pat Gill, 20-yard run, making the first first down in the stadium.

First pass: Scott Feldman (B), incomplete.

First completed pass for Bedford: Scott Feldman to Clark Main.

First penalty: Bedford, offsides.

First sack: Mark Bosworth (F).

First field goal: Nick Lotz (F), from 45-yards out, scoring the first points in the stadium.

First touchdown: Demetrius Ball (F), 25-yard run, with 2:08 left in the first quarter.

First punt return for touchdown: Mark Bosworth (F), on first play of second quarter.

First fumble to result in first down: Kevin Stock (B) dropped back to punt but the snap hit the ground. Stock picked up the ball and ran five yards for a first down.

First victory: Findlay.

First homecoming queen at new stadium: Jill Renae Colvin.

to see about 7,000 in attendance — 2,000 of them ringing the field.

Mr. Shimel can't remember how many times he paced up and down the old stadium by himself, making white yard lines. But, he does know he never painted hash marks, or NFL-style sideline markers like the new field had Friday. He would start in the morning and the paint had just enough time to dry before the 7:30 p.m. kickoffs.

Earlier this week, Joe Zelinko, from Athletic Field Services, used 250 gallons of mixed paint and 20 man hours to spice up the new field. Yard markers are visible from everywhere in the stadium, especially with four large light towers shining on the field.

"You can't match this stadium," Mr. Zelinko said, examining his work. "And, it's not even finished yet. Everything is superior. Just a perfect view."

"Compared to other stadiums, this is the top of the line."

Those in the crowd mirrored Mr. Zelinko's thoughts.

"We made it out of the 18th century and into the 20th century and probably the 21st century," Temperance resident Mike Szirotnyak said.

"It's real impressive," Bedford graduate Mike Krob said. "When I went to high school here, we always had to go to the run-down old stadium. You always had to

See **STADIUM**, Page 12A



—Evening News photo by Donny Wilson

Bedford's eighth-grade band members joined the high school Marching Mules and their alumni Friday night to celebrate the opening of Bedford's new stadium on Jackman Rd. The Mules lost their homecoming game with Findlay 51-7.

Stadium (cont.)

fight to find a place to park. It was sort of an embarrassment."

Toledo resident Bob Lennex came to see his grandson, Scott Hoppe play for the Mules.

"You can thank the people for this," he said. "There is no tax dollars at all. You don't find very many people who work together for something like this."

The grand opening went off without a glitch, except for maybe the large crowd and those standing along the front fence. Crowds began forming in the parking lot at 4:30 p.m., 30 minutes before the gates opened. The Bedford side of the stands was full long before Bedford kicked off against Findlay.

The scoreboard lit up the field,

flashing messages like "Go Bedford" or "Please Drive Home With Care." Ticket takers swiftly worked to get everyone in the stadium. New yard markers spotted the ball on each play and new pylons, the orange markers that mark the end zone, were in place.

Longtime Bedford coach and now athletic director Bill Regnier was confident Friday's homecoming crowd was the biggest Bedford has ever seen. Cars were parked all over the school campus, with some overflow cars at the nearby Bedford library.

Even the weather cooperated.

"Sixty people were out here Saturday with shovels and rakes," said Gene Stock, co-chairman of the stadium committee. "Thursday, we

were out here until 10 p.m. putting up the flagpoles.

"If we would have had one day with all rain, we would have been dead in the water."

The old stadium was dark Friday night, but noise from the old field across the woods could be heard. Between the bus garage and old sign proclaiming the Douglas Rd. field "The Home of the Kicking Mules," only debris from last week's games and a few deflated balloons could be found.

The crowd at the community stadium seemed pleased with its replacement, however.

"We were driving by here the other night and the lights were so bright," Mr. Lennex said. "It was just like daylight. It is just beautiful. There is no comparison."

BEDFORD PRESS

November 3, 1997

Stadium organizers hope to maintain momentum

As former University of Michigan football coach Bo Schembechler might say, it's nice to be ahead but you can't afford to lose momentum.

About 50 people gathered October 23 for the first meeting of the Bedford Stadium Committee since the stadium's opening three weeks earlier. Maintaining momentum for the private initiative was uppermost on their minds, said committee Co-Chairman Gene Stock.

"Our basic message is we're not through fund-raising, even for phase one," Stock said.

Phase two at the 5,000-seat Bedford Community Stadium is the construction of modern restrooms and food service areas. Stadium organizers hope to have them up and operating by next football season.

The stadium committee has raised slightly more than \$800,000 in cash and pledges, Stock said. It has used a \$1 million loan to finance the project.

"We don't want to go out now and begin phase two until we get a good handle on phase one," Stock said.

Organizers plan to focus on

four main fund-raising efforts, including the Bedford High School Alumni Association's annual spaghetti dinner. This year's dinner, set for Nov. 11 at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, will feature former U-M coach Schembechler as speaker.

Other fund-raising programs are sales of personalized bricks at the stadium, candy bar sales, and a pledge drive.

There are three levels of pledges, but special emphasis will be put on obtaining \$1,000 pledges, payable over five years and earning donors membership in the "Million Dollar Club."

Bronze plaques bearing contributors' names will be placed at the stadium next year.

Individuals can contribute to the stadium effort through their United Way workplace drives. They can designate their donation whether they work in Bedford or any other community, including Toledo.

Stock said organizers want more people to join the effort. Volunteers can call Stock at 847-6358 or committee Co-Chairman Phil Swy at 847-3964.

Schembechler helps out Bedford Stadium project

By BILL BRENTON
Evening News sports writer

TEMPERANCE — A stirring motivational speech by former Michigan football coach Bo Schembechler and an ultra-successful fund-raiser for new Bedford Community Stadium blended like a quarterback's pass to a receiver Tuesday night.



BO
SCHEMBECHLER

Some 550 persons jammed Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Catholic Church's Auditorium/Gymnasium for the second annual Bedford Alumni Association spaghetti dinner. They added close to \$45,000 toward financing a 5,000-seat, \$1.2-million stadium already in use.

"We sold out," said Gene Stock, a major mover in the privately funded project. "What I liked best was the variety of people from major executives to some who could barely afford a \$50 ticket."

Schembechler, one of America's winningest college football coaches until retiring after the 1989 season, got into the act during an hour talk which kept listeners clapping and smiling.

"It's a beautiful project," he said after viewing Bedford's state-of-the-art activities home. "You must be proud."

"I've always believed there's a place in athletics for everyone who wants to compete."

Stock, Phil Swy, Ken Weaver, Ed Mazur and John Satkowski and others have reason to be proud.

Stock stressed what will be a

See SCHEMBECHLER, Page 2B

Schembechler (cont.)

multiuse facility "started as a dream two years ago. We had only a model at this time last year. Now we have a stadium."

Schembechler not only waived his fee. Bo also arrived early to sign hundreds of autographs.

"You build a stadium or gymnasium so young people can learn fundamental values," he explained.

The 69-year-old Wolverine legend mentioned U-M's solid win at Penn State Saturday, said Michigan will have "a tremendous battle" with Wisconsin, emphasized "there is no rivalry in football to match Michigan and Ohio State" and moved on to why ath-

letics are so important to young men and women of today.

"Attitude, organization, learning fundamentals of anything you do, setting goals, unselfishness, not complaining, discipline and motivation are major lessons. That's why I believe strongly in sports."

He also offered advice for coaches in the crowd:

"The most important thing in coaching is telling the truth — to everyone! Your code of conduct isn't gray. It's black and white."

His words will be remembered by the Bedford community while raising \$300,000 to \$400,000 it needs to complete the first phase of the stadium project.

Community Stadium to be dedicated with skydiving and fireworks

The Bedford Community Stadium will be dedicated in a formal ceremony at the first football game of the 1998 season between Bedford High School and Monroe Jefferson on Friday, Sept. 4.

The Bedford High School Alumni Association is inviting the public to participate in a tailgate party from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. Parking will be provided in the "mudhole," an open field between the high school and junior high school, and supervised by school employees.

The Mighty Meaty Swing Kings (MMSK), a Toledo-based swing band, has donated its services for the tailgate party. Saxophone player Randy Bialecki, Temperance, is a MMSK member, among the first to enter into the 90s jump-swing music scene. Dancing will be highly encouraged.

A short ceremony will begin before the game in which the Bedford Alumni Association will present a symbolic key to the Bedford Public Schools Board of Education. Local resident Dan Leslie, will deliver the key by skydiving from an aircraft provided by another local resident, Rick Swick of R.A.

Swick and Associates. The air-drop is scheduled for 7:15 p.m.

After the game, a fireworks display by local man Dan Kay will begin. The fireworks have been funded through local donations.

The stadium is the first special project by the Bedford High School Alumni Association. The cost was covered entirely by private funds and in-kind donations of labor and materials. Recently completed was Phase I, which includes field renovation; new goal posts; stadium lighting; seating for 5,000; two entry pavilions; a three-story press box; recognition walls; fencing; landscaping; sidewalks; and flag poles. High-technology equipment, including a scoreboard, message center and communications systems were also installed.

The cost of Phase I construction approaches \$1.5 million, but so far more than \$900,000 have been pledged or collected toward the project. Fund raising will continue for Phase I and Phase II, which includes permanent rest rooms and concession stands. The proceeds from the sale of Bedford Stadium candy bars and recognition bricks will benefit the project. A "Recogni-

tion Wall of Fame" located at the east end of the stadium will honor donor's with a name plaque for pledges greater than \$1,000.

Those interested in contributing to the dedication or the Stadium project may contact Gene Stock, chair of the Bedford Community Stadium Committee at (734) 847-6358 or Andy Dobrzanski at (734) 847-7141. More information on the project is also available by visiting the Web site www.bedford.k12.mi.us.

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**DEADLINE for the
September 7, 1998
issue is
MON., AUGUST 31
at 5 P.M.**

Key opens stadium dedication ceremony

By Phyllis Van Hove
Staff Writer

"Bedford Community Stadium - Be a Part of It" was the greeting flying from the back of an airplane as fans drove up to the Sept. 4 football game between Bedford and Monroe Jefferson High Schools.

The Bedford High School Alumni Association hosted several activities for the evening's dedication ceremony of the Bedford Community Stadium. The night began with a tailgate party for the community from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. Entertainment for the party was offered by the swing band, "The Mighty Meaty Swing Kings," with a dance floor area provided. Members of this band are all veteran players and entertainers who are one of the first Toledo groups to enter into the '90s jump-swing scene. Local resident Randy Bialecki is a member of the band, playing saxophone.

Opening the dedication ceremony for the community stadium was skydiver Dan Leslie, a local resident who donated his time to bring a large key to the stadium. Aircraft services were donated by local resident Rick Swick of R.A. Swick and Associates.

The key to the Bedford Community Stadium was presented to Dr. William Hall, superintendent of Bedford Public Schools, and Kay Williams, president of the Bedford Board of Education. Presenting the key were members of the Bedford Alumni Association, Gene Stock, Steve Lennex and Phil Swy. A fireworks show closed out the

evening, with local resident Dan Kay in charge. The cost for the fireworks display was underwritten by donations from local residents and businesses.

The Bedford Community Stadium is the first special project of the Bedford High School Alumni Association. The stadium project has been funded completely by private funds and in-kind donations of labor and materials. Phase I of the project is now complete. This phase included field renovation, new goalposts, stadium lighting, seating for 5,000 people, two entry pavilions, a three-story press box, recognition walls, fencing, landscaping, sidewalks with inscribed brick pavers and flagpoles. Also included were a state-of-the-art scoreboard, message center, sound and communication systems.

The cost of Phase I is \$1.5 million with more than \$900,000 pledged or donated so far toward the cost of the project. Fund raising will continue to raise the funds to pay for this phase and also to complete Phase II.

The second phase will include permanent restrooms and concession stands.

Donations for the stadium project may be done in several ways. Bedford Stadium Candy Bars are available for \$1. Recognition bricks may be purchased at a price of \$100 for a four-inch by eight-inch brick or \$200 for an eight-inch by eight-inch brick.

Those who wish also may participate in the pledge drive over a five-year period. A pledge of \$1,000 or more will include the donor's name on a plaque on the "Recognition Wall of Fame"



Members of the Bedford High School Alumni Association present a key to the new community stadium during ceremonies held Sept. 4.

located at the east end of the stadium.

Recent improvements to the stadium include several areas. The interior of the press box has been freshly painted. New carpeting donated by Townsend Carpeting has been installed in the pressbox top and second floor along with the stairways down to the first floor. The underground sprinkling system has been extended to all areas of the stadium where grass has been planted. This work is being completed by local resident Russ McCormack, owner of Mack & Jeds Irrigation Company.

In the planning for this fall are plaques on the "Recognition Wall of Fame" at the east end of the stadium. Plans also are being made for paint striping in red and white to be added to all of the stadium walls on the inside of the stadium. Numbers indicating the yard markings will be painted on the side walls in front of both home and visitor stands.

Further information on the stadium project is available by contacting Gene Stock at 847-6358 or the Alumni Association president, Andy Dobrzanski, at 847-7141.

Community donations keep Bedford stadium in the game

BY LARRY P. VELLEQUETTE
BLADE STAFF WRITER

TEMPERANCE - When the Bedford High School Mules played their first full season of football in their new stadium last fall, their supporters may have thought the team's remarkable venue was complete.

But they would have been quite wrong.

What started as the dream of a few Bedford athletic boosters and alumni in 1996 has blossomed into the county's premier outdoor stadium, and promises to become even more elaborate in the months to come as several planned additions take shape thanks to some generous alumni and other community supporters.

"You take a little bit of pride when you graduate from there and you can give something back," said Tom Bruechert, who along with his 1973 classmate and fellow concrete mason Chuck Faller, have begun work on a nine-foot sweeping walkway on the west side of the stadium.

The walkway will host commemorative paving bricks engraved

The arena has blossomed into the country's premier outdoor stadium.

with the names of contributors who've helped pay the bills on Bedford's \$2 million stadium.

Although the Mules played their first games in the stadium in 1998, much of the \$1 million loan taken to build the structure remains to be paid. The stadium was the project of the Bedford Alumni Association, which has taken responsibility for its financial and structural foundations.

"Once the stadium construction is finished, people think it's paid for, but it's not paid for. We still need to raise money to pay it off," said Gene Stock, chairman of the Alumni Association's stadium committee.

Some of those funds will come from the sale of commemorative pavers, which the association is selling for \$100 a brick, and \$200 for a double-sized brick.

A large portion of the remainder of the money needed is being collected through fund drives, encouraging local businesses and individuals to pledge their long-term support to the project, and in-kind donations to finish its construction, Mr. Stock said.

Later this month, the stadium committee hopes to hang the first of several donated limestone slabs above the stadiums east and west walkways. The slabs will contain bronze plaques with the names of the project's most generous benefactors, Mr. Stock said.

Although its large stands can host thousands of fans, one thing the stadium lacked in its freshman season was adequate concession areas, something the Bedford Band Boosters hope to do something about this year.

At its regular meeting tonight, the Bedford Board of Education is expected to approve bids to build three new state-of-the-art concession areas at the stadium, the cost of which is to be borne by the band boosters, which hopes to have the first one built in time for the team's first home game on Sept.

See STADIUM, Page 2 ►



BLADE PHOTO BY LISA DUTTON

Tom Bruechert sets forms for a concrete ramp as work on the Bedford Stadium goes on.

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Stadium

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"That's been our goal, but to be honest, we're getting pretty late in the game here.

Hopefully, in 30 days, we'll have a building up and a roof over our heads," said Lee Turpening, chair-

man of the Band Boosters concession stand building committee.

When they are built, the concession stands will not only boast stainless-steel interiors and block exterior construction to match the rest of the stadium, but also closed-circuit television monitors so workers and those in line can keep track of the action on the field.

"We designed them the way we think they will work best. The idea is to make them as comfortable as possible," Mr. Turpening said. Last season the band boosters made do with tents, hauling them back and forth for each game, something he hopes won't be repeated.

The boosters are borrowing money to pay the estimated \$150,000 to \$200,000 cost of the concession stands, which the group will pay for over the next 10 years through fund-raisers, Mr. Turpening said. Several local contractors and laborers have donated their time and materials to the project, lowering its costs significantly.