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FKHS NATATORIUM ROOF REPLACEMENT COULD EXCEED \$2.2 MILLION

USD 445 BOE weighs pool options

BY ANDY TAYLOR
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COFFEYVILLE — Do you have about \$2.2 million burning a hole in your pocket?

If so, the USD 445 Board of Education might have an interesting proposition for you.

Rebuilding the Field Kindley High School Natatorium.

Confronting the prospects of heavy price tags in multiple scenarios, school board members on Monday learned of the pool's future structural stability during a presentation at their monthly meeting.

In an hour-long presentation from assistant superintendent Michael Speer, the board intently listened as Speer gave a thorough history of the problems associated with the FKHS swimming pool, which is now closed and locked from public use due to the deteriorating condition of the roof and support beams.

Speer also gave an overview of the costs to repair the natatorium, as well as the expenses and revenues that are associated with the swimming pool facility.

The problems

The natatorium, which was built in 1972-73, has faced a series of challenges, as the inherent conditions of humidity, pool chemicals, and steel create corrosion and rust on the beams and trusses. Over the decades, that rust has caused joints and beams to weaken, thereby creating safety and structural stability concerns.

The condition of the roof was brought to the attention of FKHS principal and USD 445 administrators about one year ago when a contrac-



tor was attempting to place a new air conditioner compressor on top of the roof. The roof and beams bowed under the weight of the compressor. Upon further inspection, the contractor found corrosion and weakened supportive joints.

Once the natatorium was declared off limits to the public, a structural engineer was procured to give an assessment of the roof . . . as well as the costs to replace it.

The engineer's opinion: the entire roof must be replaced.

Over the past 20 years, USD 445 made attempts to remove humidity from the natatorium (namely installation of exhaust fans and air condition-

ing vents).

However, the environmental conditions have taken a toll on the natatorium roof, said Speer. He presented photographs of the corrosion in the roof structure. The corrosion was viewable to the board when it toured the facility in April.

The cost to repair

In April, Navitas Engineering confirmed that the entire roof structure will need to be replaced at a cost of about \$2.2 million.

That estimate covers the costs of an entire roof replacement; replacement of the HVAC and storm drainage system; painting of the interior walls;

placement of specialized, rust-resistant coating on the new steel beams and trusses; replacement of interior doors, exterior doors and transom; and removal and reinstallation of the pool partition.

However . . .

Because Navitas' bid was prepared in April, it will likely have to be revised to adjust for escalating construction costs and materials costs, Speer said.

Further expenses

Besides confronting a price tag of more than \$2.2 million to replace the roof, the pool has other needs, Speer said.

Such as . . .

- A thorough grouting will need to be performed to the pool basin as the pool leaks about 2,000 gallons per day, which equates to about a 2-inch loss from the pool surface.

This is an increase from the 1,500 gallon per day loss that was reported in 2003, Speer said.

Water infiltration has become a problem as water through an unknown underground source finds its way into the basin.

"The pool was drained many months ago, but there is standing water in the pool because water is leaking through cracks," he said.

The estimated cost to regrout the pool basin would be about \$23,000.

- the pool needs new lane ropes, estimated to cost \$4,500.

- New timing system and scoreboard are needed as corrosion has ruined the interior controls. A new system and scoreboard would cost about \$15,100.

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VSE Aviation sees continued growth in Indy



Colby Matthews . . . VSE Aviation general manager

Aviation MRO company completes expansion, adds to local payroll

BY ANDY TAYLOR
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INDEPENDENCE — The world of aviation engine maintenance and overhaul has found its home in Independence, Kan., thanks to the growth and expansion of

VSE Aviation, which is located at the Independence Airport.

In a presentation at the First Friday information session, VSE Aviation general manager Colby Matthews, spoke about the recent expansion of the plant, which included doubling the size of the facility's former 33,000 square feet footprint and adding more numbers to its payroll.

"We started out in 1992 as Kansas Aviation with about six or seven employees and were lo-

cated in the World War II hangar at the Independence Airport," he said. "Today, we have a 66,000 square foot facility and employee over 200 people."

With its specialty in aviation engine MRO (maintenance, repair, overhaul), VSE's Independence facility has found a niche in serving the general aviation industry by servicing and overhauling airplane engines that have surpassed the federally-mandated overhaul of 3,000

flight hours.

Aviation engine components are shipped to the Independence plant, where fuel control mechanisms are stripped, repaired or replaced, Matthews explained. Hoses are tested, control mechanisms are recalibrated, and sensors are replaced due to use. After all components are cleaned and checked, they are rebuilt onto the engine block, where the

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Renowned church hymn composer was Coffeyville native

Ira Stanphill's best-known songs include "Mansion Over the Hilltop," "Room at the Cross"

BY ANDY TAYLOR
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One would have to squint to find any mention of Ira Forest Stanphill in local history books.

That's because people are looking at the wrong books.

Instead, Stanphill's influence can best found in another book: the church hymnal.

Stanphill, who was raised in Mound Valley and Coffeyville as a child and attended local schools, is among the best-known composers of church hymns of the mid-20th century. Among the songs that he penned were "Room At the Cross," which has been a customary altar call at the end of Sunday morning worship and revival services; "Mansion Over the Hilltop," "I Know Who Holds Tomorrow," "Follow Me," and "Supertime," which was recorded by country music artists Johnny Cash and Jim Reeves.

With the help of research through the Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center in Springfield, Mo., Stanphill's brief biography follows:

- Stanphill's family moved to Mound Valley in Labette County shortly after his birth in New Mexico in 1914.
- As a child in Mound Valley, the Stanphill family befriended a local man with a talent for



Ira Stanphill, a prolific hymn composer, was best known for his song "Mansion Over the Hilltop." Stanphill spent part of his childhood in Mound Valley and later in Coffeyville, where he graduated from Field Kindley High School in 1932.

the piano. His name was Claude Gilson, whose vocal and piano skills were unmatched, even as he was blind since birth. Gilson was an accomplished musician in the Gospel music genre, performing with local groups for revival ser-

vices and special functions throughout Southeast Kansas. He also was a piano tuner, using only his senses of hearing and feel to guide his way through the fine-tuning of the 88 notes on the piano keyboard.

Claude also perfected classical music. So, in any setting, he could burn the ivories with toe-tapping, Southern Baptist convention-style music hymns and immediately delved into classical works by Mozart or Beethoven.

- Stanphill would later recall about being mesmerized with Gilson's quality of music dipped with spiritual influences.

- The Stanphill family would later move to Coffeyville in 1922. As a teenager, Ira became a gifted musician, learning simply chording and studying piano and voice. He also could play the ukulele, which landed him a spot on a weekly 15-minute show on radio station KGGF. It was on that show where Ira could take requests for songs and play them on his ukulele as the notes traveled across the broadcast spectrum.

- By the time he was entering middle school, Ira had mastered the piano, organ, ukulele, and accordion. He would later learn to perfect the xylophone, guitar, clarinet and saxophone.

- He was converted to Christianity at the age of 12 when his family attended the Assembly of God Church in Coffeyville.

- At age 15, he wrote his first chorus: "Move Forward." It was written for the Christ's Amba-

• see **STANPHILL**, page **A3**