

Waynesville Reorganized School District

1950 brought several changes to Pulaski County. The reactivation of Fort Leonard Wood began another economic boom and the days of the one-room school were coming to an end.

The state of Missouri and its normal schools began encouraging the consolidation and reorganization of school districts as early as 1910. In the first half of the 20th century, there were at least 90 school district locations, as mentioned in the *Pulaski County Rural Schools* published by the Pulaski County Historical Society (1990). Some consolidation took place during those five decades. The enrollment in some one-room schools declined to a few students of one or two families, who then went to the nearest school. The construction of Fort Leonard Wood in 1941 effectively deleted five schools: Bloodland, Union, Maze, Hopewell, and Rolling Heath. By 1949, there were 60 school districts in Pulaski County.

In the June 30, 1949, issue of the *Pulaski County Democrat*, the County Board of Education called for a vote on proposed reorganized school districts, as provided for by Senate Bill No. 307, 64th General Assembly. If the state combines

school districts, it is called reorganization. If the districts do it on their own, it is called consolidation.

The proposed reorganized school districts included the following districts: R-1— Dixon, Hancock, Hamilton, Fox Crossing, High Point, Franks, Pisgah, Lone Star, Gaddy, Shephard, Needmore, Burnett, and Mungy; R-2— Crocker, Brown, Bates, Cowan, Sweet Home, and Bear Ridge; R-3— Swedeborg,

Dublin, Lee, Oaklawn, Hawkeye, and Hicks; R-4,—Richland, Buzzard Roost, Moro, Mt. Satchel, Prairie Creek, Hazelgreen, Pleasant Knoll, Fairview, Oakview, O'Halloran, Elm Grove, and Skin Heel; R-5— Laquey, Turkey Ridge, Independence, Cedar Grove, Prospect, Fairview, Cave Springs, Hilton, and Bellefonte; R-6— Waynesville, Shockley, Mt. Gibson, Maze, Anderson, Hooker, and Shady Grove; R-7— Big Pin-

ey, Haley Bend, Pine Bluff, and Hopewell.

The vote was reported on August 11. The reorganization plan carried in Waynesville, Richland, and Laquey. The voters in the districts of Crocker, Dixon, Swedeborg, and Big Piney voted not to reorganize.

In Waynesville, the vote was 186 for and 68 opposed. However, Hooker patrons were 18 for and 46 against. The total was 204 for and 114 opposed. (See "1949 News" in 2024 *Old Settlers Gazette* for vote totals for other districts.)

The law stipulated that those districts which did not vote to reorganize must hold another election within two years

We offer here a glimpse of the Waynesville Reorganized School District buildings from the pages of *The Tige*, the 1950 yearbook produced by the students. If you would like a peek at the lives and gossip of the students of that year, we published a copy of "The Tiger Rag," the student newspaper produced for December 1, 1950, in the 2004 *Old Settlers Gazette*.

The superintendent of the newly reorganized school district was Cecil A. Elliott. The Board of Education members were Ansel Routh (President), James Laughlin (Treasurer), Clayton Gray, Henry Hough, Walter Bartlett, Jr., and Douglas E. Long.



This is the Waynesville school building on North Street in 1950. It is the third school built on this site. The first was a frame building constructed in 1886. It was used until 1906 when a new concrete block building replaced it. It was razed in 1936, and this much larger WPA-assisted modern brick school was built. It even had indoor plumbing and a basement cafeteria, both absent in the old block schoolhouse. It served grades 6-12 until a new high school was built in West Waynesville. It then became a Junior High School (grades 6-9), and then a middle school (grades 6-8). It was razed and the Pulaski County Justice Center erected on the site in 2020.

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1-Waynesville had two school buildings in 1950. The Junior-High School was on School Street, one block north of the town square and is pictured on the previous page. West Elementary, above, was built in 1942 during the influx of students during World War II. It had 13 classrooms in use at that time. In 1950 it served grades one through five with about 220 students in eight classrooms. The building is still in use today in West Waynesville. It houses the district's administrative offices.



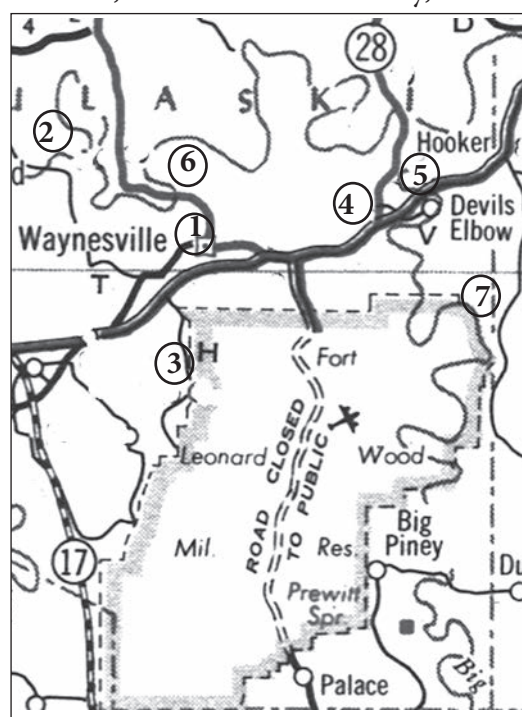
3-Mt. Gibson was located on Highway H on the northwest boundary of Fort Leonard Wood, near where the Missouri Veterans Cemetery is today. There were 15 students in grades 1-6.



2-Shady Grove was located on Highway T near the Gasconade River on the Joe Ed Roam farm, six miles northwest of Waynesville. Shady Grove was organized at least by 1909 when Frank Manes, whose farm was nearby, was teaching there. There were nine students attending in 1950.

Right—The relative locations of the rural schools in the Waynesville R-VI School District relative to the larger schools in Waynesville (1). The rural schools served students in grades one through eight. Waynesville had the only high school.

Locations 6 and 7 were for Shockley and Maze schools. Shockley was 4 miles north of Waynesville and Maze on the northeast corner of the fort. Although both were listed in the proposed reorganization, neither had functioning schools by 1950.



4-Anderson School sat near the junction of Highway 28 and the original Route 66. Anderson hosted a summer normal school in 1906-1907. The school did not have a well so water for the students and teacher was hauled from nearby Bushwhacker Cave Spring. There were 19 students in 1950.



5-Hooker School stood just east of the present Hooker Cemetery on the original graveled Route 66. It was the largest of the rural schools with 29 students and two teachers. It was also noteworthy for having a cook and lunch room. Outhouses are at left in the 1950 picture..