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Basketball game kicks off school-beautification project

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ARLINGTON — The good-natured ribbing about Friday's basketball game at Bailey Junior High started long before two groups of community-minded businesspeople took to the court.

The game's announcer, Arlington schools trustee Bowie Hogg, got it going at the previous night's school board meeting.

"Don't look for a high-scoring game," he joked. "I think they possibly hired some employees just to help them win."

All kidding aside, Hogg and other Arlington officials were more than happy, not to mention really grateful, to host the charity half-court hoops-fest between SCM Real Estate and First Rate, a financial-services company. The event kicked off a project called Curb Appeal Partners. Organizers hope that local businesses will sign on to raise money for school-beautification projects through athletic and social events.

Bailey was the first recipient. Each of the businesses in the game agreed to donate \$5,000, and the losing team, SCM Real Estate, will add an additional \$2,000. The final score was 38-18.

Hogg said the cash-strapped Arlington district doesn't always have as much money as officials would like for upkeep of its older schools. Curb Appeal Partners will help with that, he said.

40 years

Bailey, which is on Bowen Road just south of West Park Row Drive, celebrated its 40th anniversary last year.

Mark Joeckel, director of brokerage services for SCM and the parent of a Bailey student, said the company wanted to help Bailey's outside look more like the great school that it is.

After the work is done, he said he hopes that passers-by and potential residents will say: "Boy, I'd like to find out more about that place. I'd like to stop and go in."

As part of the Curb Appeal Partners program, the school received a free assessment and recommendations from mycoskie+mcinnis+associates, a landscape architecture and civil engineering business in Arlington.

Principal Jimmy Walker, who served as referee at the game, said the money will likely be used on sod, improving irrigation and other ways to make the school more attractive. The school has numerous large trees in front and beside the building. They provide shade from the sun but make it difficult to grow grass.

"We've got some great things going on inside our school, but we also want the outside of our school to give a good first impression," he said.



Matt Minare of the First Rate basketball team looks for a shot while surrounded by defenders from SCM Real Estate Services during a charity game at Bailey Junior High on Friday in Arlington. S-T/KELLEY CHINE