

# Farmington Observer

Volume 88 Number 35

Thursday, February 17, 1977

Farmington, Michigan

52 Pages

Twenty-Five Cents

## Brodhead leads the way

# PBB ignites political rift

By STEVE BARNABY  
Farmington editor

State Democrats are joining U.S. Rep. William Brodhead (D-Detroit) in calling for the resignation of Michigan Agricultural Secretary Dale Ball in response to his department's handling of the PBB incident.

In a press conference earlier this week, Brodhead urged Republican Gov. William Milliken to fire Ball because of what Brodhead described as Ball's departments "disgraceful" performance.

Brodhead also accused the department of a cover up.

"The top administrators of the department have made serious errors of judgment. In their misguided efforts to protect the farmers involved and to cover up their subsequent bungling,

**"The people of Michigan are literally being poisoned, and we must put a stop to it immediately. We cannot afford to take chances on the health and safety of our children while we argue about how much poison we can eat without suffering damage."**

—William Brodhead

they have protected neither the farmers nor the consumers," he said.

"It is obvious that a reorganization of the Department of Agriculture is necessary so that the interests of the consumer are protected.

"Consideration should be given to placing responsibility for inspection of food products in a different, con-

sumer-oriented agency," Brodhead told Milliken in a letter addressed to his Lansing office.

Brodhead, whose district includes Farmington, Farmington Hills, Redford Township and Northwest Detroit, said he was speaking out because of the numerous calls his office had received from constituents who were

upset about PBB (polybrominated biphenyls) infection of the state's meat products.

The PBB scare has flared up in recent weeks because of a study recently released by Dr. Irving Selikoff, director of Environmental Sciences Laboratory of Mt. Sinai School of Medicine at City University of New York.

Selikoff found that almost one-third of 1,029 Michigan residents examined exhibited symptoms of physical deterioration possibly caused by PBB.

PBB, a fire retardant, was accidentally mixed into animal feed in 1973. The chemical was spread throughout the states commercial food supply before it was discovered more than a year later.

Experts estimate that just about every Michigan resident has PBB in their systems.

BRODHEAD ALSO HAS written to Michigan Atty. Gen. Frank Kelley urging him to seek immediate halt in PBB contaminated meat under existing state laws concerning the protection of consumers.

Other measures Brodhead has asked for are:

• For U.S. Agriculture Secretary Robert Bergland to treat Michigan as

(Continued on page 16A)



## Guild comedy

Vickie Skerritt of Livonia and Erroll Fortin of Farmington Hills rehearse a scene from the Theatre Guild of Livonia-Redford's production "Relatively Speaking," which opens Friday night. Other performances are Feb. 25, 26, 27 and March 4 and 5 at the playhouse, 15138 Beech Daly in Redford. Curtain time is 8:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. on Sunday. For reservations or information, call 427-8325.

## Cops fight alienation with student program

By LYNN ORR

Every afternoon, 45 East Junior High students skip their scheduled classes to participate in an experimental youth program aimed at promoting student involvement in their school and community.

Now in the third week of the project, the students are beginning to learn what the program is all about—selecting and following up their own ideas on how to relate school to every-day life.

Dr. Jacqueline Loughheed, director of the "Youth Advocacy" project, says student-initiated activities are the program's goal.

"Students today, to a large extent, have feelings of alienation and lack of autonomy, especially in the junior and senior highs," says Loughheed, an Oakland University professor.

The East project, a joint undertaking by OU and the Farmington public schools, is one of only 10 test sites in the nation. The Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, a federal program known mainly for its work with police agencies, is funding the \$2 million project, \$50,000 of which goes to OU for its work at East.

THE 45 STUDENTS were randomly selected from 350 students who volunteered for the project after hearing a demonstration lecture.

Although some of the kids admitted they really wanted to get out of geography class and that new program "sounded easier than school," they're already showing some enthusiasm, according to Ellen Silvers, a Farmington education worker.

"We want to get them removed from a textbook and regular classroom approach," she says. "We hope they go out in the community and get involved in some activities, as well as gather information."

Last week the students made lists of various subjects they had taken up in social studies classes, and this week they went through the topics to determine which would relate to their community.

Three East students, Bobbi Eter, Anna Tele and Stacie Reda, looked at the topic of explorers and decided they could discover who founded Farmington and how the town developed.

Stacie would also like to investigate drugs in school—"I'd like to know why kids use drugs and what to do about it," she says.

Paul Einhaus' curiosity was piqued by the project.

"I like to know about new things," says the seventh-grader, and his

friend Chris Trikes agrees. "Later on we'll be helping people," he explains. "And there's only a few schools in America doing this."

Some of the other projects the students plan on looking into in the next few weeks include playground equipment, lunchroom facilities, paper drives and aid to senior citizens.

The project will run until June, 1978, with the same students participating.

One of the project's major goals is to teach observation techniques by interviewing the students will conduct with East staff, students and Farmington residents.

"They'll gather information and then come back to class and the whole class will discuss it," Dr. Loughheed says.

Another goal of the project is to decrease disruptive behavior, one of the reasons the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration decided to fund the program.

The project leaders hope the effects of the class will filter down to other students, alleviating the boredom that often causes student mischief.

## Legal precedents traced to support ERA passage

Passage of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) will bring added legal protections to men and women, according to Pat Schneider of the Women's Justice Center in Detroit.

Speaking before a small group of women in the Farmington Community Library, Farmington Hills, Ms. Schneider traced the legal precedents which allow law makers to exclude women from public activity under the guise of protection.

"If a law excludes a group of people by race or national origin that's called a suspect classification. It's illegal."

"But if a law says that all women can't do a particular thing—that's never been dealt with by the court as a suspicious class," she said.

"The court will assume a law excluding women to be legal. But if a law says that all blacks are excluded, that law's assumed to be illegal," she said.

While suspicious classifications within a law are unable to withstand a court attack, clauses excluding women are usually supported, she said.

IF ERA IS PASSED, women would not be put under the suspicious class classification. The Supreme Court has placed the exclusion of women in that category, yet," she said.

Title 7, which relates to job discrimination, outlaws the exclusion of women. But that law applies only to employment, she added.

Under Title 7, employers can't exclude persons on the basis of sex, race or national origin.

The exclusion of women has been sanctioned by the Supreme Court since 1873, according to Ms. Schneider.

That was the year the court ruled that women were central to the creation of a family and should be protected.

"Women were assumed to be children, forever," Ms. Schneider said.

The 1873 decision was prompted by Illinois' refusal to admit a woman lawyer to the state bar.

"The justices said that under divine ordinance women are the organizers of the family. And this is also the nature of things."

"The domestic sphere properly belongs to the domain and the function of women," she said.

The ruling was cited in 1961 to support the formation of an all-male jury to hear a woman's trial.

A FLORIDA WOMAN, who killed her husband with a baseball bat, challenged an all-male jury on the grounds that it wasn't one composed of her peers.

Women were excluded from jury duty by Florida law.

In hearing the case, the Supreme Court echoed the pronouncement of 1871.

"A woman is still regarded as the center of the home and family life and belongs within the domestic sphere," Ms. Schneider explained.

"Therefore, they could be excluded from jury duty because the Supreme Court ruled that their place was in the home," she said.

The same reasoning was used by Justice Louis Brandeis in 1908 when he supported a 10-hour working day for women employees.

Brandeis saw all women as potential mothers-of-the-race who should be protected.

"It's against the interest of the state that each woman work a 10-12 hour day," said Ms. Schneider, paraphrasing Brandeis.

"The law only protects women," she said. "It doesn't say that a 10-hour day is bad for men, too. Under ERA, these benefits would be extended to men as well."

BRANDEIS' DECISION to limit women's working hours resulted in less jobs for females. Employers became reluctant to hire someone who could work only 10 hours.

Women ticket takers in the Brooklyn Transit System lost their jobs altogether in 1919 when New York decided that the transportation authority could hire only men for that job.

"That ruling put 505 women out of jobs. Many of them were supporting children and homes," Ms. Schneider said.

"A 1915 Supreme Court ruling says that aliens have the right to work but

at the same time, the Court was restricting women's rights," she said.

"It wasn't until 1971 that the Supreme Court decreed that a classification based on sex was illegal," she said.

The case involved a dispute between parents of a child who had died leaving an estate less than \$1,000. The couple was separated and both partners applied to become administrators of the estate.

"The law of that state said that if a man and a woman file to administer an estate, than the man's claim will be honored," she said.

"THE SUPREME COURT ruled that it was an overbroad classification and a violation of the 14th Amendment."

The law may grant women some extra protection but it discriminates against their dependents, according to Ms. Schneider.

In 1974, Justice William O. Douglas supported the larger tax deduction which is awarded exclusively to widows. Widowers are excluded from the deduction.

Douglas decided that the deduction makes up for lower pay which women employees receive, according to Ms. Schneider.

But the Supreme Court declared that it was illegal for the Army to require dependents of women officers to submit proof that the husband was earning less money than his wife.

"The court still shied away from calling sex a suspect classification," Ms. Schneider said.

With passage of the ERA, sex would become a suspect classification. Instead of taking away the protection from women, the amendment would extend that protection to men, according to Ms. Schneider.

Laws prohibiting women to lift extra-heavy materials would be extended to men.

"NO ONE in our society should be asked to injure himself or herself" by picking up something that is too heavy, she said.



Chris Adams, Troy Burgess and Don Slusser look over the day's work in the Youth Advocacy project being conducted at East Junior High. (Staff photos by Harry Maubue)

## New laws ease credit for women

In a society that runs on credit, recent laws have made it easier for women to participate in some financial dealings, according to Charlene Snow, a lawyer and a director of the Women's Justice Center of Detroit.

Ms. Snow recently explained women's credit rights in a talk at the Farmington Community Library, Farmington Hills, Michigan and federal laws make it

illegal for organizations to deny women credit.

Federal law makes it illegal to discriminate against a person seeking credit on the basis of marital status or gender.

"It's more broad than the state law," Ms. Snow said.

The law covers banks, realtors, insurance companies, auto dealers and insurance agencies.

"When a woman is applying for

credit, they can't ask about her method of birth control or how many kids she has," Ms. Snow said.

"If you're young and newly married, they can't ask you if you're likely to have children," she said.

"THEY CAN'T DISCOUNT money on the basis of marriage, children or alimony," she said.

Women are excluded from revealing if they are divorced or widowed. Per-

sons can skip form questions which ask for marital status, to the extent of crossing out the Mr., Mrs. or Miss designation on the name line.

"If a woman gets a divorce or is widowed, the change in her marital status is insufficient reason for terminating her credit."

"If you relied on your husband for your credit rating, they can ask you to re-apply for credit, but they can't

(Continued on page 15A)

### inside

Club Circuit	3B
Community Calendar	8b
Editorial	1A
News	Section A
Sports	Section C
Suburban Life	Section B
Classifieds	Sections C, D

### PHONES KEEP RINGING

"The phone started ringing at 7 a.m.," Mrs. Ronald Russell told us, "and we sold the car that afternoon." Follow Mrs. Russell's lead and sell your used car through the Observer & Economic classified pages. They really work for you.

MAPLE 1973 2 door hardtop, 16,000 miles. We've got another one, \$10,000.

### DIAL DIRECT 644-1070