

Farmington Observer

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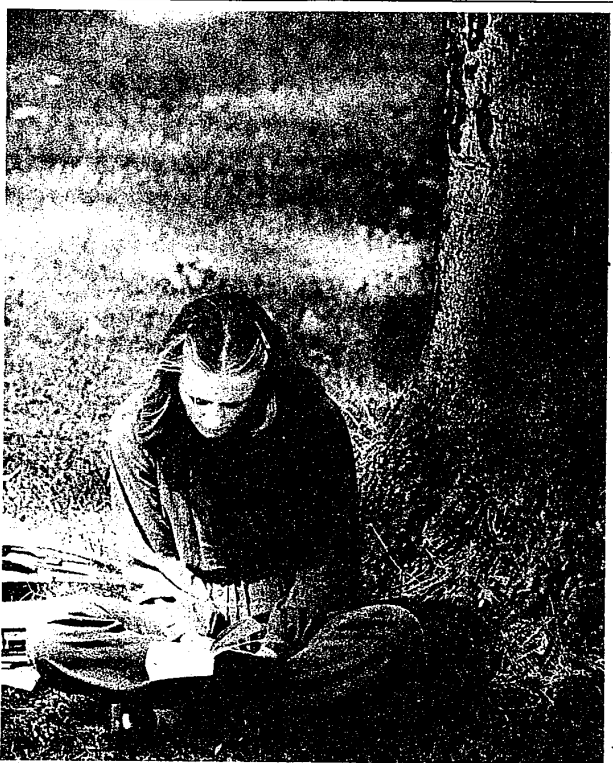
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Farmington, Michigan

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Cracking the books

Dorothy Hemming, a liberal arts freshman at Oakland Community College Orchard Ridge campus, uses the waning summer sun for a little studying. To see how student's reacted to the opening of another school year, turn to 3A. (Staff photo by Randy Borst)

2 more years

Teachers head for class

By MARY GNIEWEK
Farmington students are back in the classroom today following an 11th-hour settlement reached Tuesday morning between teachers and school administrators.

Teachers received a 9.5 percent pay increase over two years, improved health insurance and other fringe benefits in a new two-year pact.

The tentative agreement was reached at 5 a.m. Tuesday following intensive negotiation sessions held almost daily for the past two weeks and routinely since May.

About 500 of the district's 770 teachers were present at a 6:30 a.m. meeting Tuesday at the Farmington Civic Theater, where they overwhelmingly voted to go back to work.

Farmington Education Association (FEA) president Tom Chrzanowski, a member of the bargaining team, said a ratification meeting will be scheduled late next week. The contract is also subject to approval by the school board.

Talks bogged down last week over the formula used to compute salary schedules. The union request of a 6 percent salary increase was based on second-semester pay schedules.

The administration's 5 percent offer was based on last year's annual salary schedule — a difference of 1.5 percent. "They'll call it 9.5 percent new money. But we're calling it an 8 percent increase," Chrzanowski said.

"We've gotten off the second-semester pay schedules."

IN THE FIRST year of the contract, steps 0 to 9 will receive a 5.75 percent increase; steps 10 and 11, an 8.9 percent raise, according to Chrzanowski's figures.

An 8.5 percent increase will take effect the second year for all levels.

Former salary schedules on an 11-step scale ranged from \$11,016 to \$19,783 for teachers with bachelor's degrees, and \$12,465 to \$23,005 for instructors with master's degrees.

Other parts of the agreement include:

- More comprehensive long-term disability pay to cover psychiatric care, drug and alcohol rehabilitation.

- An early retirement incentive plan that would pay more to teachers who retire before the age of 60.

- Class size reduced by one student at all grade levels in the second year of the contract.

- Insurance options offered to teachers who are covered by their spouse's insurance policies. Before, no duplicate coverage was allowed.

- "A lot of it was house cleaning. We have better contract language on vacations, promotions and transfers."

- "MANDATORY RETIREMENT was 55. We had to change it to 70 years old to comply with the law," Chrzanowski said.

- "I think it's a fair settlement," Chrzanowski expects support from the teachers and the school board.

- "I think it was a good settlement in line with what other districts are doing," said School Board president Michael Sijpelec.

- "It was a fair agreement. Our reports were that the mood at the table was very friendly throughout." School Superintendent Lewis Schulman agreed.

- "We are delighted."

- "It was tough bargaining. The teachers were aggressive and hard-hitting. Bargaining was not acrimonious or bitter."

- "It never disintegrated into walk-outs or ugly flair-ups. I think the settlement was satisfactory to both sides."

Chore program gets fund boost from government

The Farmington-Farmington Hills home chore program, which helps to maintain senior citizens in their own homes by providing workers to perform heavy duty domestic jobs for them, has received federal and local funds for its second year of operation.

"We received a federal grant for \$10,000 again from the Area Agency on Aging," said Doug Gaynor, director of Parks and Recreation for Farmington Hills.

Gaynor and Loretta Conway, director of senior programming for the city, jointly co-ordinate the program.

"It's a 20-80 grant, which means we must come up with 20 percent of the funds, which we split with the city of Farmington," Gaynor said.

The program runs a fiscal year from October through September. It will

have \$15,250 for operation this year, which is \$3,000 more than last year.

The Farmington Hills City Council approved a \$3,337 allocation to keep it going last week. The Farmington City Council is expected to approve its share, \$1,313, at its next meeting.

"Sometime, what is considered to be a major job by an elderly person is a minor problem. If the job is small, our staff performs it for free."

Tasks like leaf raking, snow shoveling, grass cutting, painting, step repair and yard cleaning are done. Light plumbing and electrical work are performed if there is a home chore employee who can handle such tasks.

"The tasks may be insignificant to a young person, but for the elderly, it can be major," Gaynor said.

(Continued on page 4A)

Polls open on Tuesday

Candidates face off for primary

By STEVE BARNABY
Farmington editor

Then there were eight.
That will be the story next Tuesday when votes are tallied in the Farmington Hills city council primary election.

Ten candidates have been campaigning in hopes of garnering a spot in the general election in November. The field includes four incumbents and six newcomers.

The payoff will be three four-year terms and one two-year term.
Without question the main issue has been the senior citizen-low income housing project slated to be built on the corner of Freedom and Drake roads in southwest Farmington Hills.

Two candidates — Jack Burwell and William Lange — have come out squarely against the project as presently financed. Funding will come through bonds sold by the Michigan State Housing Development Authority. Rents will be subsidized through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Burwell and Lange have come out against the idea of federal or state subsidies for the project, believing that most persons in the community are opposed to the regulations which accom-

pany such funds.

On the opposite side of the issue are the four incumbents, Keith Deacon, Jan Dolan, Cathy Jones and Joanne Smith. All the incumbents have fought in support of the project in various stages of its development.

Throughout the planning stages, the project has been fraught with public debate.

One candidate arising from the debate has been Donn Wolf, a community and governmental affairs coordinator for Detroit Edison. He originally went public after the council proposed building a senior citizen project under the auspices of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

While not opposing senior citizen housing, Wolf is leary of federal funding and would like to see the community study alternatives to financing of senior housing projects. Wolf leans toward a public vote on the present issue.

Taking a middle ground on the senior housing issue are Michael O'Hair, Terry Sever and Shirley Stadler.

O'Hair, an administrative director for the department of child psychiatry at Mt. Carmel Mercy Hospital, favors the present project but disagrees with

how the council has handled the issue.

He first became interested in local politics after opposing a rezoning project on the corner of Eleven Mile and Orchard Lake Road.

It is his feeling that the council neglects its homework and takes the recommendations of the city administration without enough study.

While generally supporting the senior citizen project, Mrs. Stadler is concentrating her campaign in other

areas. Presently a member of the Planning Commission, she aims at improving the economic tax base in order to maintain current tax rates. She opposes the introduction of low income housing into the community.

Sever, a local printer, has gained a reputation as a civic leader.

Sever has come out in support of the senior citizen-low income housing project.



KEITH DEACON



WILLIAM LANGE



JOANNE SMITH



CATHY JONES



DONN WOLF



TERRY SEVER



JACK BURWELL



SHIRLEY STADLER

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Don't retire your lawn equipment - recycle it with an ad in our classified section. Just a few lines in your hometown newspaper will turn your used mower into ready cash to help cut next summer's expenses. But don't delay. End of season bargain hunters are busy now.

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