

# Farmington Observer

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## Council shuns stand on foster care guidelines

By MARY GNIEWEK

Farmington Hills City Council decided last week not to take a stand on proposed state guidelines which would limit both adult and child foster care facilities in the city.

Council tabled the resolution on the grounds that it was too vague and instructed City Attorney Paul Bibeau to gather more information before it would be brought back for further discussion.

The regulatory division of the Michigan Department of Social Services, which licenses all foster care facilities in the state, has proposed that all adult, child and foster family group homes for children be limited to 5 percent of the total population of the city, township, or village in which they are located.

In Farmington Hills, which has a population of 60,000 residents, the new guidelines would prohibit placing more than 3,000 people (5 percent) in foster care facilities.

The State Legislature has already ruled that foster homes with six or less unrelated residents cannot exist within 1,500 feet of each other in residentially zoned areas. Foster care homes with more than six residents must be located in multiple zoning areas.

The regulatory division, directed by the Attorney General's office, must determine what constitutes an excessive concentration of foster care homes in residential neighborhoods. They have the job of interpreting broad legislation passed at the state level.

These are homes indistinguishable from other residential dwellings that provide shelter for retarded adults and

children in need of foster care.

CURRENTLY, THE REGULATORY division is ferreting out information collected at nine public hearings held statewide to gather opinions about the proposed regulations.

The regulatory division will then amend and present its findings to Social Service Director John Dempsey, who will make the final decision on rule implementation.

Mary Wagner, executive director of Community Living Centers Inc. of Farmington, called the proposed rules horrible.

"I'm against percentaging off anyone because of handicaps. It doesn't make sense," she said.

Community Living Centers administers eight adult foster care facilities in Oakland County, including six in Farm-

ington and Farmington Hills.

The homes have retarded residents who require full-time supervision, transportation, job placement and crisis intervention. Oakland County has secured HUD grants to build two more adult foster homes, one in Farmington and the other in Southfield.

Mrs. Wagner testified against the proposed regulations at a public hearing in Pontiac.

"We are preparing a density map which we will consult when we get a request for licensing so that we're not lumping all the homes in one part of the community," she said.

Mrs. Wagner said her agency is not able to keep up with requests from business owners who want to hire retarded for work.

"WE'RE DOING something for the

retarded and something for the neighborhood, too," she said.

James Quigley, director of the adult foster care licensing division in Lansing, said all public comments will be considered before a report and recommendation is made to the director of Social Services.

Quigley said alternative proposals may be suggested.

"Part of the problem is the question of responsibility for these places," he said.

Farmington Hills Councilwoman Joanne Smith refused to support the proposal.

"I'd hate to vote without knowing what (5 percent) would amount to. These people are with us, they must be recognized," she said.

"I can't support such an ambiguous,

narrow resolution. For us to pass this would mean emotionally slamming the door on these people. Each foster home should be based on its own merits."

Councilman Joe Alkateeb seemed to favor the measure.

"The percentage of foster care homes must be based on total population," he said. "It's not really shutting the door on these people, but creating a fairer distribution throughout the city."

Despite mixed views, the council unanimously decided to table the issue.

In addition to adult foster homes, there are 22 foster family homes in Farmington and Farmington Hills of 7,168 across the state. The St. Vincent-Sarah Fisher Home is the only licensed child-placing agency in Farmington Hills. There are 111 such facilities in Michigan.

## Classics scholar digs archeology and writing

By MARY GNIEWEK

It's probably due to an interest in the classics and archeology that Sister Marjorie Allen thinks of her life in terms of centuries.

She vowed long ago to live to 2001 so she could view the end of one era and the dawn of another. She's just as interested in what happened thousands of years ago.

A Ph.D. and a Fulbright Scholar who has participated in archeological digs, Sister Marjorie is taking a sabbatical leave next year to finish writing a book.

She is researching the origins of the Mercy Sisters of Detroit, which will take her to Dublin, Ireland, where the Roman Catholic order was founded relatively late on the religious scene in 1831.

The Latin and Greek instructor at Our Lady of Mercy High School once studied at the American Academy in Rome and the American School of Classical Study in Athens.

She was in Italy when the villa of Stabiae was discovered buried along with Pompeii and Herculaneum — towns preserved following a massive volcanic eruption in 79 AD.

Sister Marjorie balances her interests between the classics, archeology and her book, but confides the writing task "is too time consuming" to pursue while teaching school. She's been on the project for five years and hopes to wrap it up next year.

"I have to travel across the country and to Ireland," she said.

To date, she's discovered the order was founded by a woman who came to Detroit from New York in 1860.

"MERCY SISTERS were one of the early Irish orders that weren't cloistered. They were called the 'walking sisters' because they served the community at large. They went wherever

they could be of service: to hospitals, schools, orphanages, prisons," she said.

Sister Marjorie, the fledgling author of a book on an order of nuns, was a convert to Catholicism at age 26. At 28, already a teacher of classics with a master's degree, she joined the Sisters of Mercy.

"I never felt that I lost anything or gave up anything. I feel I've gained so much," she added.

She is the daughter of a Methodist father and a Christian Scientist mother, both school teachers. Her father warned her becoming a nun would mean "professional suicide."

"My parents were reluctant," she recalled. "At the time, there was a lot of prejudice against Catholic teachers, especially in public schools."

Sister Marjorie attributes her conversion to "reading a book that backfired." At 10, she read a book that was "supposed to prove the church was

idiotic. The more I thought about it, the more I kept thinking there must be something on the other side."

Moving to the French Catholic town of Mendon, Mich. as a young adult added fuel to the fire.

"I was out teaching before I got around to it (conversion). I was convinced this was the answer."

WHY DID SHE join the Sisters of Mercy?

"I was impressed with their openness and friendliness. And it never entered my mind that I wouldn't be able to go on teaching."

After teaching at several high schools across the state and at Mercy College of Detroit, she was assigned to the newly built Mercy High School in Farmington Hills 14 years ago.

For the past nine years, she has led her students on simulated archeological

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Sister Marjorie Allen, an instructor of Greek and Latin at Mercy High School, talks about her upcoming sabbatical leave and the archeological digs she has participated in abroad. Behind her is a photo of Apollo from the temple at Olympia in Greece, her favorite from the temple at Olympia in Greece, her favorite from the temple at Olympia in Greece. (Staff photo by Harry Mauthe)

## Iron on a mascot

T-shirt weather is here and it's time to start thinking about how to make your T-shirt a little special, different or plain crazy.

To help in this effort, the Farmington Observer features in this edition iron-on decals which feature the local high school symbols.

Just turn to the back of Section A and you will find the decals ready to be cut out and ironed onto your shirt. The color is crazy orange. But what the heck, we want everybody to know where you go to high school.

Whether you be a Farmington Falcon, Harrison Hawk, North Farmington Raider or Mercy Marlin, you've got a ready-made way to

show up your friends from other schools.

These decals will make great wearing for the beach, around town or just bumming around the house.

To make sure it works, just follow these simple rules. Cut out the decal, place it over the front of your T-shirt face down (you'll notice they're printed backwards) and iron on at a low temperature and presto.

Another important thing to remember is that the T-shirt must be made out of cotton or else it won't work very well.

So, c'mon high school boosters, show your stuff and cut out and iron on your decal today.

## Concert to benefit N. Farmington radio station



Station manager Jack Travoli spins platters and raises funds for North Farmington's WNFH. (Staff photo by Harry Mauthe)

Keeping a radio station in business is an expensive venture.

At least that's what the students over at North Farmington High School have found over the years.

To defray the cost, WNFH is sponsoring a musical concert on May 25 at 7:30 p.m., in the school's auditorium. Price is \$2 at the door.

Senior Jack Travoli, WNFH station manager, says the station is attempting to raise \$1,800 to buy studio equipment. Although operating for 10 years, the station is still an in-house broadcast operation.

But the 30-some students would like to make the station sophisticated enough so they can apply for an FCC license to broadcast around town.

The only school station with such a status in the Farmington area is the Oakland Community College Orchard

Ridge station.

"We run the station on our own. We don't have any financial support from the school," says Travoli, who has been with the station for three years.

"We buy a lot of records and the Record Outlet has also helped us out," he says.

Travoli stressed that although the station was able to function, it doesn't have enough money to make major purchases.

To kick off the evening will be WABX disc jockey Jack Burns. The concert will be a combination of folk, rock and jazz, according to Travoli.

Among the featured groups will be H. Crossfire, Ward Kelman, April Arabian and Greenberg.

Playing folk guitar will be Keith Romeo. Debbie Williams and Troy Burgess will be featured in piano solos.

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The Farmington-West Bloomfield League of Women Voters polled five candidates running for two seats on the Farmington Board of Education about their concerns with the school district, appear on page 3-A, along with information about a candidate's night scheduled next Wednesday.