

Farmington Observer

Volume 91 Number 60

May 12, 1980

Farmington, Michigan

38 Pages

Twenty-Five Cents

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Small business hurts, as economy takes dive

During times when consumers are more cautious about the dollars they spend, small businesses feel the effects of collective budget tightening.

While owners of shops in Farmington's Village Mall caution that their business hasn't dangerously decreased, several owners and managers say the annual early summer shopping slump has come early this year.

"This is not seasonal. There's usually a boom in here until the kids get out of school," said Mary Cauley of Bolinas Reef.

"This is a pre-slow, slow. This is the first feeling of recession. January to March were good months."

Her shop, which specializes in imported goods, novelties, cards and smaller household items experienced a drop off in sales in late April. Ms. Cauley pinpoints April 20 as the day when sales first began to slow down.

During that week, one day was quiet enough to net her about \$14 in sales. But she says the slower days are still matched by livelier ones.

A SIMILAR pattern of sales has been noted by Cindy Wile, co-owner of

Country Miniatures which specializes in doll house furniture and accessories.

Summer is usually slow for a store specializing in an indoor hobby, Ms. Wile said.

But echoing Ms. Cauley, she noted that this year's slow time arrived earlier. April's sales amounted to half of the ones tallied in March, a move which was unexpected by Mrs. Wile.

Her slowest day garnered the business \$4. But that was followed by a day in which the day's receipts totaled \$400, she said.

"People are cutting back on gasoline and groceries. They're not going to come here to buy pretty furniture," she said.

In addition to buying less, her customers are paying cash for the goods they do buy. Charge account sales once averaged about four to five a day. Now, they've become rare.

"ONE MAN came in and charged his purchase. As he handed me his card he told me that he was charging it but that he could because he paid off his bill each month.

"The fact that he felt he had to offer

an excuse shows how people are cutting back on using charges," Mrs. Wile said.

Instead of being pessimistic about her business, Mrs. Wile said she had faith that she had a solid, successful business.

"I have a successful store; we'll just sit out bad times," she said. The store, which opened last September, tallied \$18,000 in sales during December. After the holidays it averaged about \$6,000 a month until April.

Like others in the mall, she remains philosophical.

"We'll work on houses over the summer for Christmas," she said.

Her sit tight attitude is shared by others.

"It depends on priorities," said Deano Dault, manager of Haler's Health Hut, referring to the shopping habits she's seeing in her store.

IN ADDITION to being more careful about their purchases, customers are buying items in smaller sizes, she said.

But she views the situation as part of running a business.

"It has its ups and downs. It's got to be expected," she said.

In order to increase their business and entice new shoppers in the small mall, the merchants are forming a loosely knit association which would allow them to cooperatively purchase advertising and become involved in promotional activities for the mall.

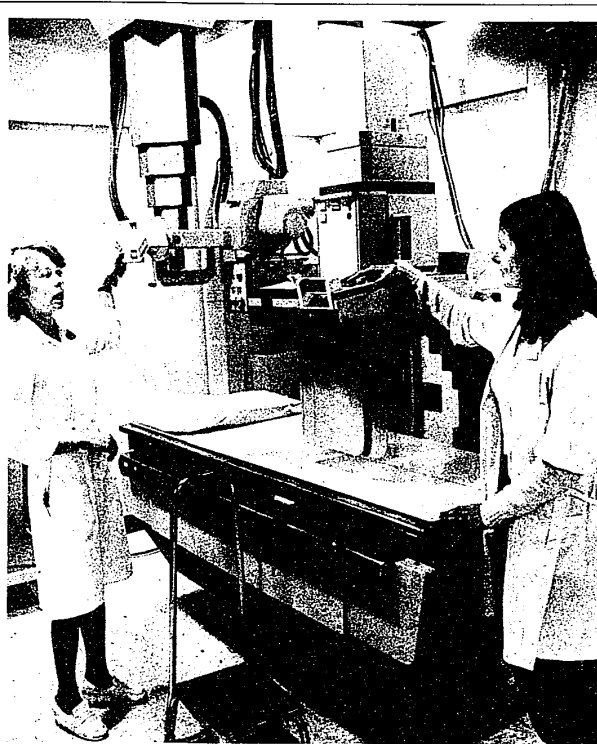
The association's spokesman is Mike Blicher of Berkey's Emblems.

"The association is something that's been talked about for a while," he said.

The association is trying to promote walk-in traffic and do on a cooperative level what some of the owners have been doing individually. Cost of individual advertising has risen for the owners.

MRS. WILE uses flyers which she sends to her customers with coupons to promote her sales. She ran newspapers ads for several months and offers 6A)

(Continued on Page 6A)



Hospital Week

Around the country, hospitals are showing their respect to the public. Botsford General Hospital, Farmington Hills, has some modern technical equipment of which it can be proud. Here, Nancy Bors (left) superintendent of nuclear medicine and

Debbie Meek, doctor's assistant, adjust a fluoroscope unit. To see some of the other features at Botsford, turn to Page 3A. (Staff photo by Randy Bors)

Taxi rate plan aids seniors

Beginning today, Farmington and Farmington Hills senior citizens and handicapped persons will be able to expand their transportation horizons at a discount rate.

The program, sponsored by funds from the Southeastern Michigan Transportation Authority (SEMATA), will provide eligible residents taxi service to points within a 108 square mile area.

Areas included are Farmington, Farmington Hills, Livonia, Northville, Northville Township, Plymouth, and Plymouth Township.

Eligible residents are those 65 years and older and the handicapped. Identification is required.

Those interested in using the shared-ride taxi service should call 474-3333.

Persons escorting the handicapped will be able to ride free of charge. Rates will range from 55 cents to \$1.45, depending on the distance to be traveled.

Persons wishing to use the cab service should call at least one hour before they wish to leave. Response time will be from 30 to 60 minutes.

Bush campaigners aim at blue collar support



Shirley Stadler remains hopeful her candidate, George Bush, can still pull out the rug from under front-runner Ronald Reagan. (Staff photo by Randy Bors)

By LOUISE OKRUTSKY

In a recent "Dooonesbury" comic strip, cartoonist Garry Trudeau drew the stereotype of an Ivy League Young Republican asking presidential candidate George Bush, "Is having a good portfolio enough to get elected?"

"I'm afraid not," comes the answer. The cartoon strip vignette sums up the frustration of Bush supporters such as 17th district campaign coordinator Shirley Stadler.

So far in the campaign, Bush's background, which includes terms in Congress, in the United Nations and as CIA director hasn't been enough to pull him ahead of front-runner Ronald Reagan.

Some Bush supporters believe their candidate's difficulty in coming across on television accounts for at least part of his campaign quandary.

"That's the difference between someone who was trained as an actor as a candidate and a president and someone who has the background as a candidate and a president," said Mrs. Stadler of Farmington Hills.

Bush's tendency to present a cool elitist image on camera prevents him from coming across to the average worker, Mrs. Stadler admitted.

"IF A CHANGE were to be made in

the campaign, I would want more of an effort to have him speak to working class groups," Mrs. Stadler said.

"They're the backbone of America. We need their help."

Much like Kennedy supporters, Bush's backers hope to use their numbers to influence the party platform if the nomination eludes their candidate.

Although admitting the chance of losing exists, Mrs. Stadler still looks toward the convention with some hope. Of the convention's delegates, 49 percent aren't legally bound to specific candidates.

There will be a large contingent represented which is flexible, which can change their mind."

Bush is the third candidate which Mrs. Stadler has supported during her 12 years of party activity. She was a delegate for Richard Nixon in '72 and for Gerald Ford in '76.

Her commitment to Bush is based upon her assessment of his views and her inability to support Reagan.

"I don't agree with Reagan on many points," she said, choosing her words slowly.

"We have to be realistic. We have to have a candidate and a president who is responsive to current problems in a realistic way," she said.

SHE DOESN'T consider as realistic Reagan's comment that he would block Cuba in retaliation for Afghanistan.

"Cuba didn't invade Afghanistan," she said.

If Reagan wins the Republican nomination, Mrs. Stadler says she won't automatically switch her support to him.

"I have strong philosophical differences with him. I would have to think it over very carefully before taking an active part in the campaign."

She didn't face the early campaign confusion over Bush's image as a younger Reagan.

"They differ on significant issues," she said.

"He's not a younger Reagan. He's not as inflexible. We need someone who is flexible but firm."

She cites Bush's pro-ERA stance and his reluctance to see federal legislation against abortion as two issues on which he is at odds with Reagan.

Mrs. Stadler, who is active on several local and state Republican committees, also suggests that within the party, Bush garners supporters and workers from persons who have long been active.

Reagan, on the other hand, has drawn persons who by and large haven't been active within the party.

Teachers wrestle with computers

By MARY GNIEWEK

It wasn't love at first sight. One teacher vowed to use a pencil eraser on a computer keyboard so she wouldn't ruin her fingernails.

Other teachers approached these microcomputers puzzled but eager. Frustration gave way to pleasure once 15 Farmington school teachers figured out how to use the microcomputers during a teacher-in-service seminar at Harrison High School last week.

Dr. Gary Smith of Wayne State University introduced teachers to the types of computers they'll be using in the classroom in September. The district just purchased \$100,000 worth of computers: two microunits for each elementary school, four for each middle

school and 16 for each high school.

The computers were a popular draw during the day-long seminars on a variety of education related topics.

Smith used three PET computers, the type Farmington bought, to demonstrate a variety of uses. They can be used for administrative work like keeping payroll and student records; computer assisted instruction (drills and practice) storage and retrieval of information; and computer managed instruction which has yet to be fully proved, according to Smith.

He explained that minicomputers (one PET costs \$550) have been marketed only since 1977 while main-frames costing \$1 million have been operating in tri-county area schools for more than a decade.

"UTILIZE THE microcomputers heavy use within the first month," Smith said. "Most of the problems will show up early during the warranty period. Afterward, they're quite reliable."

Teachers were invited to learn the computer keyboard, similar to a typewriter keyboard, and program simple instruction games. Two hour-long sessions were staged at Harrison.

"The program you create for PET won't necessarily run on another PET in another classroom," Smith said. "There will be some problems with the micros."

The machines are portable and become operational when plugged into a telephone jack. Any power outage, even a momentary flicker of lights, will wipe out computer programs stored in-

side the machine. To reserve programs, information must be stored on a cassette tape.

Smith suggested each school in the district identify three teachers to work with computers, explore existing programs and build support for use.

"Make it possible for as many students as possible to assist in programming," he said.

"But don't make everyone learn. Neither teachers nor students who aren't interested should be forced to learn computers," Smith cautioned.

what's inside

| | |
|------------------------------|-----------|
| Agenda | 2A |
| At Your Leisure | 7C |
| Community Calendar | 2B |
| Editorials | 7B |
| Inside Angles | 3A |
| Obituaries | 2A |
| Suburban Life | Section B |
| Sports | Section D |

A FAMILY DYNASTY
For many years in the Farmington area, the family name Uppser has meant dedication to the community. To read about a father and son combination which has made it work in both government and business, turn to Page 2A.