



Farmington Observer

Volume 94 Number 97

Thursday, September 15, 1983

Farmington, Michigan

90 Pages

Twenty-five cents

'Honky tonk' label tagged to festival

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

Calling the 1983 Founder's Festival "an utter disaster" some Downtown Farmington Center merchants say they want the annual celebration discontinued unless it is improved to the caliber of the Birmingham and Plymouth festivals.

"In summary, this annual event has deteriorated to a point where it has a potential negative effect on our year-round sales rather than improving our merchandising opportunities," claimed the 26 downtown merchants, employees and customers who signed a petition opposing the character and organization of this year's festival.

"We do not care to see such annual brief honky-tonk events destroying the established attractiveness and reputation of our downtown area."

Lori Vincent, Framery One Inc., pointed specifically to the organization of food and craft booths, as well as traffic patterns in the mall's parking lot, as seriously affecting the business of shops on the east side of the Downtown Farmington Center during the festival.

"People completely by-passed this area. There was no foot traffic," she said.

'We do not care to see such annual brief honky-tonk events destroying the established attractiveness and reputation of our downtown area.'

— Merchants' petition

ANOTHER MERCHANT on the east side of the mall, who preferred to remain anonymous but who signed the petition, claimed "poor organization" as the cause for many of the merchants experiencing a drop in business that weekend as compared to past years during the festival.

"We have to point a finger at poor festival planning and organization as the source of the problem," according to the merchant's petition.

In the six years her store has been in the outdoor shopping center, Vincent said the festival "has gotten steadily worse."

"I had customers who said it looks real trashy. It looks just like a carnival," Vincent said. "Customers say



Some local downtown merchants have passed around a petition objecting to what they claim is the honky-tonk appearance of the Farmington Founders' Festival.

they avoid the downtown area during the festival."

Besides moving the booths to the southern portion of the shopping center, away from the east side row of shops, most of the booths offered food, with only a few booths featuring crafts.

"You've got everybody choking each other out," said one merchant. "I understand the (festival) committee needs to make money. But all there was to do over there was eat."

Looking at the hodge-podge of booths, Vincent said, it appears the festival committee allowed anyone to sell what they chose as long as they could pay the fee for setting up a

booth.

"There were identical food booths side-by-side," she claimed. "I don't know any longer what's the point of having a festival. Who is the festival trying to help?"

ALTHOUGH ROB Falls, the Farmington Founder's Festival committee chairman, could not be reached for comment, Jodi Soronen, a committee member and executive director of the Farmington Chamber of Commerce, said the merchants' petition will be discussed by committee members this week.

"They will respond," Soronen said, adding that other festival committee members have received verbal com-

plaints about the quality of the 1983 celebration.

But Soronen added, "We had no one on the (festival) committee that had worked on the committee before."

Although both the merchants and chamber officials agree the festival was started 19 years ago to help boost retail sales during the slow summer months, merchants now claim the festival does just the opposite.

"... the class and quality of each successive festival has become less appealing to the residents who are our current and potential customers," merchants said in the petition. "Specifically, some of our regular customers have already indicated their dis-

gust with this year's tacky and disorganized affair."

While Vincent points the finger at festival committee members for the celebration's poor organization, she also points in the other direction to merchants who have used the festival to unload seasonal and damaged merchandise.

"It's really not a fair do something special sale," Vincent said.

The only solution Vincent can offer is a big meeting to determine whether the festival should continue. If the festival is to continue, she said, "they're going to have start from scratch — a total overhaul of how it's organized."

Republicans launch drive to improve education

By Tom Baer
staff writer

To the flood of studies — beginning with the National Commission on Excellence in Education's highly critical report last spring — calling for reform of American education, add one authored by Michigan's House and Senate Republicans.

Issued last week, the Republicans' report calls for mandatory competency tests for all new teachers and graduating high school seniors and a new state aid funding formula to add some \$420 million to the state's kindergarten-through-12th-grade (K-12) education system.

"Children have the right to a decent education and they have the right to be taught by a teacher competent in the subject area," said a statement issued by the office of state Rep. Sandy Brotherton (R-Farmington).

The Republicans' proposals "are part of a comprehensive education program that sets tougher curriculum and certification standards for students and teachers and dedicates the revenue from the first 1.5 percent of the income tax rate to the K-12 system to provide adequate funding for a system of excellence," the statement continued.

Brotherton, who serves on a task force which spent "months of study" on state education, said, "Basically, we're trying to respond to some of the problems that the (federal) report outlined."

THE MONEY — the additional \$420 million in state aid that's earmarked for education — would come "out of the same pot we now have," according to Brotherton.

"But I'll mean fewer dollars for other things," he admitted.

"One of two things has to happen," Brotherton continued. "Either some of these other areas of state government

are going to have to suffer... have a lower priority, or we're going to have to raise more money.

"If (the money for education) might come out of the declining welfare dollars as the economy improves."

In addition to competency tests, the program addresses certification standards for teachers, effective classroom

time and teacher preparation programs.

The program, according to Brotherton, seeks to ensure that children with weak skills are identified as early as possible and that the people who are teaching them are the most capable, best educated teachers possible.

Michigan's present graduation re-

quirements — a single class in civics — are among the lowest in the nation.

The state is one of only four without periodic teacher preparation program approval and one of only 12 that have taken no action in the area of teacher competency.

IN ADDITION to the above points, the program calls for:

• Extending the school year, from 900 hours to 1,140 hours by the 1988-89 school year.

• Establishing instructional audits of every school building.

• Mandating an intensive study of average daily attendance in all schools.

Please turn to Page 4

Faxon faces discrimination suit

By Carol Azizian
staff writer

The former administrator of a French-English school in Southfield has filed a lawsuit against state Sen. Jack Faxon, charging him with sex discrimination and breach of promise.

Marilyn Levin of Birmingham said that Faxon, D-Farmington Hills, and

directors of the Lycee International eliminated her job. School officials replaced her with a Frenchman when French board members complained about an American woman running the school, she said.

"Sen. Faxon told me that the French were used to having male administrators," Levin said. "He also told me the board members didn't want me there, because I was not French."

Levin claims that American parents were reluctant to fight the decision because they "don't make financial contributions to the school."

The bilingual school is subsidized by the French-government-owned Renault USA Inc. Many French-speaking children of Renault employees who live in the Detroit area attend the school. Lycee's 10-member board is half French and half American.

Levin said the board had no "sound" reason for ousting her.

"THEY HAD NO basis for judgment," she said. "I never even met with the board. Only one French board

member ever saw me work, and she wrote a letter supporting me."

Faxon denied the allegations, claiming Levin was "just seeking publicity."

He said Levin's job was eliminated because the school couldn't afford to keep her when it decided to hire a full-time assistant to the headmaster. Levin's job as education coordinator for the American section was part time.

While Levin didn't speak French, Jean Francois Genay, the new assistant to the headmaster, has an extensive

background in bilingual education, Faxon said. Genay taught at the United Nations School for 10 years and was principal at the Lycee Francaise in New York.

Levin countered that Faxon never mentioned her lack of French would be a problem when he hired her.

Levin is asking for damages exceeding \$10,000, reinstatement and back pay. The suit was assigned to Judge Henry Szymanski of Wayne County Circuit Court.

Millage vote is Tuesday

If past school elections in the Farmington District are any indication, the precinct workers had better remember to take a good book or some knitting to the polling places for Tuesday's special election to renew five mills for 10 years.

There should be plenty of time for reading or other leisure activities along with guiding a few voters in and out of the booths.

"We've been getting only 1,000 or 1,200 people voting in the past few elections," said R. Scott Bacon, the administrative assistant for the district, which contains approximately 56,000 voters.

Added William Priak, the district's assistant superintendent for finances and services, "I have no reason to believe I'll be any other way (to Tuesday's election)."

Slim turnouts in school millage elections usually mean passage since only the "yes" people bother to vote. Still, Priak is concerned about the five mills, which represent \$5,000,460 of the district's \$44,310,000 operating budget.

"We need these five mills," he said. "I'm always concerned about millage elections, hoping they'll be favorable for the district."

Please turn to Page 3

Hammer assault is investigated

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

A Farmington Hills resident's condition is improving at Boisford General Hospital one week after he was beaten with a hammer.

Raymond S. Ducher, 36, of Fairmont Apartments was taken to Boisford late Sept. 9 shortly after an assailant struck him in the head with a hammer, Farmington Hills police said.

Ducher managed to crawl from a storage room in his apartment, where the attack took place, to the living room, where he called police. Ducher owns a gas station at Five Mile and Inkster roads in Redford Township.

Arraigned in 47th District Court on a charge of assault with intent to commit murder was Jonathan Marchwinski, 26, of Westland.

JUDGE MICHAEL Hand set bond at \$10,000. Marchwinski did not post bond and is in the Oakland County Jail in Pontiac. A preliminary examination on

the charge is scheduled for Wednesday, Sept. 21. Conviction on the charge carries a maximum penalty of life imprisonment.

Marchwinski was arrested Sept. 11 after he was apprehended by Inkster police. Farmington Hills police had contacted the Inkster Police Department after they received a call from a woman saying Marchwinski could be found at an Inkster motel.

Ducher told police he had arrived home from vacation earlier on Sept. 9, stopped at his gas station and was given a ride to his apartment by an employee. While unpacking his luggage, Ducher told police, he was struck from behind in the back of his head as he was bending down in the storage room. The assailant struck Ducher several times, police said. Ducher told police he managed to stop his assailant from choking him by jabbing the attacker in the eyes.

Although he could identify his assailant, Ducher told police he had no idea why he was attacked.

oral quarrel

Be true to your school and tell the world why

Farmington-area high school students, take note. As you all know, summer vacation is a good memory and school is back in session. We'd like to know what high school you think is best and why. Most students take pride in their high schools, but they never get a chance to brag about them. Here's that chance. Today's Oral Quarrel question, di-

rected at Farmington-area high school students, is: What high school do you think is best and why?

To respond to these questions, call the Farmington Observer at 477-4494. You have until 1 p.m. Friday to answer. To learn your neighbors' opinions, read Monday's Farmington Observer.

what's inside

- Amusements 10-14C
- Business 7-8C
- Classified Sections D-E
- Community Calendar 3E
- Club Circuit 10A
- Crossword Puzzle 5E
- Editorials 12A
- Memory Lane 3A
- Obituaries 2A
- Recreation News 8A
- Sports 1-5C
- Suburban Life 1-12B
- Travel 14C

NEWSLINE 477-5450
CLASSIFIED ADS 691-0800
HOME DELIVERY 691-0600

...for those who expect more

CREATIVE LIVING REAL ESTATE GUIDE

IN THE OBSERVER & ECCENTRIC'S THURSDAY EDITIONS