

Opening Day cards:
Collect them all, 1D



Gymnasts
lauded, 1C

North Farmington
students save tot, 2A

Farmington Observer

Volume 98 Number 52

Monday, April 6, 1987

Farmington, Michigan

58 Pages

Twenty-Five Cents

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Farmington FOCUS

If you have a news item, feature story idea or an action picture with a Farmington area connection, send a note to our downtown office at 33203 Grand River, Farmington 48024.

SALUTE your secretary. The Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce will celebrate National Secretaries Week at a luncheon at 12:30 p.m. Thursday, April 16, at the Holiday Inn of Farmington Hills, 58123 10 Mile.

Guest speaker will be Vicki Niebrugge, a local American Business Women's Association 1986-87 Business Woman of the Year. In addition to being a speaker and consultant, she's a corporate human resources manager in Ann Arbor.

As director of the Nova Group, she consults with professional firms and institutions in the areas of stress and crisis management, employment assessment, management skills development and employment and hiring practices. She is president of the SOS Community Crisis Center Board of Directors in Washtenaw County.

The cost is \$12 per person. Bring your secretary, assistant or aide. The cash bar opens at noon.

Call the chamber for reservations: 474-3440.

MAKING the rounds. Officers from the Farmington Hills Police Department Crime Prevention Section are visiting Farmington, North Farmington, Harrison and Mercy high schools to brief parents about safety during the graduation season.

"We stress parental responsibility," Sgt. Charles Nebus said.

Discussion topics include alcohol and drug laws as they pertain to young people, the consequences of drinking and driving, and the city's house party ordinance.

TAPPING his knowledge. Farmington Hills resident Ernie Harwell is among 21 prominent state authors who have contributed articles to the 80-page April issue of Michigan Living, a magazine published by the Automobile Club of Michigan.

"They don't all talk about travel," said Len Barnes, editor. "Most stories are about growing up and living in Michigan."

Harwell, longtime voice of the Detroit Tigers, writes about an Upper Peninsula excursion.

KEEP these numbers handy for reference when calling the Farmington Observer: News line, 477-5450; sports line, 591-2312; home delivery, 591-0500; classified ads, 591-0000; display ads, 591-2300.

FOOTNOTES: One year ago this week, Oakland University professor and financial strategist Robert Kielman predicts Farmington Hills office space will be overbuilt by the end of the year (1988).

County team taking aim at road tie-ups

Unified approach urged: 4A.

By Joanne Mallazowski
staff writer

A helicopter ride is the best way to get a birdseye view of traffic-congested Oakland County as far as Jack McDonald is concerned.



Jack McDonald

The Oakland County commissioner, who represents the Farmington area, did just that recently when he joined Gov. James Blanchard on an aerial tour of the county.

Though familiar with the area's growing traffic congestion, McDonald admits even he was astounded by what he saw as the helicopter flew over thoroughfares leading to the county's economic gold mines — the Rochester

area, Southfield, Troy, Novi and Farmington Hills.

But McDonald and other county leaders are sure it's going to take more than an aerial tour to convince Blanchard and state legislators that something has to be done.

To that end, the road commission and city managers have been meeting, discussing and planning methods of ensuring financing for what's expected to total \$740 million in road improvements over the next decade.

IN JANUARY, the Oakland County Board of Commissioners — which has no legal jurisdiction over the road commission or road financing — decided to throw its hat into the planning ring with development of a transportation committee.

McDonald chairs the six-member committee, which is expected to gather information and public comments to present in the form of a

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Botsford-based civic leader is a big fan of people

By Joanne Mallazowski
staff writer

He has witnessed some heartwrenching moments.

But once a week, he seeks out the hospital's happiest of places — the nursery.

"Here is new life. The miracle of birth. I often stand at the window and wonder what these babies will grow up to be," said Russell Tuttle, Botsford General Hospital's community relations director.

The tragedies, sadness and despair that Tuttle has witnessed over the years at the Farmington Hills hospital are balanced by the continuing medical advances that prompt as many successes and happy moments.

"My respect for life is still the same. And I have an immense respect for the doctors and nurses who deliver the care," said Tuttle, 55. "I have learned a lot. I've become fascinated. Each day there is something new in medicine."

Yet there's more to Tuttle than disseminator of medical and hospital news and happenings.

In the inner sanctum of community leadership, Tuttle — known amply to many as Russ — is a familiar face that more often than not is bubbling with laughter and compassion.

HIS VOCATION and avocation is people — and he loves it. "I meet a lot of people in this business, and

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people



RANDY BORSSTAFF/photographer

Russ Tuttle, outside Botsford General Hospital.

Rotary on trial

Allowing women crux of issue

By Bob Sklar
staff writer

Farmington Rotary doesn't encourage or solicit membership by women.

But it would if the Supreme Court upholds state laws designed to allow women to join Rotary clubs, said Robert Gardner, president of Farmington Rotary, whose 45 members include businessmen, professional men and public officials.

"We'll go along with whatever the Supreme Court rules," the Farming-

ton Hills resident said. "Being part of Rotary International, we have to support it. From my viewpoint, I'd certainly welcome women into our club. But that's my personal viewpoint."

The state laws that have come under scrutiny violate the rights of Rotarians everywhere, the Supreme Court was told March 30.

California law barring Rotary International from ousting a Duarte chapter with women members un-

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Clowning around



For Chuck Dexter, putting on the makeup is an art itself.

Bucky reveals identity

Bucky the Clown's visit to Wood Creek Elementary was full of balloons, bright colors and lots of giggles from the school's youngest students.

Three afternoon kindergarten classes watched as Chuck Dexter transformed from an everyday daddy of classmate Justin Dexter into the role he plays each year when the Shrine Circus comes to town.

During the circus' most recent 17-day run, which ended March 29, Bucky did 12 performances for Detroit-area families.

He is one of a pool of 70 local Shrine volunteers who change into clowns for the annual circus, held at the Michigan State Fairgrounds. Between 30 and 40 clowns perform each night, Dexter told the children.

"When you go to the Shrine Circus, it's helping other little kids so they can play like you," he explained.

Proceeds from the Shrine Circus go to the 22 Shrine hospitals across the country that help crippled and burned children.

Seeing Dexter before he painted his face and dressed was a special treat for the youngsters.

"Not too many people get to see clowns make up," he said. "And not too many will tell their names once they're made up."

Dexter has played the smiling Bucky for the past four years, keeping the same face and costume for his clown acts. He is considering changing his facade to look like a hobo, or something different.

Whatever clown costume he uses, "everything should be covered," he said, dressing in traditional bright colors, floppy clown shoes, white gloves and yellow wig.

Kindergarten teacher Gerrie Pugh, Carol Towne and Virginia Clarke watched as Dexter kept the youngsters entertained with his makeup, costume and using balloons to make a mouse, a parrot, bumblebees and a giraffe.



photos by RANDY BORSSTAFF/photographer

Bucky the Clown (Chuck Dexter) twists balloons into animal shapes for the children.

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