

What's Thanksgiving without a parade? 1D



Harrison football, 1C

Cities fight dismissal of school aid suit, 5A

Farmington Observer

Volume 102 Number 14

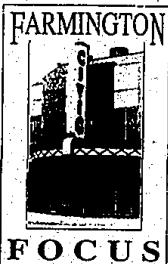
Monday, November 19, 1990

Farmington, Michigan

68 Pages

Fifty Cents

1990 Suburban Communications Corporation



Engler choice plan gets cool greeting



By Casey Hans staff writer

Choices in education are good, say some parents and school officials, but not necessarily the choice programs proposed recently by governor-elect John Engler.

Most prefer keeping education choices within the Farmington community, with local control and without pressure from the state.

"I think we've made a new definition (of choice) here in Farmington," said Farmington Area PTA Council President Sue Shapiro, referring to the district's program at Highmeadow Common Campus, its open enrollment policy at the high school level, optional center or neighborhood school kindergarten programs and the proposal currently under study for a year-round school program.

"We're much better off helping all schools. Forget schools of choice and improve all public schools, so you don't have one school better than another."

"That's what we're trying to do here."

Students from across the Farmington district attend Highmeadow Common Campus, where they have regular curriculum programs in the morning, then concentrate on enrichment sessions in the afternoon. Here, some former students work on an enrichment recycling project in the school parking lot.

REACTION CAME after Engler said he supported students attending any school within a district, and in future years that cross-district choice be considered, allowing parents to send their children to any school in any Michigan district. Though Engler has taken no public stand on the much dis-

cussed voucher plan — where parents would have a stipend and could send their child to a public or private school of their choice — that issue has also arisen.

Assistant superintendent for curriculum and staff development, Judith White, said she believes the district is headed the right way in choice offerings. She does not advocate offering choice between individual schools, unless each can offer something special.

"Our programs are very similar" (in each school), she said. "I don't think there would be a lot of movement. To me, where choice might have an interesting impact . . . is if one school offered some really different things."

White said a recent survey regarding the Highmeadow program showed a "tremendous satisfaction with our elementary program across the district — even more than we thought."

ALTHOUGH ENGLER brought the issue to the forefront after his election, educational choices have been discussed nationally for a number of years.

A national school administrators association called for a longer school year to enhance learning in 1987. In 1988, the National Governor's Association endorsed the idea of giving

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SAVING TREES

has always been an important issue in Farmington Hills. Mayor Jean Fox reports that residents of the city have saved about 1,131 of them since starting a voluntary recycling program last year. A total of 655 tons of newspaper has been recycled at the city's recycling center at the DTW yard on Halsted Road. "One ton equals 17 trees, so 1,135 trees have been saved in this short time," Fox reports.

MORE NOISE

The Farmington Hills City Council will again take up the noise issue at the Farmington/Farmington Hills Community Center, after a neighbors group said any action by the city's planning commission on decibel levels would be "usurping the legislative power of the council." The council put off discussion of the issue after the letter was presented at a Nov. 12 meeting. "We need at least a week to digest and get an opinion by the city attorney," said Councilman Terry Sever.

GIFTS ABROAD

Any gifts for members of the armed forces serving in the Middle East may be dropped off at various city and community agencies. Appropriately marked and decorated boxes at these collection points have been made and placed there by Boy Scouts Troop 110.

Please make sure your gift is packaged in plastic or metal. No glass.

Donations to defray the cost of shipping can be made payable to ESA Troop 110 and mailed to 25773 Rutledge Crossing, Farmington Hills, 48335.

The scouts, who meet in Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Church, are collecting the gifts and letters to brighten the service men and women's holiday, in cooperation with Friends of Freedom.

The boxes will remain in the collection points through Nov. 30.

Collection points include the Farmington Department of Public Safety, 23400 Liberty, Farmington Hills City Hall, 31555 11 Mile, The Community Center, 24705 Farmington Road, Farmington Hills Fire Department, 28711 Drake Road, Farmington Community Library, Farmington branch, 33550 Liberty, Hills branch, 32737 12 Mile.

HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

There will be no window or post office box service, or residential-business mail delivery on Thanksgiving Day, Thursday, Nov. 23, said Farmington postmaster Kenneth Harris.

Normal holiday mail collections will be made and Special Delivery and Express Mail services will be provided.

Normal mail service will resume Friday, Nov. 23.

MEMORY LANE

From the Nov. 23, 1950 edition of the Farmington Enterprise:

High winds take a toll in Farmington as the smokstack at the Farmington Dairy, yields under the strain and bends at a "crazy angle."

Tasty tidbits

LUNCH IN Heritage Park is a treat for park goers — not to mention the Canada geese ready for any tasty tidbits.

But the geese weren't alone as sea gulls and mallard ducks competed for some of the handouts of bread.

Denise Moore of Farmington Hills had no problem enticing the geese (top) with lunch while her 4 1/2-year-old son, Clinton, had to protect his cheese sandwich (right) from the hungry park inhabitants. Thursday's unseasonably warm weather was just right for Moore and her children, including 2 1/2-year-old daughter, Rose, to get together with Moore's sister, Debbie Kostreba of Livonia, and her son Nicholas, 2 — and thankfully all were armed with bags of bread.



Photo by SHARON LOMIEUX/staff photographer

Victims say reporting is sensitive

Panel discussion spurs understanding

By Amy Roes staff writer

While many think journalists rank somewhere between used-car salesmen and politicians on the popularity scale, last week in Southfield the press received at least a "B" from some of its traditionally harshest critics.

At a special panel discussion Wednesday at the Southfield schools complex, police, a prosecutor, a doctor and victims of violent crimes gathered to exchange views on how the media cover stories of domestic violence and sexual assault.

Hosted by the Society of Professional Journalists, the panel discussion also included representatives from local print, radio and TV news organizations.

Perhaps to the surprise of the 25 or so journalists in the audience, the media did not end up on the chopping block after all was said and done. Even more shocking was who turned out to be the media's biggest proponents: the victims themselves who had been covered by the press.

Four years ago a young woman was raped by an unknown assailant who broke into her home. Today

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Board considers cuts first, then tax hike

By Casey Hans staff writer

Farmington school trustees will consider a list of proposed cuts to programs and projects before deciding to hold a special tax election next year.

Superintendent Michael Flanagan was directed to bring a list of possible cuts — what the board is calling streamlining — back to the table for discussion Tuesday. The board is also considering a more focused special tax election

in which it could offer voters choices of tax amounts or earmark tax language for specific capital projects.

Flanagan has asked the board to make a decision for or against an election by early December.

"In good faith, it seems we should try and streamline especially in non-classroom areas," Flanagan said. But "I feel strongly we don't have a luxurious program. We have an adequate program for our kids."

SCHOOL OFFICIALS are concerned after recently losing \$5.8 million through state recapture, and say it will take an additional \$7.6 million — about 3 mills in property taxes — to continue the same school programs and capital projects the district has under way for the 1991-92 school year.

With a large state budget deficit and a change in the governor's office, they are also concerned the state will take back more money from the district yet this year.

Most school board members agreed with the

idea of some cuts, citing public opinion that shows voters are fed up with rising property taxes. "They are indicating they want to see an effort made that we make some cuts in some areas," said trustee Cathleen Webb, who recently polled her neighbors. "They see some gravity there."

"THE FINANCIAL picture for this state is very, very bad, and it's going to be that way

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Secondary school boundary proposals are due tonight

A committee studying secondary level boundaries for Farmington Public Schools will present tentative proposals for boundary changes tonight and seek additional public comment.

The public meeting of the Secondary Attendance Area Study Committee will be held at 7:30 p.m. at Power Middle School, 34704 Rhonswood, Farmington Hills. Power is off Gill Road, south of Nine Mile.

Two sub-committees studied boundaries for both middle school and high school levels throughout the

district. Twenty nine parents, four school district representatives and members of the Farmington Education Association participated in the study, which began on Oct. 9.

Copies of the committee's proposals are available at the district's central office and will also be made available at the meeting. School/Community Relations director Pam O'Malley said tonight's proposals are tentative, and could change depending on public comment.

After tonight's meeting, the committee will finalize its recommendations and present them to the Farmington Board of Education on Tuesday, Dec. 18, during the regular board meeting.

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