

Prom fashions brighten night, 1C



Softball results, 1B

Race brings women out for a cause, 13A

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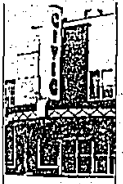
Thursday, April 16, 1992

Farmington, Michigan

76 Pages

Fifty Cents

FARMINGTON



FOCUS

Housing rehab draws residents' ire

By Joanne Mallazewski
staff writer

Some Olde Town residents have every intention of contacting federal officials about what they believe are violations in how the city administers its block grant program.

"I intend to pursue this with the inspector general (of the Department of Housing and Urban Development)," said an angry George Roberts, a member of the Farmington Hills Housing Rehabilitation Loan Board. "I have seen too much cover-up."

Roberts is joined by other residents who say they are fed up with problems, such as "shoddy workmanship," as well as other apparent irregularities with the housing rehabilitation program, financed with block grant money.

They also oppose the use of block grant money to help pay for a code enforcement officer in the city's south end. And they maintain that despite the use of an enforcement officer in the last two years, code and zoning violations continue in many of the city's older areas at an alarming rate.

"There are other avenues open to us," said

Iida Ranesbottom, Olde Town-Meadowbrook Heights Homeowners Association secretary.

DESPITE ROBERTS' public comments Monday night, the city council did not address a recent audit of the block grant program or publicized problems with contractors who are paid with money from low-interest loans made to income-eligible homeowners.

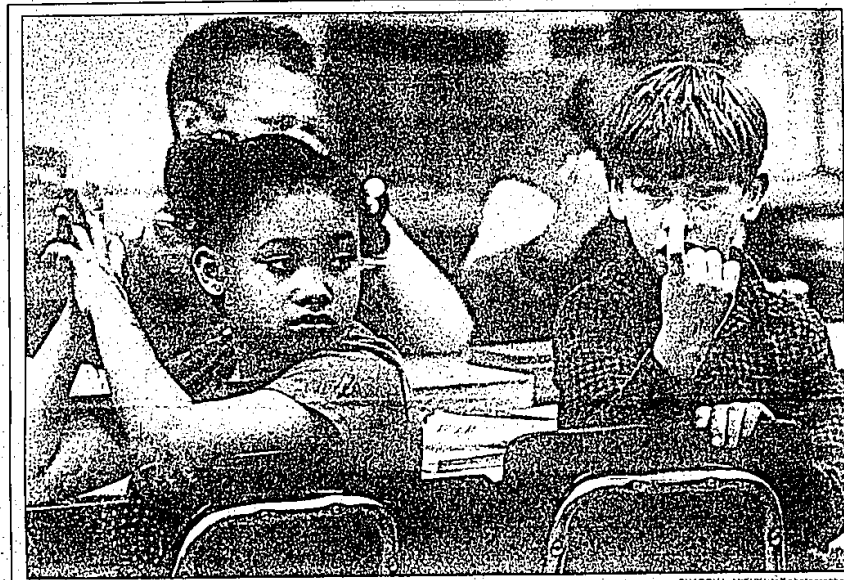
Dismissing the complaints, councilwoman Joanne Smith urged the council "to get back on track" with the approval of the distribution of the city's \$427,000 in block grant money (in-

cluding \$60,000 housing rehabilitation loan repayments) for 1992-93. She suggested problems with the program be addressed administratively.

Roberts, for one, intends to pursue another direction. "I intend on consulting with an attorney right now."

The loan board member says he is unsatisfied with an audit of the block grant program conducted by Plante & Moran CPAs, requested by City Manager William Costick when board

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SHARON LAMIEUX/staff photographer

See you in court

Lakeisha Alford looks toward the stand as David Oleako tries to get the attention of another sitting across the "court-

room." The third graders bring civics to life as they set up a mock court. For story and more photos, please see Page 3A.

Chief speaks out on reforms

By Casey Hana
staff writer

Farmington's school chief on Monday called for continued discussion on school finance and property tax reform to ensure that Michigan kids don't get the raw end of the deal.

Superintendent Michael Flanagan said two issues must be worked out together, with a sensitivity to today's students who represent our country's future.

"We need to be aware of the consequences," said Flanagan, the current president of the Michigan School Business Officials who has been outspoken in the area of school finance reform. "To think it's going to be solvable without kids paying for it is naive."

He added: "Are we looking at a rising sun, or a setting sun? If we don't find this balance, we're certainly looking at a setting sun in Michigan and possibly in the United States."

Flanagan, who has been an administrator for both in- and out-of-formula school districts in the past decade, was the keynote speaker Monday at a conference in Ypsilanti

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Secretary clowns her way to D.C. Easter Egg Roll

By Pat Murphy
staff writer

Earlier this week, Mary Lee Gentry stepped out of her role as a serenely efficient secretary at the Lubavitch Foundation, the Orthodox Jewish center in Farmington Hills that is scheduled to build a campus/retreat in West Bloomfield.

She stepped into her role as "Wacko, the no-frown clown."

Gentry flew to Washington, D.C., Tuesday, to participate in the annual White House Easter Egg Roll.

Gentry is the only Detroit area clown among 30 from Michigan scheduled to help thousands of youngsters hunt for eggs and other-

wise have a good time Monday on the White House lawn.

THE EGG ROLL is a Washington tradition reportedly dating back to the early 1800s and the presidency of James Madison, whose wife was fascinated to learn that Egyptian children rolled colored eggs on the site of the pyramids.

It's been at the Capitol, the National Zoo and other Washington locations. But tradition says the egg roll was moved to the White House under the administration of Rutherford B. Hayes and has since featured the president, first lady and other dignitaries.

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A crimp in 'Kroger-ing'

Walkout sends area shoppers elsewhere

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By Tom Baer
staff writer

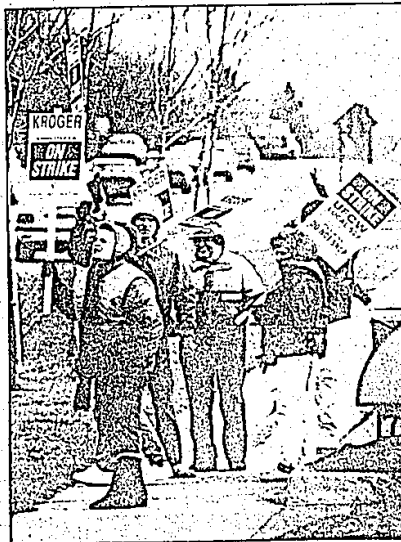
With only a few cars in the parking lots, most Kroger supermarkets have that closed look this week.

The stores are open, but few shoppers are crossing the picket lines set up Monday when more than 7,000 Kroger Co. cashiers, clerks and other employees walked out on strike over a variety of grievances.

But, if people aren't Kroger-ing, to steal a line from the chain's advertising, then where are they shopping this Easter/Pasover week, one of the busiest of the year for food markets?

Other large chains in the Detroit area are also affected.

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JOHN DISCHER/staff photographer

Kroger strikers, including Kim Kendra (at left with long scarf) take to the sidewalk in front of the 11 Mile/Middlebelt store.

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- Real estate . . . Soc. D-E
- Employment . . . Soc. E-F
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- Crossword puzzle . . . 7D
- Entertainment . . . 7-10B
- Obituaries . . . 6A
- Opinion . . . 18A
- Police, fire calls . . . 3A

CLASSIFIEDS . 591-0900
CIRCULATION . 591-0500
NEWS LINE . 477-5450
SPORTS LINE . 953-2139

Garage Sale

Season Is just around the corner!

Place your \$2.15 a line classified ad and reach suburban Detroit's finest market.
(Minimum 3 Lines)

591-0900

HOW ABOUT that Kara Varilone. She's a poet and now we all know it.

Kara, now a fourth-grader at Hillside Elementary School in the Farmington District, penned a poem, "Fantasies," that's being published in "Poetic Voices of America," an anthology.

Her poem will also be published in another anthology, "Olympus," which will be on display at college and public libraries across the nation. Kara's poem will be copyrighted and will remain her property.

The poem, written when Kara was a third-grader, was sent to nine contests by Hillside teacher, Dodie Harris.

"This is thrilling for Kara, her family, Hillside, Farmington and for me," Harris said. "I as so happy that Kara has the interest to come back to me and show me her writing. She must have felt it was good and wanted my feedback."

"This is every teacher's dream — to be remembered and appreciated."

HEAR YE! Hear ye! The Farmington Historical Society will meet at 8 p.m. Wednesday, April 22, at the Farmington Community Library, Liberty and State streets in downtown Farmington.

Jean Fox, former Farmington Hills mayor and city councilwoman and noted author and historian, will talk about the Glenwood Cemetery, where eminent Detroiters and Michiganders have been buried.

The public is invited to attend.

HEY, something "fishy" is going on in the Farmington Community School.

Students at Farmington Community School went "fishing for a favorite" to celebrate reading. They were given fish-shaped pages to have filled out whenever someone read them a book.

Under the direction of Barbara Crisp, they decorated, cut out and returned the shapes, which were then suspended across the hall to create the illusion of the ocean. A total of 1,407 "fish" were returned.

The reading theme continues this month with an April showers program, including raindrops, clouds, lightning bolts, rainbows and sunshine.

MEMORY LANE — From the April 17, 1952 Farmington Enterprise:

• The board of education of the Farmington Township School District approved a budget of \$582,870 for the 1952-53 fiscal year. The budget, as proposed by Superintendent O.E. Dunckel, was \$102,010 more than last year's figure.

• Some 225 pints of blood were contributed by Farmington-area residents during the recent Red Cross blood drive held at the Farmington Town Hall.

• Farmington and Clarenceville high schools were to open their 1952 prep baseball seasons with an inter-community game on the FHS diamond.

• Because of an active building program in the Clarenceville District, the board of education voted to meet every two weeks.

Items for Farmington Focus may be mailed to the Farmington Observer, 21896 Farmington Road, Farmington 48336, or dropped off at the newspaper office.