

# School Board Regrouping Despite Protest Petitions

By STEVE BARNABY

The resignation of Dr. Roderick Smith as superintendent of the Farmington School District has elicited protest in the form of a letter signed by 159 Farmington residents and presented to the board Dec. 5.

Smith resigned Nov. 21 after he was notified that four members of the board desired his resignation. Those

members were Kenneth Perrin, Ron Ennitt, Elizabeth Brennan and Kathryn Stirling.

Prior to his resignation, secret meetings were held by the board, where it was determined that no reason would be given by the board for the requested resignation.

THE LETTER lashed out at the procedure used by the

board to determine the resignation and ask why no explanation was given to Smith or the public.

Fred Hughes, 30954 Oak Valley Drive, was spokesman for the petitioners, who included several backers of liberal school board members. The letter also asked why the resignation came so soon after a new three-year contract had been signed at the beginning of the school year.

The letter said the action of board concerning Smith's resignation left much to be desired and said the board has been "less than responsive" to the needs of education.

Aldo Vagnozzi, vice president of the board, who voted against Smith's resignation, responded to the letter in a plea for unity.

He applauded the sentiment

of the letter, but said the board had acted with good legal opinion in taking their position of giving no reason for the desired resignation to either Smith or the public.

"THE TIME has come to put the issue behind us... the die is cast. The decision is irreversible," Vagnozzi said.

He said that the unanimous vote to appoint Marinus Van

Amejde acting superintendent should be interpreted as a "ray of hope" for unity in the future.

"It is time to give him (Van Amejde) the opportunity to build on this support, to improve the school system. This is a good base to build on. The time for recommitments is over and the time for rebuilding is here," said Vagnozzi.

## Roth Upheld, But Rehearings Seen

The U.S. Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals ruling upholding the right of a federal judge to order cross-district busing was called "kind of like a Wild West movie" by one attorney close to the scene.

"They've decided the guy is going to hang, but they'll hold a trial first," he said.

The Appeals Court, while affirming Judge Roth's right to establish a metropolitan busing plan, ordered the case back for rehearing on grounds some districts included were not granted a hearing.

But it also held there was no necessity to prove a district guilty of discrimination in order to include it in a desegregation area.

William Saxton, attorney for 20-odd local districts fighting the Roth decision, termed the Appeals Court ruling "illusory."

"Now all that's left is to determine the appropriate scope of the district," Saxton said.

Three paths remain open for suburban schools determined to carry on the fight: (1) They may ask for a U.S. Supreme Court hearing, (2) they may seek a rehearing before the full 10-member Court of Appeals, or (3) they may wait out results of the rehearing before Judge Roth.

The three-man panel, which returned a unanimous decision, consisted of Judges Harry Phillips of Asheville, N.C.; George Edwards of Detroit, and John Peck of Cincinnati.

Saxton said he felt the court erred in approving cross-district busing by failing to take into account certain recent U.S. Supreme Court rulings.

Saxton said he had not decided the next legal step to take immediately following the Friday ruling.

## New School Supt. Hunt Under Way

By STEVE BARNABY

The Farmington Board of Education is officially searching for a new superintendent to replace Dr. Roderick Smith, who resigned Nov. 21 after a series of secret meetings were held by the board.

Smith's decision not only caused controversy on the board, which split 4 to 3 on accepting the resignation, but also the public, which has let its voice be known in letters to the board and at the board meetings.

Since Smith's resignation, Marinus Van Amejde has taken the helm as acting superintendent.

BOARD PRESIDENT Kenneth Perrin at the Dec. 5 board meeting outlined some of the procedures to be used in choosing a new superintendent.

Asking for the patience of the public in the board's search for a new superintendent, Perrin said it would be a lengthy process, anywhere from six to 12 months.

He said this would be one of the most important decisions the board would ever make affecting the future of the Farmington School District.

"I feel that it is extremely important that each member of the board participate fully in this decision," he said.

Alluding to the recent controversy between the board and administration over the role of board committees Perrin said, "If the board really means to back away, we must choose a superintendent in whom we have full confidence."

He said a desirable superintendent would be one who would be willing to put thought into long-range planning so that decisions by

the board wouldn't be under the pressure of immediate action.

OTHER QUALITIES Perrin called desirable for a new superintendent were a willingness to make research into new areas of curriculum, improvement of existing programs and realistic evaluation of staff so that appropriate assistance could be given.

After the criteria are set by the board, Perrin said, a search will be made through universities and within the present administrative staff for a candidate.

Board Member Mervyn Ross said that in order to regain the confidence of the public after the recent controversy, a search for the superintendent should be made under the public eye.

"If we are to revive the trust and faith of the community we must do it between ourselves. The community must have the assurance that no action similar to the recent past will be forthcoming in the future," he said.

On that note Dr. Ross made a motion, unanimously accepted by the board, which said that no search be taken for a superintendent by any board member until the board, as a whole, defined the method to be followed at a regular board meeting.

BOARD MEMBER Aldo Vagnozzi seconded the motion and said, "The motion says to me, now that we are all appointed to the committee, that we ought to set down procedure before members go out and act for the committee and determine procedure."

"As progress is made we should report to the community. This is the way to get the selection process going in an orderly manner," said Vagnozzi.



CARD PAINTER—Frank Smith works at the hobby that has kept his friends happy for Christmas after Christmas. (Evert photo)

## Hand Made Greetings Fill Retiree's Life

A Christmas card from Frank Smith, 2577 Hopkins, is more than just a Christmas card.

While most people wander up to the local store to buy their box of yuletide greetings, Smith makes the custom something special — he creates his own greeting cards.

Smith has made every

Christmas card from scratch since 1935. He not only draws the pictures for the covers, but also composes the verse and writes it in script.

A RETIRED school teacher, he taught architectural drawing during his 32 years at Redford High School in Detroit.

With the aid of his drawing

skill, he adds the experiences of his life over the years and comes up with unusual greeting cards.

A world-war traveler, he has drawn pictures of cathedrals and foreign places with great exactness. Many times he gives a local flavor to his cards by drawing scenes of his house or the surrounding area.

Through the years, it has been his intent to leave a meaningful message in his greeting.

During World War II, he drew the interior of the Nuremberg Cathedral, which included the intricate architecture that exists in the Gothic structure.

The verse inside reads, "In far off lands, neath crosses white, lie brave men — row on row. They fought that justice replace might and seeds of freedom grow. No hates they held within their hearts, thru death they now decree, that man for love of God shall chart an honorable path in victory."

ONE YEAR he drew a picture of their new house with the inscription, "We plum ran out of scenes, I fear, makin' Christmas cards, you know. So it's a new house we're buildin' — on a hilly view that clear and flowers for Bea (his wife) will grow."

At other times, the enormity of the task has discouraged him, but he just could never convince himself that buying cards was a better way.

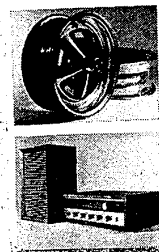
During one of these fits of frustration, the greeting card for the year read, "You just can't help but thinkin', '7 weren't for folks like you, we'd end this free time too."

SMITH DOESN'T let his talent for drawing and verse end with greeting cards. He has designed a number of

Continued on Page 3A

Amusements .....	10B
Bowling .....	8A
Churches in Action .....	4.5A
Classified Want Ads .....	1-9B
Deaths and Funerals .....	5A
Focus: Michigan Lottery .....	Sec. C
Sports -- Prep and Pro .....	8.9A
Ski Hail .....	9A
Spotlight on Women .....	7A
Turf Tips and Quips .....	8A

If you like "things"...



the kind of things that most young people like... things like cameras and wheels and sound... then you'll enjoy making it a habit of reading the Observer. You'll find the things you like... at the price you want to pay!

## One-Act Night At Farmington

"A Night of One Acts" will be presented by the Farmington High School play production class at 8 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 14.

They will stage "This Younger Generation" by Paul T. Nolan, "The Tell-Tale Heart" by Edgar Allan Poe, and "Aria da Capo" by Edna St. Vincent Millay.

Deb Williamson and Vicki Holmes, both seniors, are producers. Brad Allen will direct "This Younger Generation." Judy Capla will direct "The Tell-Tale Heart," and Jan Ingram will direct "Aria da Capo." All are seniors.

Miss Ingram has called in Rusty Ingram, a 1972 graduate of Farmington High, as a special guest star for her play. Tickets are 75 cents and may be purchased at the door.



ATHLETES HONORED in the traditional Exchange Club luncheon for Harrison High recently included Paul Johnson (left), captain of the cross country team, and Kurt Heiss, captain of the golf team. William Prisk (center), vice president of the exchange club, chats with the young men. (Evert photo)