

Farmington Observer & Eccentric

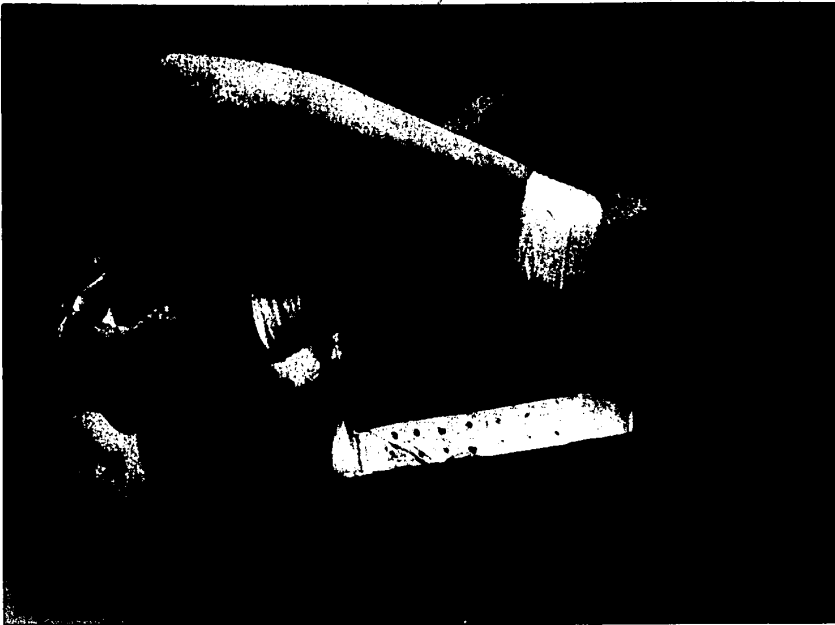
Volume 86 Number 38

Thursday, February 27, 1975

Farmington, Michigan

56 Pages

Fifteen Cents



The Pain of it all

Not everything has been fun and roses for Farmington Harrison's wrestling team. It wasn't a disappointing season, despite Harrison's third place finish in the Western Six conference, and the future looks a lot brighter than this wrestler

would expect. Most of this year's squad were sophomores, and Coach Bill Pratt can hardly wait until the big sophomore wrestlers become senior wrestlers. (Staff photo by Gary Fiedman)

Make room for the metrics

By SUSAN AVERILL

FARMINGTON—If you think you've got problems with higher math now, just wait. Next year your child will be calculating in metrics.

A few teachers in Farmington are getting the jump on a state law which requires school districts to begin teaching metrics at the elementary level in 1976.

No math books with metrics are available yet, so the teachers have outdone the few metric instruments purchased by farsighted administrators with Tilt-I funds. They also used ingenuity to develop games and measuring instruments designed to help develop conceptual frameworks for their students.

Dennis Place, fourth grade teacher at Larkshire Elementary School is one of these teachers.

In the middle of his classroom stands a table heaped with games, toys and measuring instruments. Each is in metric, and each is designed to give a working, visual concept of that measuring system.

THERE ARE no English measuring devices in sight. Each child's ruler is carefully taped to reveal only its metric side. No centimeter is allowed.

"We don't want them to convert, it might confuse them," Place explained. Besides confusing them, it would also encourage a lingering dependence on the English system of inches and feet, something Place would like to avoid. Students exercise their minds with games made especially for them by Kathy Denning, another Larkshire teacher.

Two of the games resemble Monopoly, with a start and a finish and squares in between, some of which instruct the player to "pick a card from the deck" or "measure line 'M' and move ahead that many spaces."

Line 'M' is one of several lines of various lengths which are drawn out

side of the spaces. Students measure the lines in centimeters (cm). If 'M' is six centimeters, the player will move either six forward or back, as the card instructs him.

ANOTHER GAME is similar to run nunny. Students either try to match their opponent's discard or find what it equals among the cards in their own hand. A card of 1,000 cubic millimeters (mm) might be matched with one cubic centimeter, for example.

For some weights and heights in

metrics came as a shock. Place said some students step on the scale, look at their weight in kilograms (kg) and look up at him expectantly.

"What do we really weigh?" they ask.

It takes a while for Place to explain that although the number is different than what registers on the scale at home, it is indeed their real weight.

The students have a handmade caliper to measure the width of solid objects like heads, bottles and basketballs and a trundle wheel which clicks

off meters when wheeled across the room.

Thumbs and paper clips serve as measuring instruments when nothing else is readily available. Place said. The width of a child's thumb is usually roughly equivalent to one centimeter and the edge of a paper clip measures a fair millimeter, he explained.

The only drawback to the problem is frustrated parents. Place said.

"They feel kind of funny because they can't help their kids at home," he said.

He comes out of his shell

By CORINNE ABATT

FARMINGTON HILLS—Sculptor Ted Striewski popularly known in art circles as "the egg man," is no longer basking those colorful, charming embryos.

Like many an artist who moves from one period to another, Striewski has moved from his egg period to another, as yet unnamed.

The artist, member of the fine arts faculty of Oakland Community College Orchard Ridge campus, is a master of taking common place things and, through arrangement and innovative techniques, giving them new perspectives.

Since then, eggs, in the shell or out, hardboiled, soft boiled, sunny side up and over easy, captured the artist's attention.

The egg period was born when he was experimenting with epoxy resins. Pouring them on to a flat framed surface, creating landscapes and figurative works, Striewski's daughter, Bambi, Michigan State University freshman, looked at one of the landscapes and remarked that one of the clouds looked like an egg.

STRIEWSKI SAID that until that moment in 1970, "I had no particular focus, in content or theme."

Since then, eggs, in the shell or out, hardboiled, soft boiled, sunny side up and over easy, captured the artist's attention.

"The resin had a remarkable ability to capture the look of an egg," he said. "I was looking for a way to focus my energies, and the egg seemed to fit."

Because he is a sculptor rather than a painter, the pieces, though framed for hanging, are three dimensional.

In varying degrees, the artist's sense of humor is present in the 100 egg pieces he did. Sometimes it is subtly coddled in the arrangement of

the eggs on the chart, other times it cracks into the viewer's senses with a whack.

The piece hanging in the living room of the Striewski home on Harborside is two oversize sunny side up eggs with the words "2 eggs" underneath.

THIS EXEMPLIFIES the combination of flowery quality and hard edge letters he likes.

The egg has been used in art for centuries, but I like to think of myself as the first to get into the egg," he said.

It was the egg which whetted the appetites of collectors for Striewski's work, displayed by Shelly Rees at the now defunct Middle Earth Gallery, Bill Leonard, then director of the J. L. Hudson Gallery immediately responded to the egg art and Striewski joined his regular artists.

The eggs won regional and national awards, and are included in many recognized private collections.

Perhaps the greatest reward to the artist is the response which the eggs evoke in viewers—laughter and obvious enjoyment, what Striewski terms "the absurdity of the whole thing."

BUT NOW, the eggs, explored from every possible angle, even the obscure, have been placed on the back burner replaced by a fascinating with old photographs and tintypes.

The work with old photographs, the artist says, "is the very beginning of a stage and I don't know where it's gonna lead."

One of the first in the new stage is the "Female Time Distortion Chart" in which a series of pictures of Victorian era women are mounted under cast polyester resin ground into lenses. The photographs change with the angle of vision offering a kaleido-

scope view of the face reminiscent of fun house mirror room.

In process in the studio is the "Old Little Girl Parts Chart," which will include plexiglass cut to the shape of the child in the old photograph, painted on the reverse side of the plexiglass with the subject of the photograph dismembered and reassembled.

Collecting old photographs has produced a morbid fascination in me with the mortality of man. Time stops when a photograph is taken," Striewski said.

WHILE HE says he is "pretty much committed to working with plastics," he began using canvas as a medium when plastics were difficult to obtain last year. One of the canvas pieces won best of show at a Wayne State University exhibit recently.

He also is making furniture such as coffee tables one looks like slabs of slate, but is made from Styrofoam covered with clay. Plaster was poured over the clay for the mold, and the surface made with a built-up of fiberglass ground down and colored.

Striewski is now on a semester sabbatical from his teaching. He and his wife, Gloria, soon will leave for a five-week tour of European art centers.

Admitting that New York City is now the center of world art, he is anxious to see what is happening abroad.

"As far as I can tell, there is no single trend in modern art. It is splintering in all directions, and there is no one major school of art that we are aware of."

HE LOOKS upon the European tour much the same way he does life with the same mixture of humor, solemnity and curiosity which characterize his work.

(See ARTIST, page 2)

Board mulls hold-the-line tight budgets

By SUSAN AVERILL

FARMINGTON—As any geometry book will tell you, something resting on three points is more stable and secure than on any other number of points. Unfortunately for the Farmington school board, that rule doesn't hold true when it's next year's budget is in the balance.

Three alternative budgets presented to the board Tuesday night were molded around three different income variables. Beside the \$120,000 reduction already made in state aid, Business Manager William Prisk warned that yet another cut may be made, this time \$260,000.

The only bright spot was a possible additional \$200,000 in state aid, but even that is uncertain, Prisk said.

FIRST PRESENTED was an austerity budget which will be used in the event of millage failure. The further reduction of state aid was not taken into account, although the additional revenue was added into the figuring. It was all done with a note of caution, however, which induced Prisk to "asterisk" items which may have to be removed should the expected revenue not be forthcoming.

Included in the austerity budget for elementary schools was the retention of an art consultant, a vocal music consultant, and seven reading consultants. It also provided for a reduced number of office employees, less expenditure for replacement textbooks and a more equitable division of the expenditure-per-student allowance between the elementary and secondary levels.

With the austerity budget, second year schools would keep three administrative assistants, three teachers, and four reading specialists. Extracurricular activities (the B-I schedule) would be reduced, as would testing programs, transportation expenditures and the number of office employees.

Graduation would be rescheduled from Ford Auditorium to the high school gymnasiums and auditoriums.

Additional items included increased employee fringe benefits, but did not include the restoration of the class day from five to six hours, an omission which incensed some board members.

William Corliss, vice president of the board, said the loss might lead to the loss of high school accreditation, which would hamper students trying to enter a university.

"I find this budget totally unstaffed

tory. We won't have accredited schools, but we will have a football team," he said.

Farmington high schools are currently accredited by the North Central Association, which stipulates a six-hour class day as one of its minimum requirements. Any substandard requirement will result in a one-year warning period. The school will be denied accreditation if the situation is not corrected.

School administrators did not view the problem as serious.

"ACCREDITATION is just an indication to the universities that certain standards are being met," said Lewis Schulman, assistant superintendent of secondary education.

If Farmington schools lose their accreditation, they might have trouble getting into prestigious eastern universities, but it will make no difference in Michigan," he said.

"Considering the circumstances, I think we can stretch the North Central warning to two or three years. But if not, the trouble will come when students apply to colleges that are not in the state, and who don't know what the school system's standards are and what the grades mean," Schulman said.

Gary Lichtman, president of the board, said he viewed the reduction of the school day as a one-year, stop-gap measure.

With criticism leveled at the maintenance of the B-I schedule, several administrative and office employees and the continued reduction of the school day, Prisk defended his program saying it was designed to give the students a "well-rounded" education.

Corliss was also concerned that the reduction would allow the students to acquire a maximum of 15 credits when 14 are required for graduation.

"This budget, ladies and gentlemen, is inconceivable. One mistake, one failure, and our students are on the line," he said.

Trustee Ann Rudewig suggested the elimination of the physical education requirements to allow more academically oriented students to take advantage of the extra hour.

Already in effect is the option for the student who would normally take his physical education classes, during ninth and 10th grades to take them during 11th and 12th. Schulman said.

"Usually the students take at least one year during ninth grade, but there is no reason they could defer it until their senior year," he said.



The egg piece will be in a national exhibit. (Staff photo by Craig Newman)

The Observer & Eccentric index

News	Section A
Bridge	6
Business at a glance	8
Business people v	8
Columns	16
Obituaries	14
Suburban life	Section B
Club circuit	6
Community calendar	3
Volunteers	9
Classifieds	Section C
Sports and Business	Section D