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Twenty Five Cents

Farmington's future stymies experts studying district

By RON GARBINSKI

Compiling an accurate forecast of the Farmington School District's future enrollment is a problem for school officials. When administrators must consider such unpredictable factors as residential growth, the economy, employment, energy and other unexpected happenings, the painstaking process of forecasting becomes difficult. It sometimes becomes frustrating even for researchers with the most sophisticated forecasting methods.

"Every school district has problems and it is very difficult to predict demographic figures when there are so many variables to consider," he continues.

"So the question always will be what do you do with the schools during periods of declining enrollments?"

"It would be good if someone could predict which schools should stay open and which ones should close," Robinson explains. "But the answers aren't that easy to find."

Robinson recently completed a demographic study of the Farmington School District to see what the future holds for the district's enrollments.

The Farmington School District is forecasting 18,500 students for the 1978-79 academic year. That's down 494 from the pre-

sent school year when total enrollment as of Sept. 28, 1977, was 18,994.

His research has proven what district administrators have believed all along: There is a problem with declining enrollments in the district, but there will be good news in the future.

"You can expect a continued school enrollment decline of 500 per year for the next two or three years. Then an uptick is expected," Robinson reports.

"We are going through a frustrating period. People are relocating in the area. The younger market is going to be experiencing growth, but not right now," the researcher says.

"There can't be growth when you continue to have more moves out from the community and school enrollment continues to drop," he says. "But in the next few years, there will be a resurgence in enrollments in the Farmington district."

By conducting an impact analysis of the school district, Robinson shows that the continued decline in enrollments is due to several important factors.

"INCREASED WORKMEN'S compensation payments are forcing many industries out of the area. Energy costs and problems are crimping present expansion plans of local firms," Robinson explains.

"Unemployment, rates of more than 10 per cent are affecting families in the district. Just these factors will decrease enrollments each year by about three per cent."

Several other factors will help increase enrollments in the district and partially offset the declines.

"The completion of Interstate 275 will have a great impact on the community and will help increase enrollments at a six per cent annual rate," he continues.

"This is probably the most important consideration, at least to me as a researcher, that we found when preparing the demographic report for the school district. The freeway system will be an artery right to the Farmington area, making it a huge distribution center for the seven county region."

Adding to the incentives of locating with the freeway system of I-96, I-696 and I-275, companies would be able to choose between two Class A industrial parks.

It is rather unusual for a community the size of Farmington to have two Class A parks, but it provides added incentive for firms," Robinson explains.

OTHER FACTORS that will help accelerate enrollments in the district are the completion of the Twelve Oaks Shopping Mall on Novi and the expansion of sewer and water systems in sections of Farmington Hills.

"Completion of a central business district at Twelve Mile and Farmington roads will have a definite impact on enrollments. We have found that it would help increase school enrollments at least two per cent per year," the researcher says.

Other factors such as a total rearing of the community for industrial purposes.

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Sister Loretta Ann Walsh grimaces a bit as Chuck Muer, owner of the Farmington Hills 'Clamdigger' restaurant, offers her a taste of her first clam. Muer and Sister Loretta recently worked on a fund-raising project to gather money for cancer research. (Staff photo by Harry Mauthe)

To fight cancer

Sister Loretta tries a treat

By CORINNE ABATT

Sister Loretta Ann Walsh of Farmington Hills said she ate all that she could stomach when she was offered a taste of a clam.

Dr. Schmeer's Dominican nun who has discovered a possible anti-cancer factor in fresh clams, he will be the guest of honor at a brunch in Farmington Manor in Dearborn at noon Sunday, May 2.

Dr. Schmeer desperately needs funds to continue her research until she qualifies for government funding through the National Institutes of Health, NIH.

RESTAURATEUR CHUCK MUER was one person who agreed to help in the fund-raising effort. Sister Loretta Ann dropped by his Farmington restaurant, Clamdiggers, to acknowledge his help and thank him for a check he recently sent to Sister Loretta at the American Medical Center in Denver where she is director of Marine Studies.

While at the Clamdiggers, Sister Loretta Ann admitted, "I have never eaten a clam. I suppose I should since I am talking about them all the time."

That was all it took. In a few minutes there was a whole steamed platter of clams on the half shell in front of her.

She lifted one out with a small fork and gave it a long look and said before swallowing it, "They're very nutritious and I should try them, shouldn't I?"

She did and agreed after several more that it was indeed a taste you have to acquire.

Not long after Muer decided Sister should learn how to open clams. He wrapped a bag apron at her waist, showed her the clam knife, demonstrated the technique and watched closely as she clamped the unopened clam deep in the palm of her hand and pushed the knife at the place where the shells meet.

Since it is not an easy thing to master,

right off Muer opened the clam and propped the delicacy into his mouth while Sister Loretta Ann watched.

She watched him suck in the juice and asked, "Are you sure these clams are from unpolluted waters?"

"Absolutely," he assured her.

Muer ran a Clams for Cancer campaign from Dec. 15 to Feb. 28 in his three Ohio and three Michigan restaurants.

(Clam eaters donated 10,817 "Sister Loretta Cherry Stone Clams" and raised \$10,817 for the cancer research.)

The clam eater's gift of five cents per

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Junior high kids fight to keep open school

By LOUISE OKRUTSKY

The Farmington school board will receive a SOS from Farmington Junior High School at Tuesday's meeting.

Students banded together in a Save Our School (SOS) movement to convince the board that there is a need for the school.

Anne Carrey, Diane Kangas and Erin Kanaman started the group when they realized that the board was considering closing their school.

They call the junior high "the best school in town."

School board member Dr. Myron Ross has called the school "the oldest, most expensive school to maintain."

The building's age, a decrease in junior high school enrollments and the school's utility costs have prompted discussions about closing the school for the last two years.

"YOU DON'T THINK of the building," Diane said.

"It's a small school and the teachers can work with us individually," Anne said.

It isn't necessary to have air conditioning and carpentering in a school, such as Warner Junior High, the girls explained.

"We don't have to have all that," Diane said.

The group will present a petition to the board, asking that the school be kept open.

The petition will be left in the classrooms the day after the day the girls. They've collected and verified 429 signatures in a

school that houses 540 students.

Some students were absent from school because they were on a school trip, Erin explained.

The girls admitted that the older section of the building is in poor repair, but they believe that school spirit and the teachers compensate for any architectural deficiencies.

"The teachers are super nice," Erin said.

"The whole structure of our school is the teachers and the kids—especially the

principal, William Chasson—he's super nice."

If the students were bused to another junior high, some may not be able to attend extra-curricular activities, they said.

"MANY TIMES A TEACHER with a big class can't work with you individually," Erin said. "She might ask you to stay after school. If you take a bus you can't come after school."

I don't like getting shifted around," Diane says.

Students argue that losing Farmington Junior High School students to other schools would be a new expense for the school board.

The new buses would need new money and gas to operate. If FJHS was closed, we would spend just as much money on the buses," said student Marshall Anderson.

The move would separate friends, the girls said. They also believe that they wouldn't enjoy school activities as much in a stranger school.

The biggest year at Farmington Junior High is the ninth grade," Diane explained. "There's the ninth grade dance and the ninth grade banquet."

Junior high school students interested in athletics would be separated from coaches, and girls trying out for the cheerleading squad wouldn't know the team, the coaches or the students in a new school, they said.

"It's like starting all over," Diane added, explaining that her brother Kevin, a seventh grader at the school, would have to become acquainted with a new coach and a new team.

"MY BROTHER knows the coach and the coach has helped him," she explained.

"We like this school," Erin Kanaman said. "All of our friends are here."

"If you close our school," she wrote in a hand-delivered letter, "we will all be separated. Then we will have to make friends all over again. Please take this very seriously. We wouldn't put up with a bus if we didn't care."

Gala event awaits Farmington

By CORINNE ABATT

With Marion Borse of Farmington in command, the May 29 Bicentennial Ball is fast shaping up as one of this year's most elegant events.

Four hundred red, white and blue invitations were in the mail earlier this month, and the smaller red, white and blue RSVP's are already coming in.

The dinner dance sponsored by the chamber of commerce will be in the Bedford Inn, and 312 persons is the maximum the committee is prepared to handle.

Mrs. Borse, in super, well-organized fashion started the planning last September with co-chairmen John Ansel and Bill Flattery.

Along with these two resourceful helpers, she formed a committee which represents a variety of professional talents. Florist Fran Lesperance is doing traditional colonial dried table centerpieces which will be given away at the ball.



MARION BORSE

These, like the centerpieces, will go to draw winners.

Given a warm, clear, late spring evening, Danny Baker's supper orchestra will be out on the patio for dancing during and after the sit-down dinner.

WHILE COSTUME is not mentioned as optional on the invitations, Mrs. Borse says she knows "if many who are planning period costume." Some are making their own. "Mrs. Borse is having hers made."

Others are investigating rental possibilities. No matter what the source, the period bicentennial costumes will add color and interest inside Bedford Inn historical setting.

Again if the evening is a clear one, the patio will have hors d'oeuvres tables and possibly the table for the large bicentennial birthday cake which the Farmington Bakery will bake.

Mrs. Borse wisely is keeping the program to a brief, dignified one appropriate for the event which is supposed to be both light and serious. The invocation will be given by Bishop Senech of Our Lady of Sorrows Church, the Star Spangled Banner will be sung by Sue Reed, former Miss Farmington, and a color guard will present the colors.



ERIN KANAMAN



ANNE CAREY

Dinner hours are hazardous

A survey conducted by the National Bureau of Standards and the Consumer Product Safety Commission notes that, of 23,800 households surveyed, 2,460 reported fires in the last year.

Results of the survey showed that 65 per cent of these fires started in the kitchen with the peak time between 5 and 8 p.m.

inside

New Cracker Barrel Sports Suburban Life Classified

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Farmington editor Steve Barnaby recalls how he first fell in love with the beauties of Michigan in his Cracker Barrel Debate column on page 2A.