

# Farmington Observer

Volume 88 Number 23

Monday, January 24, 1977

Farmington, Michigan

23 Pages

Twenty-Five Cents

## Board debates open meetings in rule update

By LYNN ORR

Farmington School Board is updating its policy manual. The first revision included provisions for the open meeting law, passed by the state legislature and effective April 1, of this year.

Although revision committee chairman Michael Shipcey attempted to eliminate closed sessions in the policy, the board opted for a clause to permit closed sessions.

The board voted to accept Shipcey's amendment "that no final actions will be taken in closed sessions," but remaining guidelines for the sessions will be established under bylaw revision.

"There's no reason why we're any more special than the rest of the community," said Shipcey while debating the elimination of closed sessions.

"The use of language is sometimes an area that has to be carefully considered," maintained Vice-president William Graviss, explaining why he had doubts about Shipcey's amendment.

"Once something is written down on paper, to adhere strictly to those words could be embarrassing," he said.

**UNDER THE PROVISIONS** of the "open meeting" law, Public Act 267, meetings of school boards and other legislative bodies must be open to the public with few exceptions. A closed session can only be called by a two-thirds vote and a reason must be supplied for closing of the session.

In personnel matters, at the request of an employee or student, a board

may close a session, but the board is without the option to close the session without the person's assent under the law.

Other areas that may be involved in closed sessions are collective bargaining issues, purchase or sale of real estate, consultations with attorneys regarding strategy in law suits, and partisan caucuses of the legislature.

The board spent about three hours attempting to iron out policy changes, and tempers flared as arguments over semantics developed.

"We'll be at this for four years," quipped Treasurer Gary Lichtman as a result of the slow progress made Tuesday night.

"For a short period of time, the adoption of some policies might not satisfy the wishes of all the members of the board," he said.

Lichtman, Shipcey, and trustee Emma Makinen are the committee members overseeing the policy review. The policy manual was last updated in 1971.

Board members had received copies of the committee's work one week prior to the meeting, and substantive changes were requested in writing prior to Tuesday's meeting.

In an attempt to eliminate further wranglings, the committee again requested alterations be made in writing before next week's board meeting.

The board will take up 13 policies on second reading and 11 on first reading at the next meeting. A first and second reading of policy changes is required by board bylaws.



### By guess and by gosh

Ken Lockwood, a member of the Farmington Artists Club and Detroit's Scarab Club, gives professional instruction to Rosella Jonke in classes that have been run "by guess and by gosh." Lorraine

McClish and Harry Mauthe tell in story and pictures about the administration that keeps things going in The Gathering Place in spite of shaky finances. (Staff photo by Harry Mauthe)

## Author says,

## Memories spur writer to teach

By LOUISE OKRUTSKY

A childhood memory of long, red underwear and a daily trip to the library with her son and daughter prompted Lynn Schoettle to write a children's story.

Ms. Schoettle uses her experiences gained from writing the children's book, "Grandpa's Long Red Underwear," and three adult novels in teaching her Oakland Community College (OCC) class at Orchard Ridge.

Her course on writing children's books will concentrate on lessons that Ms. Schoettle learned through experience and a correspondence course in writing.

"I teach my class how to market their work. Creative writing classes don't go into that," she said.

"I teach them to balance a story. If you have a suspenseful situation on a

right-hand page, then the conclusion should be reached on the next right hand page, so the child has to turn the page to discover what happened," she said.

Her own excursion into selling a book began during her stay in Massachusetts several years ago. "When my ex-husband was in the Air Force, I took the Famous Writer's course. We were living in a remote area of the state.

**"THE ONLY COURSE** that was available to me was the correspondence course," she said.

Later, she studied at Wayne State University and OCC.

Besides the course, her children helped to fill the time in Massachusetts.

"The library was around the corner. Every day we'd walk to the li-



LYNN SCHOETTLE

brary and get six picture books. Then we'd sit on the porch and read them all in one day. The next day, we'd return them and get another six picture books," she said.

"I thought to myself that I could write a book, too."

Once she embarked on the project, she was surprised to discover writing came easily for her.

"It came pretty naturally," she recalled.

Since it was unnecessary for her to concentrate on every step in the process, she didn't analyze how to write.

"When I started to teach the class, I had to read books on writing. Then, I saw why I was doing what I was doing naturally," she said.

**HER CHILDREN'S STORY**, about a little girl who entertains her grandparents by dressing up in grandpa's long, red underwear, was pounded out on a borrowed typewriter.

"It's based on something that happened to me when I was a little girl visiting my grandparents," she said.

"I wrote the original story for one of my Famous Writer's assignments. My grandmother liked it. After I wrote the book, she told me that she

(Continued on page 6A)



### 'Making faces'

"Suck your cheeks in" instructs librarian Denise Moll (left) as she daubs rouge on "guinea pig" Dana Curtin's face. Why is a librarian teaching the art of

making up? See our page 3A feature for details. (Staff photo by Harry Mauthe)

## Northwestern debate set

The two Northwestern Highway advisory committees will meet Tuesday to try to resolve who should carry out an environmental impact statement on extending Northwestern.

Meeting jointly for the first time since April, the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) are expected to debate the one consultant versus two-or-more consultant approach at the session, set for 7:30 p.m. at Farmington Hills City Hall, 31555 Eleven Mile.

Some CAC members have been pushing for the two-consultant approach since they don't believe a single consultant could manage an unbiased report.

**GEORGE SYNDER**, a representative from the Eastern Michigan Environmental Action Council, believes in having one consultant for and one against the extension of Northwestern Highway.

"The environmental impact statement is not designed to make the deci-

sion (for or against the extension)," he said. "That is the highway commission's job."

"We're giving them a tool to be able to make that decision. Our job is to bring forth the alternatives."

Edward Kazenko, coordinator of the impact study for the Michigan Highway Department, opposes the two-consultant method.

"The conclusion reached from nationwide sources is that the two-consultant approach for the conduct of an environmental impact assessment has not been tried in this country or, for that matter, abroad. The response from all sources as to whether the approach would be practical was unanimously negative," he told the committee in October.

If two consultants are hired, he has recommended hiring a third to coordinate the work of the others.

"There would be some duplication of effort with the involvement of a third consultant who is primarily danc-

ing between the other two," he added.

The group also has the option of hiring one consultant who would then hire two others to help gather the information.

**THE TWO COMMITTEES** may also choose to discuss the study design for the environmental impact study.

The TAC recently reviewed and accepted most of the amendments to the study proposed by the CAC.

The joint meeting could be the time to consider the few major differences which remain prior to submission of a design to the state highway department.

If both committees can agree, just one study design will be submitted; if not, each probably will submit its own.

The highway department will decide on the final design either by accepting the committees' recommendation, compromising, or coming up with a design of its own.

## Arson suspected in theater fire

Farmington Hills fire investigators discovered a gasoline can in the lobby of the gutted Farmington Four Cinema, which has led them to suspect that arson was responsible for the blaze, according to a source close to the investigator.

Although he declined to confirm or deny the discovery, Hills Fire Chief John Van De Voort Friday did say that indications of arson were found at the theater, at 39215 W. Ten Mile, which was partially destroyed in an early morning fire, Jan. 13.

While officials search for the cause of the fire which caused an estimated \$250,000 damage, theater owner Sol Krim, of Southfield, said he looks forward to reopening the complex within 60 to 90 days after he receives insurance funds.

"Farmington Hills is a nice community," Krim said. "He was pleased with the amount of business the theater was doing."

"Business was increasing. We were doing well there," he said.

Van De Voort said the investigation into the arson is progressing slowly but surely.

"There's a lot of leg work, a lot of witnesses," he said. "There is pressure to solve the case whenever there is a large loss, but there isn't more than usual in this instance."

**THE BLAZE GUTTED** the lobby of the theater. The theater section of the building was damaged by heat, fire and water, according to fire officials.

Firefighters were alerted to the blaze at 4:30 a.m.

The name of Joseph T. Smith was mistakenly lopped off of our story called "Meet Farmington's newest Eagle Scouts" printed in our Jan. 13 edition.

The eighth grade student at Dunckel Junior High School is one of 10 scouts who took scouting's highest award in ceremonies conducted by Troop 263. He is also one of the youngest to achieve the rank of Eagle.

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Smith is an accomplished pianist and plays trumpet in the school band. He fulfilled his community service requirements by donating 50 hours of his time to work in Farmington Hills Community Library.

## inside

Community calendar 6B  
Crackerbarrel Debate 10A  
Sports 48A  
Suburban Life Section B  
Classifieds Sections B.C

### GIDDYAP, GEORGE

The Farmington Hills City Council is getting the stall treatment from City Manager George Majors as the detriment of an efficiently running police department. To see what Editor Steve Barnaby has to say about it turn to page 10A