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Educators plan cable strategy in Farmington

By Craig Piechura
staff writer

Metrovision, the cable television firm selected last week to serve Farmington, Farmington Hills and Novi, was ranked low in the area of educational access compared to the other two bidders.

But members of the Farmington Board of Education are not unhappy with the selection of Metrovision last week by city council members in all three communities.

School officials say now that the company has been selected they plan to get involved in public-access programming promised by the cable franchise. "Just training kids in the use of (cable television) equipment is terrific," said Janice Rolnick, school board member in Farmington. "I'd like to see

an elective in high school allowing students to start producing their own shows."

Ms. Rolnick, as well as Superintendent Lewis Schulman, suggested the possibility of offering classes few students take, such as Latin, to students at one school that would be viewed by students at another school.

DESPITE declining enrollment, she said, students at the three Farmington high schools could take a course taught by one teacher at a central site that might be discontinued without the benefit of two-way communication.

Board member Helen Prutow said school officials might've liked more educational equipment in the cable package but every option raises the cost for cable subscribers.

"We were not overly grabby because that did occur to us," Mrs. Prutow said. She and board member Michael Shpiece said school officials aren't planning to broadcast school board meetings over cable television.

"That'd be an instant cure for insomnia," she added.

Henry Harris, president of Metrovision, said school officials and students in Farmington area and Novi should take advantage of the opportunity to use public access equipment. The company's experience in Redford Township, Harris said, is that the equipment often sits idle despite staff who are there to help members of the community use the educational tool.

IT'S the old story where you can lead a horse to water but you can't make him drink," Harris said.

"A lot of people are put off or intimidated about using cable equipment. The color cameras they have now are simple but they scare people until they use them. It's just a matter of pointing the camera at the subject and making sure you're shooting the guy who's talking. All you have to do is zoom in and out."

Schulman said schools plan to use the medium. He said the schools have had good relations with city officials so far in the cable process. Noting that 2 percent of the cable firm's revenues have been pledged for community access programming, Schulman said, "We hope to have an effective voice in the policy process."

Brodhead reaps 'A'

By Mary Rodriguez
staff writer

Michigan Congressman William M. Brodhead has received the highest pro-consumer rating in the U.S. House of Representatives in a report last week by a Washington-based consumer rights group.

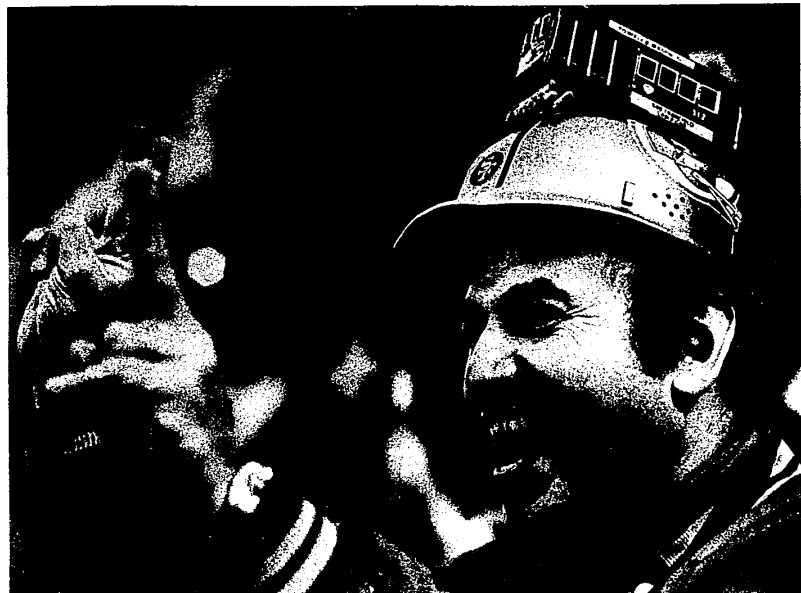
Brodhead, whose district includes Redford Township, Farmington, Farmington Hills, Southfield and northwest Detroit, received a rating of 97 percent based on 30 key votes during 1981 in the areas of consumer protection, government reform, federal subsidies, energy and environment, and tax reform.

The rating was completed by Congress Watch, the legislative-monitoring arm of Public Citizen, a consumer advocacy organization established by Ralph Nader in 1971.

"I'm delighted to receive a high rating on consumer issues because they're so important to the average American family," Brodhead said.

"I tried in my votes to reflect what the people of the district wanted. I'm

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MINDY SAUNDERS/staff photographer

The homemade hat that tops Bob Sanchez' head tells the whole story as a runaway cable car runs over a helpless Bengal. The San Francisco hat must have brought good luck to his 49ers as they downed

the Bengals, 26-21, Sunday in the Super Bowl. See Page 3A for a look at the game.

Best Super plans may have gone awry

By Ellen E. Mason
special writer

It drew more than 80,000 fans from throughout the world and promised a chance for the Detroit area to show that it could throw a party as well as any city which bragged of sunshine year-round.

And the party came off and football crowned its champion after the San Francisco 49ers downed the Cincinnati Bengals, 26-21, Sunday at the Silverdome.

Kicker Ray Wersching of the 49ers

left his mark with four field goals to keep the Bengals at bay. But the lasting impression on those travelling to what many described as a Siberian outpost may be less than folks at the Michigan Host Committee had hoped for.

From the beginning of the promotion of the "Sweet XVI" celebration, organizers claimed that everything was in order and that things would run without a hitch. It almost happened, but fell apart as time neared for the kickoff for the event that was to climax the week — the game itself.

MANY FANS found themselves sit-

ting on buses within sight of the Silverdome at 3:15 p.m. — a full 45 minutes before game time — but they didn't reach the well-heated dome until a few minutes before kickoff.

But never mind that traffic was heavier than expected and never mind that one sports writer said that a Super Bowl in Detroit is like an all-expense paid trip to Gdansk. There were still out of town fans who thought the idea was nifty.

TEN-YEAR-OLD Todd Wilson, is the nephew of Bengals' right tackle Moon

Pie Wilson. Todd skipped school in Gainesville, Ga., to see his uncle play. When asked what he has done since he's been here, he said "Fight the cold."

Sherry Longston, also of Georgia, said she was surprised at how friendly everybody was.

"People have talked to us and gone out of their way to be helpful," she said. "We had a flat tire and four people stopped and asked if we needed help."

"They talk about Southern hospitality, but I'm glad we're here."

Year of the Dog

Celebrate New Year, Oriental style

By M.B. Dillon
staff writer

At 5:30 a.m. today, festivities commemorating the first day of the Chinese lunar year 4860 began.

Families observing Yuan Tan, or Chinese New Year, rise at that time to eat a special vegetable dish. The celebration continues throughout the day with family get-togethers, sumptuous feasts and the giving of money in red wrappings to children.

"It's the biggest holiday of the year," said Henry Lum, owner of Farmington

Hills' Great Wall Restaurant in the Drakeville Shopping Center.

"China as a whole is a poor country and people don't always get to eat nice things. But for this holiday they make sure they have fish and chicken on the table, even if all they can afford are bowls of rice on most days."

Those dishes are chosen, Lum said, because they represent the earth and sea, which compose the earth.

The occasion also is observed by pleasant conversations among the Chinese.

"ON THAT DAY you say only nice

things to everybody," Lum said. "You don't like to have foul thoughts in your mind or talk about anything tragic."

"It's said that that will bring you good luck and good fortune."

In most Chinese villages, Lum added, colorful dragon dances and fireworks also mark the occasion. They're performed in this country as well, but in a much less elaborate fashion. Many local Chinese, he said, will participate in celebrations in Detroit's Chinatown tonight.

Mi Duquet, whose family owns the House of Lee Restaurant at 34757 Grand River in Farmington Hills, said the Year of the Dog, which begins today, marks the beginning of a peaceful year.

"The dog gets along with everybody," she said, "so this is more like a quiet year, a year to make friends."

IN HONG KONG, the Lees' native land, the new year is celebrated for 10 days.

"We did much more when we lived there, said Ms. Duquet who moved here with her family 15 years ago."

"For 10 days there is no school. People visit their friends and relatives and there's always candy, fruit, stuff to eat and red envelopes with money for the children."

Ying Lee, Ms. Duquet's father, said that in addition to eating the traditional boiled white chicken and fish, Chinese eat dry oysters and seaweed, which signifies prosperity.

"Here it's kind of quiet," said Lee, "but we try to smile all day and not say anything to each other that is unpleasant."

"We are surprised that so many people here know about it (Chinese New Year) and wish us Happy New Year."

"We've even had customers send us flowers."

Both the House of Lee and the Great Wall will be open all day today serving more than the usual amount of Monday night dinners.

Realtors fight economic woes with mergers

By M.B. Dillon
staff writer

Just more than a year ago, four brokers who owned three competing realties in Farmington Hills were facing the common dilemma of how to pay the bills.

The brokers, whose firms were located within two miles of each other, were Mark Zehnder and Leonard Guion of Norwood Inc.; Lynn Morgan of Century 21-Neighborhood North; and Jerry Edwards of Realty World Jerry Edwards and Associates. They were coming to the conclusion that making a buck in a metropolitan area with the nation's highest unemployment rate was going to be a short-lived activity — unless something happened.

It did.

The companies merged to form Century 21-MJL Transferee Service (MJL for the partners' initials, and Corporate Transferee because the firm is seeking corporate relocation business.)

By merging, aggregate costs were trimmed by 40 percent. In sales, the company in one year climbed from total obscurity to the top 10 among Century 21 offices, said Zehnder, president of the new firm.

"It would have been impossible to continue (operating separately) for any length of time," he said.

"We all would have gone out of business because of high interest rates and a general lack of confidence in the economy by the average person."

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staff photo

Bush delivers

Vice President George Bush told an Oakland County Republican fund-raiser the Reagan Administration "is aware of your concerns" about unemployment but urged them to look at the bright side — the slowing of inflation. Bush stopped at Glen Oaks, a county park and former country club, to speak briefly and shake hands with 308 Republicans and two Democrats who paid \$125 a head for the privilege. Wife Barbara is behind him at his left. U.S. Reps. Carl Pursell (center) of Plymouth and William Broomfield of Birmingham joined him on the speaker's stand. In the 45-minute Farmington Hills stop, Bush spent more time posing for snapshots than in heavy politicking.

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