

# Farmington Observer

Volume 94 Number 9 Thursday, November 11, 1982 Farmington, Michigan 64 Pages Twenty-five cents

## Seniors rank services higher than housing

By Craig Plechura staff writer

More than 1,000 persons, age 65 and over, completed a questionnaire mailed to them by the Sisters of Mercy seeking information about community services needed by the aged.

While the deadline for returning the questionnaire — Oct. 27 — has passed, Susan Nestor, director of planning at St. Joseph Mercy Hospital in Pontiac, said responses are still welcome.

About 5,000 persons in Farmington, Farmington Hills and surrounding cities and townships were polled to help the sisterhood determine the most immediate priorities for senior citizens. The Catholic religious order has made care for the aged its ministry.

for the elderly," said Nestor. "What kind of services we don't know yet."

A consultant group known as the Gerontological Planning Association of Santa Monica, Calif. has been working on the project with the sisterhood and two hospitals run by the Detroit province — St. Joseph Mercy Hospital in Pontiac and Mount Carmel Mercy Hospital in Detroit.

"We're not just talking about retirement communities and housing," Nestor stressed. "We are concerned about the physical and personal needs, senior citizens' financial situation and spiritual needs."

The questionnaires are anonymous but Nestor said persons with specific questions can contact the organization directly with a separate signed letter.

Conclusions based on the questionnaire responses should be released by the second week of December, Nestor said.

## Student's forum rates the system

By Craig Plechura staff writer

In the 1960's there was a successful push for a relaxed dress code by members of the student Round Table which meets monthly with school board members and school administrators.

In the 1970's a frequent topic of discussion was a futile attempt to persuade school officials to set aside an area in school as a smoking lounge for students.

In 1982 the student members of the Round Table ask questions such as one posed by Suzanne Miller, president of the Round Table and a senior at North

Farmington High, who wanted to know why it's so easy to get an A in classes.

"A'S ARE easy to come by," she told the assembly at their November meeting Monday in the school board office. "An A isn't so special any more."

Harrison High Principal James Geiger said he chose 1975 at random to see if Miss Miller's assertion was correct. He said he found that in 1975, 63 percent of all Harrison students had a grade point average of 2.5 or better and currently 81 percent of the school's

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Farmington Hills Parks and Recreation Director Doug Gaynor is now the city's Director of Special Services. The newly formed department responsible for parks and recreation, senior citizen and youth services, as well as other areas.

## Service chief named

The Farmington Hills City Council voted to establish a Department of Special Services and appointed Parks and Recreation Director Doug Gaynor as its head at Monday's legislative session.

The move enacts Article 5 of the city charter which defines the Department of Special Services as responsible for services such as "parks, recreation, library, Council of the Arts, senior citizen housing, youth services, beautification, ecology and public health."

City Manager Lawrence Savage said the action was taken because, "For the last year and a half, Doug has been giving assignments on a continuing basis outside of parks and recreation functions, such as the annual and quarterly reports and the city newsletter."

"Doug has many abilities in areas other than parks and rec."

Mayor Jack Burwell expressed doubts about the plan.

"I highly commend Doug Gaynor. He's done a great job, but I can't make any sense of this proposal. It seems like we're creating a department within a department, and I'm opposed."

Savage explained Gaynor would continue to handle his present recreation functions as an operational unit within the new department. No personnel changes or increased costs are anticipated, he added.

The recommendation passed 6-0.

## Book banning sweeps the ideological spectrum



By Craig Plechura staff writer

Some of the books on the list of the banned, you'd expect to raise hackles in some quarters by their titles alone.

Titles such as Charles Silverstein and Edmund White's "The Joy of Gay Sex," Adolph Hitler's "Mein Kampf" and a book for teens by M.E. Kerr called "Dinky Hocker Shoots Smack" come to mind immediately.

They are on a list of more than 400 banned books compiled as part of a national campaign sponsored by the American Booksellers Association, the American Library Association and the National Association of College Stores.

"I Read Banned Books" displays are part of this campaign. Displays at both branches of the Farmington Community Library as well as a window display at Farmington's Little Professor bookstore are full of many so-called classics found objectionable by various groups.

SEEMINGLY INNOCENT books such as "The Wizard of Oz" by Frank L. Baum were yanked on grounds that the work lacked literary merit and promoted the idea that children could solve their problems through trickery.

The Oz book was briefly removed from the shelves of the Detroit Public Library in the late 1950s on those grounds but reinstated after the public demanded its return.

The list of banned books includes Mark Twain's "Adventures of Tom Sawyer" and "Huckleberry Finn."

"Most of this book-banning pressure comes from the New Right," said G. Royce Smith, executive director of the American Booksellers Association. "But it's not entirely the work of the New Right."

"Huckleberry Finn," for example, was banned in Mark Twain High School in Baltimore because of its use of the word "nigger" and that the black in the book, they felt, was a racial stereotype.

ALSO ON the list of books successfully removed from school and public libraries, or books that groups attempted to remove, are Cervantes' "Don Quixote," Shirley Jackson's powerful "The Lottery."

"Recently we fought and won against two states which enacted something called minors access," Smith said. "Any bookstore or newsstand that allows material to be sold that arouses lust in a youngster must prevent youngsters from gaining access to that material. Now that would preclude the sale of nearly every dictionary in a store where youngsters are allowed."

"WHAT AROUSES lust in an adolescent could encompass almost anything

"What arouses lust in an adolescent could encompass almost anything. A gentle breeze on a warm day."

— G. Royce Smith  
Executive director  
American Booksellers Association

— a gentle breeze on a warm day." Supreme Court judges in both Georgia and Colorado struck down the laws after the booksellers challenged their constitutionality.

Farmington Branch Librarian Beverly Daffney Pappal and Little Professor Bookstore owner Art Underwood say they've never encountered community pressure to ban a particular book. But both hear isolated complaints from time to time about certain titles.

"I've been in business 3 1/2 years, and I'd say in that time I've received three or four complaints," said Underwood. "One of them was a book that no child should have ever purchased. It was a book of dirty jokes."

"THE LADY" must've read it all the way through because when I asked what she found objectionable she said, "This one, this one, this one." We took it off the shelves and don't sell it any more."

Books for adolescents written by Judy Blume are subject to book-banning efforts throughout the United States. Underwood and Pappal say they've heard from parents about the books.

A book titled "Forever" includes a mention of female masturbation, he said, as the book is kept in the adult fiction section of the store. Children are allowed to buy it only if their parents give them permission in person or in writing.

Another Blume book titled "Wifey" was taken out of the juvenile section and put in the adult section of the library, said Pappal.

BOOKS AREN'T coded for checkout only by adults, Pappal said, but often a librarian will ask a youngster to provide parental permission in person or in writing before a book with an adult theme is checked out.

However, she said, the library should not be expected to police a child's reading material for parents.

"The library operates in loco parentis," she said, "which means we expect parents to assume responsibility for what their child reads. This is not to say that if their child comes in and requests a Harold Robbins book we'd give

tions of sexual positions — are among the most popular titles in the library, said the librarian.

The library owns four copies of the book and only one could be found for the display — the rest were checked out.

By stocking "The Joy of Sex" or "The Communist Manifesto," the library isn't endorsing everything being in the covers, she said, just making diverse opinions available.

"I THINK the library has consistently been concerned about intellectual

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## oral quarrel

## How do you feel about censorship?

More than 400 titles are on a list of What books do you think are inappropriate? What books do you think are inappropriate? To express your opinion on the question, call Oral Quarrel at 477-5498 from now until 1 p.m. Friday, Nov. 12. Responses will be printed in Monday's Farmington Observer.

## Teachers fight censorship

Censorship of teachers, along with the lists of books they assign for reading, is more than a matter of suppressing "obscenity." It affects the core of the teaching process itself.

Censorship and its aftermath is the subject of an article, "Of Mice and Men, A Huckleberry and Harassment," in the newly issued First Annual Edition of Today's Education, the journal of the National Education Association (NEA).

"The scope and intensity of recent censorship efforts has, not surprisingly,

caught many teachers off-guard. Repression in the guise of civic concern can easily baffle even the most astute educators," writes Dorothy C. Massie, inquiry specialist in the 1.7-million-member education organization's Department of Human and Civil Rights.

TEACHERS ARE qualifying as experts on suppression, because "they are experiencing first hand the pressures

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EXCELLENT RESPONSE

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