

# Farmington Observer

Volume 84 Number 14

Monday, April 18, 1983

Farmington, Michigan

32 Pages

Twenty-five cents

## State cuts puts library in big bind

By Joanne Maliszewski  
staff writer

Even with the planned receipt of a portion of delayed state aid, Farmington Community Library officials say their budget's health depends on proposed cuts in future state payments.

After waiting since mid-February, library officials are due to receive \$21,000 of a total \$36,000 in planned 1982-83 state aid later this month, library director Gordon Lewis said.

But a recent governor's executive order calling for a \$1-million cut in all state aid to local libraries could pinch the library's already tight budget, Lewis said.

"It all depends on when we get the money and how much is cut," he said, indicating that a 2-3-percent cut would insignificantly affect library operations.

Although state aid represents a small portion of the library's \$1.2-million budget, officials said funding, particularly from Farmington and Farmington Hills — the library's two major funding sources — has lagged behind operating, book and equipment costs.

Financial support from the cities is hovering at about nine-tenths of a mill, Lewis said. So in recent budget requests to the cities, library board members continue to reflect that funding level. But Lewis is quick to point out that one mill would provide an additional \$30,000 at a cost of 44 cents for each taxpayer.

"ALTHOUGH THIS additional sum would not address the full complexity of the problem, it will enable the library to begin making planned acquisitions (books and materials) that over a

period of time will materially affect the quality of public services," Lewis said.

But in addition to the planned purchase of some 4,000 books, many of them replacements, at a cost of \$109,000 in 1983-84, board members are planning to spend \$11,000 on improvements to the Farmington branch's parking lot, he said.

"The parking lot has been cracking up," Lewis said, referring to the lot's northwest corner that's crumbling because of drainage flow and traffic use.

New catch basins will be installed and that corner of the lot will be repaved, Lewis added.

Even if the cities grant the library board its requested 5-percent revenue increase this year, Lewis said, the revenue hike is offset by an average 10-percent inflation rate, leaving the library with fewer spendable dollars.

So while costs increase as circulation has climbed to an annual half-million, Lewis said the library's only sure-fire way to financial stability is through reorganizing as an independent authority.

IF BOTH Farmington and Farmington Hills city councils approve the library board's reorganization request, the authority could ask voters for operating millage, Lewis said.

Although both city councils have until late May/early June to adopt their annual budgets, the library reorganization issue will be discussed before each city holds a required public hearing prior to adoption.

The Farmington City Council is expected to discuss the issue tonight at its regular 8 p.m. meeting.



Kim Noles will be one of the lead performers in the Farmington High School student production of "The Elephant Man" which will play three evenings, 8 p.m., April 21-23 in the school's auditorium on Shilwassee, west of Orchard Lake Road.

## The 'Elephant Man' cometh



Bringing the Tony Award winning play to the Farmington stage will be Dan Schroeder, Liz Berger, Kim Noles and Tim Snyder. Farmington High is one of the few secondary schools which has chosen to take on such an ambitious dramatic production.

## Consumers lose in rate reduction

By Joanne Maliszewski  
staff writer

In 1982, Farmington Hills dipped into its coffers to pay a three-month Detroit water rate increase. So now that those rates were recently reduced, the savings will bypass consumers' pocketbooks and return to Farmington Hills to offset last year's loss.

The Detroit Water and Sewerage Department last month reduced Farmington Hills' water rates by 15 cents per 1,000 cubic feet of use on water used on and after June 1, 1983. That's about a \$45,000 savings, said Farmington Hills City Clerk Floyd Cairns.

When state law changed last year to allow Detroit to charge outside customers rates based on cost and usage, Detroit increased the Farmington Hills quarterly water rates from \$5.50 per thousand cubic feet to \$8.02.

A prior state law had prohibited Detroit from charging outside customers more than double the rate paid by Detroit customers.

Because city officials realized Detroit would again decrease the rate later in 1982, the increase was not passed on to consumers "in order to provide

some semblance of stability in the billing," said Farmington Hills City Manager Lawrence Savage.

But absorbing the three-month increase cost the city approximately \$187,000 — money otherwise used to help retire the water system's bond debt, Cairns said.

"WE FIGURED it would be going up and coming right back down anyway," he said.

When Detroit announced its water rate decrease last month, the Oakland

County Department of Public Works officials avoid passing the reduction on to consumers so the \$45,000 could be used to make up a portion of last year's \$187,000 loss.

So consumers will continue paying the quarterly \$7.57 per thousand cubic feet of water during 1983-84, Cairns said.

"In essence, the consumer is ahead of the game," he said, indicating the reduction "wouldn't amount to a lot of

dollars (to consumers)."

"Next year anyway, we'll get another adjustment more than likely and who knows which way it will go."

Although the city receives its water from Detroit, Oakland County operates and maintains the system, Cairns said. That's because when the water system was first built, the city sold its bonds to the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). County operation was one of HUD's requirements, he said.

## Quarrels abound between readers

Dear readers:

Thursday's Oral Quarrel question concerning teacher supervision of students' extracurricular activities has caused something of a stir. Reactions came from all segments of the community — students, teachers, parents and just plain interested taxpayers.

We had so many responses, approximately 50, that today's answers begin on page 2A and continue on

page 6A. We believe that such debate of an issue is a sign of healthy democracy. The newspaper is pleased that it is able to act as a forum for such spirited discussion.

Education in America and its future is one of the most important issues of our time. The intense interest of Farmington school district residents is heartening.

STEVE BARNABY  
Farmington editor

## Suspects nabbed in robbery

A Farmington Hills resident and his two sons have been charged in the break-in of their next-door neighbor's house on April 8.

Charles Shottruff, 43, and Michael Shottruff, 18, both of 28928 Herndonwood, pleaded not guilty to one count each of breaking and entering of a dwelling at their arraignment before 47th District Judge Michael Hand on April 8. A 14-year-old son has not yet been charged.

The senior Shottruff, who also pleaded not guilty to a charge of assault and battery, and the 18-year-old were released on their own recognizance.

THE TWO ELDEST Shottruffs were charged in connection with the breaking and entering of the home of Wayne and Donna Harris, 28854 Herndonwood, said Farmington Hills police.

Mrs. Harris called police about 5:45 p.m. April 8 when she heard noises and

traced muddy shoeprints leading from her basement to the master bedroom. When police arrived a few minutes later, they traced another set of shoeprints running from the Harris house across the yard to Shottruff's sliding glass door.

As police talked about the incident with Mrs. Harris, a teen-ager sped across both front lawns on a moped and

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RANDY BORST/staff photographer

## Fendt tackles block business

By Tom Baer  
staff writer

Alan Fendt seems to have blocked out a career for himself in his family's concrete masonry company — Fendt Builder's Supply, Inc. — which has been part of the south Farmington landscape for almost 60 years.

The 27-year-old Fendt, the third generation of Fendts to take a hand in running the business, oversees the operation of a plant which is capable of turning out 1,000 eight-by-eight-by-16-inch concrete blocks an hour.

The blocks, used in the construction of houses, are known commonly — but

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CLASSIFIED ADS . . . 591-0900  
CIRCULATION . . . . . 591-0500  
NEWS DESK . . . . . 477-5450

**2 for 1**  
"Filed 2 problems with one ad. I am very happy with the ad results — tremendous response!" M. Lezoli was pleased with results of the Observer & Eccentric Help Wanted-Part Time classified ad placed.

Remember...  
**One call does it all!**

**591-0900**  
Use your MasterCard or Visa

Alan Fendt surveys his kingdom, the family concrete masonry plant, from a catwalk midway up the storage bin.