



# Farmington Observer

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Twenty-Five Cents

## Strikers picket area Bell installations

By Diane Gale  
staff writer

Michigan Bell employees picketed a Farmington location during the nationwide Michigan Bell and AT&T union strike that began Sunday.

The workers' main concern is job security in an increasingly automated industry, according to local union members.

"I think computers are great, but when they start replacing people they're bad," said Anne Okonski, as she held a sign in front of the Michigan Bell equipment switching center at Grand River and Power.

There are four Michigan Bell facilities in Farmington and Farmington Hills.

The picket line was low keyed on Monday morning as Fran Bayton, Diane Shutt and Okonski, who work in a Livonia office, paced the sidewalk with their signs. The women, who say it's the first picket they've ever been involved in, are in Local 4015.

Teams of strikers took turns carrying the signs at the spot — dramatically showing their employers and the public that they are on strike.

Minutes after Bayton said, "nobody is trying to get into the building," be-

cause the location houses equipment and not many workers are located there, Michigan Bell staff associate Dominic Grillo crossed their picket line.

The picketers didn't show any signs of animosity.

GRILLO SAID, "Job security is a threat in the whole company for management and workers as well."

Of the 24,000 Michigan Bell employees in the state, approximately 17,400 are members of the Communication Workers of America, which is one of the three unions striking nationwide.

"I hope the strike is very short, because I'd rather be working," said Okonski, a Farmington resident. Only a "very small" portion of the union employees are ignoring the strike, according to Chuck Helmrich, Michigan Bell manager of corporate affairs in north Oakland County.

Customers dialing direct have virtually no problem getting through, because the calls are computerized. But callers needing operator assistance have had long waits for those filling in for the strikers.

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Fran Bayton, Anne Okonski and Diane Shutt walked the picket line last Monday at the Michigan Bell Switching Center at Grand River and Power in Farmington. Dominic Grillo (rear), staff associate for

Michigan Bell, found it necessary to cross the line while performing his job.

## House down sizing Hills attempts to ease fears

By Joanne Mallazewski  
staff writer

The best compromise is achieved when feuding parties remain unsatisfied.

That's developer Frank Whitten's description of an ordinance Farmington Hills City Council unanimously introduced Monday. The ordinance is designed to regulate house size and architecture in unfilled single-family neighborhoods. Councilman William Lange was absent.

Council members expect to adopt the ordinance next week. While both home-

owners and builders, who filled council chambers to the brim Monday, admitted they were unsatisfied with the ordinance, they also said they could live with the new house size and architectural regulations.

A public hearing will not be held prior to adoption because both homeowners and builders have been represented throughout the months of debate.

"We did hammer out what is a compromise ordinance," said city attorney Paul Bibeau, who drafted the ordinance with the help of homeowners, builders and city staff.

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AGNES M. MANSOUR speaks at banquet

## Chamber to hear Mansour

By Diane Gale  
staff writer

Agnes M. Mansour, a former Catholic nun who was the center of controversy when she was appointed director of the state Department of Social Services earlier this year, will speak at the Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce dinner in October.

"We always try to look for someone who is a good speaker, and who people will be interested in listening to," said Jody Soronen, executive director of the Farmington/Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce.

"Board members thought she (Mansour) would make a fine addition to the dinner night," she said.

After Gov. James Blanchard announced his choice for the office, Mansour, who was at the time a nun in the order of Sisters of Mercy based in Farmington Hills, found that accepting the position placed her at the center of many heated debates.

Much of the opposition arose because her office distributes money for government funded abortions for low-income women.

The Catholic church takes a strong stand against abortion. Some church

leaders were adamantly against her taking the position. Mansour was given the option of either forfeiting the job, or quitting the order.

Mansour gave up a 30-year career as a nun and opted for the position as director of social services. She continues to turn over her salary as director to the Sisters of Mercy, as she did when she was a nun. The order in turn gives her a stipend.

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## oral quarrel

## Why should King's birth be a holiday?

The House of Representatives has passed a bill to observe Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday as a federal holiday on the third Monday in January. Backers hope President Ronald Reagan, who has been trying to improve his ties with blacks, might sign the measure. Reagan initially said he opposed the idea. Recently, however, he seems to be warming to it.

Today's Oral Question is:

WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF MAKING MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.'S BIRTHDAY A FEDERAL HOLIDAY?

To call Oral Quarrel, dial 477-5498. You have until 1 p.m. Friday to respond. To see how your neighbors feel about this issue, look in Monday's Farmington Observer.



Randy Dorst/staff photographer

## On the rocks

The Upper Rouge River that jogs through the Farmington City Park is going to stay on course with the help of about 14 Michigan Youth Corps workers. They are installing erosion control

barriers to prevent the river bank from eroding and causing the river to change course. See story and more photos on page 3A.

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**CREATIVE LIVING**  
REAL ESTATE SECTION

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