

# Principal recalls earlier days in district

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"Students haven't changed much," said Geiger, who signed on as a mathematics teacher at the old Farmington High School in September of 1950. "Students are just as ambitious and

good to work with as they were when I started." Geiger, who turned 65 last December, used the words "less busy" to describe the Farmington school system of 35 years ago.

"Of course, things were a lot simpler at that time," he added. "Our curriculum and extra activities, although there were a lot of them, were much less today."

Today we've gotten into things like career counseling and college counseling and a whole host of things. It takes a larger staff, and we have to cover a lot more ground."

Geiger's wife of 41 years, Ruth, has been a teacher's aide in the Farmington District for the last 12 years. She also will retire in June.

After spending the World War II years training bomber pilots, Geiger, born and raised in Delta, Ohio, took an undergraduate degree at the University of Toledo and a master's at the University of Michigan.

"After I came up here for the master's, I guess I felt that getting a position here in Michigan was the thing to do," he said. "So I looked around a little bit and ended up in Farmington."

GEIGER BECAME Farmington High's assistant principal in 1953, the year that the school was moved to its present location on Shawnee Road.

He moved up to principal in 1958, replacing Gerald V. Harrison (after whom the high school opened in 1969 is named), who became an assistant su-

perintendent, and stayed for almost 17 years.

Geiger became Harrison's second principal (Supt. Lewis Schulman was the first) in April of 1973.

The Geigers, now Farmington Hills residents, first located in Redford Township because "there were very few new homes being built in Farmington."

"I remember looking around out here, and it may seem strange to say it now, but we couldn't find anything suitable."

But Farmington Schools suited them just fine.

"When I first began, we were kind of combined junior-senior high school," he remembered. "It was a fairly small and maybe a more personal situation in those days."

"It was kind of nice that students from the whole community came to one school so that we had them all. You had the advantage of having the talent from the whole community in one school."

The Geigers are happy they stayed all these years.

"We decided not to make changes on a couple of occasions along the way," he said. "My wife and I have liked it here."

The Farmington Board of Education last Tuesday voted to post the opening of high school principal and to pick a selection committee to screen applicants.

"Mr. Geiger has been a very valued employee and we think his retirement should be highlighted," Supt. Schulman said.

AFTER RETIREMENT, the Geigers intend to live in their Farmington Hills home "a good portion" of the year and spend the winter months in a Sarasota, Fla., condo.

"That's our initial plan," Geiger said. "We'll be doing some traveling from time to time. We have a son (David) who lives in West Bloomfield and two little granddaughters, so we want to stay close to them, too."

And another thing is certain, Geiger said. "We're not going to forget about Farmington."

## Community band performs at mall

The Farmington Community Band will headline the fifth annual Festival of Community Bands at 12 Oaks Mall, all day Saturday.

Included in the day-long event are six community bands from Novi, Plymouth, Lansing, Birmingham, the South-Oakland area and the Farmington band. The program will be divided into two parts featuring the Novi band at 11 a.m., the Plymouth band at 12 noon, the Lansing band at 2 p.m. and all three groups at 4 p.m.

The second portion will feature the South-Oakland band at 4 p.m., the Birmingham band at 5 p.m., the Farmington band at 7 p.m. and the three bands combined at 8 p.m.

Carl Grapentine is the special guest for the day, announcing for all six groups, and singing solos with the Farmington band. Carl Grapentine is the official announcer for the University of Michigan Bands, and is also a disc jockey on WQRS radio in Detroit. He is well known for his deep, resonant voice and the famous words "Ladies and Gentlemen, please welcome the Michigan Marching Band."

"The Festival includes six excellent community bands," said Paul Barber, founder and director of the Farmington Community Band. "We started with four bands four years ago, and were approached by so many other community bands who wanted to participate that we finally moved it to a Saturday, and expanded the program to six bands."

Twelve Oaks mall is in Novi, on Novi Road, between 12 Mile and I-96. The concert will take place in the center court of the mall, where plenty of good viewing space is available.

The Farmington Community Band is in its 19th season, and is open to all interested adults and to high school students by audition. The band rehearses on Tuesday nights, 7:30-9:30 p.m. in the Harrison High School music suite. For more information about the concert or the band, contact Paul Barber at 474-6441 or Mary Orwig at 477-3598.



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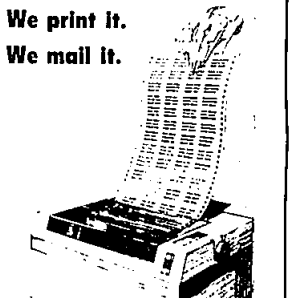
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