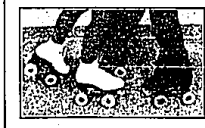


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Farmington Observer

Volume 97 Number 84

Monday, July 28, 1986

Farmington, Michigan

40 Pages

Twenty-Five Cents

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Farmington's library usage 'phenomenal'

By Joanne Maliszewski staff writer

Farmington-area residents have outstripped national averages in their use of library services, according to a library use study. Conducted by Nordhaus Research Inc. of Southfield, the study is a component of a five-year action plan being developed by library officials.

The five-year plan was requested by Farmington and Farmington Hills city councils, which jointly finance the two-branch library system, Library Director Beverly Papal said.

"It's good to have an unbiased approach. What we found was extremely interesting," Papal said about the study. The study's format consisted of telephone surveys of 300 Farmington and Farmington Hills residents between May 29 and June 2.

The study's results revealed that six out of every 10 residents surveyed possess a library card while one out of three surveyed do not. Yet, 13 percent of those who do not possess a library card still use the library and either borrow someone else's card or have others borrow materials for them, Papal said.

"We're then looking at a 73 percent usage. That's phenomenal. Forty to 50 percent use — the national average — is considered high," Papal said.

RESULTS ALSO showed that 80 percent of the residents who have library cards called themselves frequent library users. Twenty-three percent of those who do not have cards said they are frequent library users.

Interestingly, 90 percent of those surveyed who do not use the library said they felt the system was nonetheless very important to the community. Almost every adult surveyed who had children at home felt the library was at least somewhat important, Papal said.

Although the Nordhaus survey is only one component of the five-year plan, Papal said the results "will justify some internal approaches we are going to use."

For example, survey results showed residents want improvements in three major areas — reference services, increased number of books for adults and more programs for children.

"As far as improving reference services, we have to decide what that means," Papal said.

But plans are in the works to improve the library system's reference collection, improve the staff's ability to respond to public reference needs and questions will also be worked on this year with workshops and seminars.

A NEW staff member who will be assigned to the reference desk will also be a great help, Papal said. Survey results also show there's no doubt that children's library needs are of great concern to residents. Nordhaus study results together with reports from GEAC — the library's automated circulation system — show that 39 percent of all materials checked out of the library are for children, Papal said.

Consequently, a greater portion — 30 percent compared to a previous 20-22 percent — of the library's

5-year plan in works

By Joanne Maliszewski staff writer

Residents are not the only group that will be surveyed to complete the Farmington Community Library's five-year action plan.

For the first time in almost three years, staff at both the Farmington and Farmington Hills branch will be surveyed in August.

"The staff works closely with patrons, and they have an inside approach to what people want or think should be improved — inadequate lighting, seating," Library Director Beverly Papal said.

The results of a residents' survey conducted in spring by Nordhaus Research Inc. of Southfield, as well as results of the staff survey will be included in the library's five-year action plan.

The plan was requested last year by Farmington and Farmington Hills city councils, which finance the library system based on each city's total state equalized valuation.

The completed five-year plan is expected to be reviewed and approved by the Library Board of Trustees in December. In January 1987, Papal is expected to present the plan to both city councils.

ESPECIALLY BECAUSE of budgetary planning, the city councils requested the plan so that future library needs could be documented and serve as a guideline for future long-term planning, Papal said.

A third survey will also be conducted in October. This survey will include those patrons who "actually come in the buildings," Papal said. Surveys will be available in both branches. An example of the type of questions that will be asked is if a patron requests a book, how long it takes to receive the book if it must be ordered from another library in the Wayne-Oakland Library Federation.

"It is one week of intensive statistical gathering," Papal said. "We are also going to ask people to leave materials (they have used) out on the

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RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Commander Thomas Cox, with daughters Brooke, 4, (left) and Tara, 5, along the sidewalk in front of their Farmington home.

On balance Officer also is a family man

By Casey Hans staff writer

There was a time when not everyone saw Thomas Cox as the young cadet, distinguished police officer or top investigating detective and commander he is today.

Working on a two-year, three-city special assignment as an undercover officer beginning in 1974 was an "emotional high" for the 35-year-old Farmington resident and 17-year Farmington Department of Public Safety veteran — one he just can't describe with words.

"You've got to be there to ultimately understand," he said.

He felt the sting of stereotyping as an undercover agent. Cox wore

people

long hair and street clothes. He knew when he entered a store, security officers would follow him and eye him with suspicion.

Today, he believes the two years he spent undercover, when more than 1,000 arrests were made for felony crimes, were very successful years.

And he learned personally from them.

POLICE WORK "fits into my life very well," Cox said. Although

"I doubt I will be a career police officer, when I retire, knowing I did 110 percent, that's not being a quitter."

A variety of crime affects residents all over the country, regardless of area. "Crime has no boundaries," he reminds those he serves.

"People are finding it (crime) is more of a priority than the tax issue . . . than housing, or than jobs. People are fighting back. People are willing to pay the price," he said.

He said the more citizens become involved, the easier it makes his job. "I feel that I have someone on my team," Cox added. "It's Im-

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Blizman paces candidate spending

By Joanne Maliszewski staff writer

Political newcomer Paul Blizman spent the most in campaign expenses of the three candidates who vied for two seats on the Farmington Board of Education this spring.

In his first bid for election, Blizman was defeated when incumbents Janice Rolnick and R. Jack Inch were re-elected to their third four-year terms on the school board.

Yet Blizman, 45, a Southfield attorney, was the candidate who received and spent more than \$1,000, according to election finance reports filed with the Oakland County elections clerk in early July.

Candidates are required by state

law to file pre- and post-election finance reports with the elections clerk if they collect or spend more than \$1,000. Failure to report results in a \$10-a-day fine up to a maximum of \$300.

Rolnick and Inch were not required to file because they did not receive or spend more than \$1,000.

Blizman received a total of \$2,398 and spent a total of \$2,268, leaving a balance of about \$132, according to finance reports.

"I HAD a budgeted figure I expected it would cost to go against incumbents," Blizman said. "I was running against two incumbents so I had to get my literature out to voters, actually more than just the

school board voters. I thought it (seeking election) was important enough to do it (spend more than \$2,000)."

Blizman considers his election expenses "as an investment of the future — getting my name and positions out to the voters" in case he decides to run for election again.

Yet Blizman said he's uncertain whether he would have been any more successful in trying to defeat incumbents if he had spent more money.

Blizman's war chest was spent on advertising, postage, typesetting, brochures, typing fees, photographs and catering.

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