



Ron Rose, owner of Ron Rose Productions, adjusts a 24-track audio recorder. The company expanded its Michigan operations with video mixing facilities in the Studio Center.



Warren Silverstein, branch manager for Harvey's Place, works at a video tape editing station. Harvey's Place is a film and editing company in Studio Center offering laser disc editing.

photos by RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Video facility serves all needs

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

THE ADVERTISEMENT shows a tense, harried producer in his swivel chair pulled in all directions. It clearly tells the story: "Now a producer can be in five places at once." And it's no joke. New York has one, Los Angeles and Dallas both have one. Now, Farmington Hills is the center of a brand new, \$5 million-plus communications complex for the state's film, audio and video industry.

In Farmington Hills' Freeway Industrial Park, Studio Center, which officially opened Sept. 29, provides a full spectrum of production services in one 10-company location.

"The idea behind Studio Center was to build a cooperative environment for top-quality companies involved in audio, video and film production in Michigan," said Brian Kepes, Studio Center general manager.

"Our intention was to build a complex that would best serve the needs of producers shooting in Detroit, who would be attracted to the complex because of its convenience, accessibility and the number of quality services offered in one location," Kepes said.

A CLIENT, for example, could rent the 40-by-60-foot sound stage from Grace & Wild Studios, the largest company and complex anchor tenant. The client could rent cameras and video equipment from the Victor Duncan equipment rental company.

The next step could be to go across the complex to Ron Rose Productions for audio work. Editing could be completed at Harvey's Place.

"It all depends on what the client needs. They potentially could use several of the companies here. Some offer similar services but each has their own forte. The idea here is that they offer complementary services," said Mary Benjamin, Grace & Wild marketing director.

THE COMPLEX will cater to Michigan's growing film industry and the consistently busy commercial and industrial film and video industry.

"It's been very busy. I guess it's been a secret how much commercial and industrial work there's been here (in Michigan). Feature films are up. There's lots of local and regional commercial work. And there's phenomenal amounts of corporate work," Benjamin said.

If clients choose, they can book the whole complex, said Ron Rose, president of Ron Rose Productions, which has expanded its Michigan operations into the studio complex. "This is an all-in-one studio," he said.

THE AMBIANCE of the wooded seven-acre complex is just what the creative doctor ordered. Ron Rose Productions, for example, takes advantage of the natural setting. The company's "The Room with a View" offers a spectacular view of the wooded area, not to mention the video screens and six-channel Dolby sound enveloping the client.

Warren Silverstein, branch manager for New York-based Harvey's Place, likes the Studio Center concept.

"If we're doing Chevy spots, for example, they could be prepping at the (Grace & Wild) stage. We could be here editing. And if anyone needs sound transfers, they can go to Rose (Productions)," Silverstein said.

The complex right now features three buildings. The largest is Grace & Wild Studios. The film and video production company also has an administration building in the complex. The third building, called the multi-tenant building, is where the remaining nine companies are.

AMONG OTHER companies in

the complex is Magic Lantern Productions, known for its feature films "Harry and the Hendersons" and "Evil Dead II."

Full Circle Communications provides industrial design, writing services, electronic publishing and computer services for the corporate world.

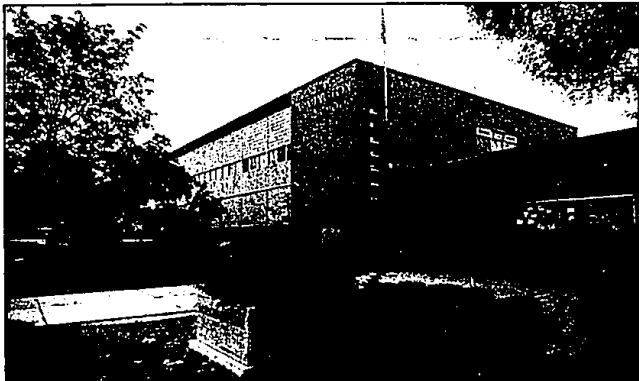
Moon-Kochis Productions is a film and video production company, which gained national attention for employee training and corporate communications programs.

August Productions is a commercial production company. The Video Group specializes in market consultation, production and local and national commercial placement.

The Advanced Center for Technology Training completes the list. The young company offers mobile training for robotics training to colleges and manufacturing companies.

THE COMPLEX is 90 percent occupied; a second phase is being considered.

"There are preliminary plans for construction of a fourth building on the site. It would be multi-tenant use to round out the number of services we already have. It could be like a Hollywood studio lot with keyliners, catering services, set designers and casting services," Benjamin said.



The facade and entryway are among the areas targeted for improvement at Farmington High School, the oldest school building in the district.

Improvements scheduled for old Farmington High

By Casey Hans
staff writer

Parent activist Tina Jensen called it a "100th birthday present," as the school board last week approved a \$2.7 million improvement project for Farmington High School, which celebrates its 100th anniversary this year.

The project includes facade and landscape work and a previously approved, million-dollar media center renovation scheduled to be completed by next fall.

The oldest school building in the district, Farmington High was constructed in 1933 and has many of the original furnishings and building parts.

The new, state-of-the-art media center will double the size of the current library. It will allow Farmington High to be the focus of high-tech changes in the district. It will serve as the telecommunications hub between schools, and eventually link the district and community.

Deputy superintendent Michael Flanagan estimates the district could save up to \$40,000 by centralizing new technologies at the center.

JENSEN, WHO has complained during the past year that the school is deteriorating physically, said she

was pleased with the planned renovations. They will address the facade of the school facing Shawwassee Road and will include window treatments, the front entrance, sidewalks and front parking lot, the landscaping and removal of the school's large smokestack, which is cracked.

The \$2.7 million also includes money for the media center renovation and furniture and book stacks for it.

The money will be taken from the district's capital fund.

Specific designs for the media center renovations and additional work will be presented at the Oct. 18 school board meeting. The projects are expected to go out for bids in December.

THE PRICING for the renovations is reasonable; they will look nice but not luxurious, according to trustee James Abernethy, an architecture professor who heads the board's Building and Site Committee.

"Twenty five dollars a square foot is not luxury," he said. "We're not going to get anything that's going to look like elegance."

Board members discussed whether to include \$300,000 for media center furniture in the project, or

pay for it out of a separate fund. Trustee Jack Itoh said, "I don't think furnishings are capital goods. To me, it's not something you fund out of a capital fund."

OTHER TRUSTEES disagreed. "We cannot open that facility like so many other school districts, and not have what it needs," said Helen Protow. "I don't want to cut it off and have no money set aside."

"Any time you build a new facility, the capital money covers the entire facility," Helen Dittmar added.

Janice Rolnick said she thought the board was being gun-shy because of the recent building renovations bond issue defeat. "We are shy because of the loss," she said. "I think that's what's really bothering us. I don't want to do that. I would be in favor of accepting the whole proposal."

Superintendent Graham Lewis didn't "see anything of magnitude" that the district would need the capital fund for in the near future. "We need to do as much as we possibly can from the fund for Farmington High School. We can then build it back up. We do have different levying options."

"I see the high school as a very critical situation."



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Saturday, October 15
From 1 to 3 p.m.

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